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THE

SUNDAY MAGAZINE

FOR 1866

EDITED BY

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AUTUMN.

(*From "Pictures of English Landscape," by permission.*)

AUTUMN.

BY THE EDITOR.

FATHER of Mercies, God of love,
Whose gifts all creatures share,
The rolling seasons as they move
Proclaim thy constant care.

When in the bosom of the earth
The sower hid the grain,
Thy goodness marked its secret birth,
And sent the early rain.

The spring's sweet influence, Lord, was thine,
The seasons knew thy call:
Thou mad'st the summer sun to shine,
The summer dews to fall.

Thy gifts of mercy from above
Matured the swelling grain;
And now the harvest crowns thy love,
And plenty fills the plain.

Oh, ne'er may our forgetful hearts
O'erlook thy bounteous care;
But what our Father's hand imparts
Still own in praise and prayer.

To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
The God whom we adore,
Be glory as it was, is now,
And shall be evermore.

IT is pleasant to leave the hot, hard pavements of a city for the meadow's cool green sward; pent-up streets for a spacious but sequestered valley; dull walls of brick or stone for the height and majesty of mountains that dip their feet in the lake, and raise their heads to the clouds; the roar of carriages and din of crowds for a quiet scene, whose only sounds are those of bleating sheep and lowing cattle, the murmur of a stream or dash of tiny waves on the shelving shore, the shouts of happy reapers where the corn falls to their sickles, or is borne off to threshing-floors. Every man of taste enjoys the beauties of such a scene; and a man of devout, habitual piety sees God as plainly mirrored there, as are the flowers, trees, rocks, and hills in the glassy surface of its lake.

Such appear to have been the circumstances of David, when in the 65th Psalm he composed that magnificent ode,—grand song for a Harvest Home,—where he adores God in Nature and soars on the wings of inspiration to the height of his argument. No doubt descriptions of country scenes, glowing with the rich colours of Thomson or Goldsmith, have been penned in city garrets. But while their authors, drawing on imagination, saw no more of green things and nature than some poor rose, or dusty plant of thyme that stood on the window sill, thirsting for a shower and drooping for lack of sunshine, that Psalm has the freshness of painting where the artist, carrying palette and canvas to the open fields, copies direct from Nature. The very mountains appear to have been towering before David, of which, singing God's praise, he says, "Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains;" overhead, the clouds, heaven's treasuries of rain, floated in the blue air, and below,

winding along, went the river that sparkled in the sun, and, conducted by a thousand conduits, gave fertility to the soil, of which he said, "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof;" and when, still rising from nature up to nature's God, he sung, "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness; the pastures are clothed with flocks, the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing," one cannot but feel that the scene was before him—hills dotted with snowy fleeces, and an umbrageous valley where crowded reapers, to shouts, and song, and merry laughter, made wide gaps in the golden corn. The scenes of autumn raised David's mind to God. And well they may ours; for in meditating on this period of the year, I may remark, that

Autumn is the season in which God is eminently, or rather pre-eminently visible.

It is a remarkable fact, that, notwithstanding the progress of arts and science, and the vast number of useful as well as brilliant discoveries man has made during the last four thousand years, he has not added so much as one new grain to those he cultivates for food. Sculptured monuments, as old as, if not older than, the days of Joseph, show that wheat, barley, and our other grains were well known to the Egyptians; as well known in the early ages of the world as in this. Another, and a no less remarkable fact is this, that the *cereal grasses*—by which we mean those plants that yield wheat, barley, and such other grains—are nowhere, on the face of all the earth, found growing wild. Apparently unable to live by self-sowing, they have totally disappeared from every country which man, abandoning, has left to its own resources—flowers, forests, fruit trees, roofless cities and ruined temples remain, but no stalks of corn, to tell that he once was there. If they cannot live now, it seems fair to conclude, that these plants never did live without his culture; and that the knowledge of their uses and of their modes of cultivation he owed to the direct instruction of Him, his teacher in this as in many things else, who, to quote the words of Scripture, "took the man, and put him in the garden of Eden to dress and keep it."

These facts suggest such an intercourse between man and his Maker as corresponds with Scripture, and those hints it gives of the intimate and happy communion in which they lived, till man fell and sin estranged them. Ignorant of these things, and, at least to appearance, altogether ignoring Divine Providence, one of our poets ascribes the bounties of harvest to human industry alone, and, thrusting God entirely out of view, sings:

Attempered sun arise,
Sweet beamed, and shedding oft through lucid clouds
A pleasing calm; while broad and brown below
Extensive harvests hang the heavy head,
* * * * * *
Far as the circling eye can shoot around
Unbounded tossing in a flood of corn.
These are thy blessings, Industry! rough power!
Whom labour still attends, and sweat, and pain,
Raiser of human kind! by nature cast,
Naked and helpless, out amid the woods
And wilds, to rude inclement elements;
With various seeds of art deep in the mind
Implanted, and profusely poured around
Materials infinite, but idle all,
Still unexerted, in the unconscious breast,
Slept the lethargic powers; Corruption still
Voracious, swallowed what the liberal hand
Of Bounty scattered o'er the savage year;
And still the sad barbarian, roving, mixed
With beasts of prey; or for his acorn meal
Fought the fierce tusky boar; a shivering wretch!
* * * till Industry approached
And roused him from his miserable sloth:
His faculties unfolded; pointed out
Where lavish nature the directing hand
Of art demanded.

Giving all the honour to human industry and its triumphs which is due, the heathen themselves teach us to bring a higher actor than man upon the scene. They recognised their dependence for the bounties of harvest on the will and providence of God—by this grand truth redeeming from childishness some of their wildest legends, and softening to some extent the savage features of customs from which humanity revolts. A tribe in our Indian Empire, for example, never sowed their fields till they had first taken steps to propitiate their god. These, as was related to me by an officer who had had charge of their district, consisted of a human sacrifice, offered up in the person of a prisoner of war, around whom the peasants stood grimly, knife in hand; each ready, so soon as the fatal blow was struck, to rush in on the victim, slice a piece of flesh from the bleeding corpse, and, hastening with it to his fields, sprinkle them with the dripping gore. Neither the pity with which, spectators of such a murderous scene, we should have looked on the trembling victim, nor the horror with which we would have turned our eyes from such savage rites, could blind them to the fact, that these heathen, however culpable and revolting their mode of expressing it, owned a power superior to human industry, and in the harvests of their fruitful fields, saw God, to use the words of David, "crowning the year with His goodness."

The Greeks attributed man's first knowledge of the arts of agriculture to other than his own genius. They regarded them as a revelation, not a discovery; and ascribed them directly to Divine instruction. According to their mythology, Ceres, the goddess of corn and harvests, who gives her name to that family of plants which, called *cereal grasses*, yield wheat, barley, and such other grains, first taught a native of Attica the art of husbandry. She showed him how to plough the ground; how to sow and reap corn; how to make bread, and cultivate fruit trees. Nor did the benignant divinity stop there. Reminding us of the true story that relates how Jesus sent his disciples forth to carry the tidings of salvation to a perishing world, the legend, rising to worthy ideas of what a God should be and do, relates that Ceres, having presented her own chariot to her disciple, commanded him to take farewell of his native land, and travel all over the earth to communicate the arts of agriculture to its rude inhabitants—who had till then subsisted on nothing better than roots and acorns.

We find a nation more ancient than the Greeks

who also regarded agriculture as a Divine gift, and recognised in the fruits of harvest more than the industry of man; even the providence and power of God. These were the Egyptians. According to them, it was Isis, one of their most celebrated deities, who, on being changed into a cow and afterwards restored to the human form, communicated to their ancestors man's earliest knowledge of the arts of husbandry. In acknowledgment of the gift and in honour of the giver, they worshipped her under the form of a woman, holding a globe in her hands, and also a vessel filled with ears of corn. Nor did they consider themselves indebted to Isis for the knowledge of agriculture only; but plainly, though in a wild and weird legend, attributed to her benignant influence the bounties of every harvest. In Egypt, as is well known, these depend on the overflowings of the Nile; and, as the story ran, it was to the tears she shed over the body of Osiris, her murdered brother, that the country owed those annual inundations which imparted such fertility to the soil of Egypt as made it the granary of the world.

In these old legends, who may not recognise traditions — though changed and distorted—of those early days when man had God for his teacher, and Eden for his home—a proof and illustration of our statement that in Autumn, with its ripened fruits and golden harvests, the power and providence of God are pre eminently conspicuous? Not that the other seasons do not also proclaim his glory. They do, were it by nothing else than their regular succession. It was reckoned a great triumph of human art when they constructed a chronometer in London which formed perhaps man's nearest approach in mechanism to the perfection of the works of God—a time-piece which, after being carried round the globe, was found on the ship's return to have deviated from true time by two seconds only in the course of a whole year. But the seasons are regulated by a clock which, placed in the heavens, has gone on without mending or winding, not for one year, nor a hundred, nor a thousand, but many thousand years with undeviating regularity. How manifold are thy works, Lord God Almighty; in wisdom hast thou made them all! In their unfailing succession how do the seasons display thy providence, and illustrate thy promise, given beneath the rainbow, by a mountain altar and beside the stranded ark, "While the earth remaineth seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease."

Whether the phenomena be those of winter, when streams lie locked in ice, and the earth looks dead, wrapped in a shroud of snow; or of spring, at whose call nature undergoes an annual resurrection, and leaves her grave in the bloom of a perpetual youth; or of summer, gay with flowers; or of autumn, crowned with ears of nodding corn, "all thy works praise thee, O God, and show forth thy glory." And, thanks to science, each new discovery in the realms of nature but confirms our faith in the Word of God; and, like the steps of one who climbs a mountain, enlarges our views of the goodness, wisdom, and power of Him who is the Maker and Monarch of all. Yet autumn is the only one of the seasons when the Church, in days of thanksgiving, calls her members specially to own and praise the goodness of God. And why but because it is specially conspicuous when in bountiful harvests He crowns the year with his goodness, and supplies those who seek daily bread with a twelvemonth's store—in overflowing barns and swelling stack-yards, with food for a whole year to come?

Autumn crowns the other seasons. It shows God's work complete and finished; and therefore glorifies Him most—the other seasons being but preparatory steps to this. Winter prepares the bed for the seed; its pause resting, its snows and rains watering, and its swelling frosts breaking up the soil. Spring, with soft and warm breath wakens the vitality of the buried grain; from its dry and husky form evoking a green tiny blade. With her showers of light and heat, with cooling rain and burning sunshine, summer nourishes the tender plant, developing the flowers that are the parents of the precious fruit. Lord of the year, these "cast up" the way for the approach of Autumn, and so the poet of the "Seasons" sings—

> Crowned with the sickle and the wheaten sheaf,
> While Autumn, nodding o'er the yellow plain,
> Comes jovial on; the Doric reed once more,
> Well pleased, I tune. Whate'er the wintry frost
> Nitrous prepared; the various blossom'd spring,
> Put in white promise forth; and summer suns
> Concocted strong, rush boundless now to view,
> Full, perfect all, and swell my glorious theme.

Stop in midsummer, and the seasons and labour that preceded is labour lost,—it were the springing of an arch without its key-stone, or the walls of a house without roof and coping. It is when fields, once white with winter snow, once green with reedy leaves, once waving in the wind with upright heads and empty ears, grow golden, fall to bands of joyous reapers, are borne from the rough stubble to full barn-yards and busy mills, it is then that God comes forth from the clouds and darkness around his throne, the Father and Friend of all—crowning the year with his goodness, and giving bread to both his praying and prayerless creatures. We crown autumn with ears of corn; and she, as the Jews did with their first fruits, carries her golden treasures to the Temple and lays them on the altar of her God. She crowns Him with her honours; to Him, as having blessed the labours of the husbandman, and guided the secret processes of nature, and directed the procession of revolving seasons, and distributed the proportions of shower and sunshine, ascribing the glory and praise that are due.

Autumn is a joyous season.

The harvest was particularly so in old times; especially in that happy land where God, their lawgiver, directed the Israelites both how to cultivate, and how to reap the ground. "Thou shalt not sow thy field," He said, "with mingled seed; thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together." In Italy I have often seen an ox and an ass in the same yoke; nor do these injunctions forbid it. Made for the Jews, to whose circumstances they were adapted, and whom they were intended to warn against intercourse and especially intermarriages with the surrounding heathen,

their authority has passed away ; but not so, at least in spirit, those harvest laws which God enjoined on Israel. What benevolence breathes, what grand lessons of humanity are embodied, in the following rules :—"When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest . . . thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger . . . When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again, it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward : it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt : therefore I command thee to do this thing."

The result of laws so well adapted to foster the spirit of humanity, we see in that charming picture of a harvest field which adorns the pages of the Book of Ruth. There, save where stiff old age or tender childhood seek to earn a little wage, the reapers, fair women and stalwart youths, a blithe and merry band, go down in steady line on the ranks of the standing corn. Behind them, scattered over the stubble, where some bend beneath the weight of years, and others are busier with play than work, come old men and women, widows, and orphan children, gleaning the stray stalks, left for them and the birds of heaven, growing into a sheaf of corn which, borne on their heads, they carry home at nightfall to grind in the household mill, to eat and be satisfied, and praise Him, who, kind guardian of the poor, said to the husbandman, "Thou shalt not gather the gleanings of thy harvest." Well, one day on the uplands of Bethlehem, the sun is shining bright, and with song and challenge and merry laughter the reapers ply their flashing sickles amid the corn, when the master appears on the scene. A kind man is Boaz, and pious as kind. "The Lord be with you," is his "good morning" to his servants,—the familiar but devout wish he offers. Suspending work and song to do him reverence, they in turn illustrate a rule that may be as well expressed by the words, "such master, such servants," as by those in more common use, "such priest, such people,"—"The Lord bless thee," is their respectful, kind, and devout response. And now, not deeming the poor beneath his notice, the good man turns from the reapers to the gleaners, and among these pensioners of God's bounty and his own, his eye lights on a widow, young in years but of modest mien. Poorly clad and of a sad countenance, early acquainted with sorrow, a widow, friendless, a stranger in a strange land, the gentle Ruth appeals to the kindliest feelings of a noble heart. Nor in vain. Her whom ruthless villany would have marked down for its prey, he commends to the care of virtuous maidens, and with a delicate attention to the feelings of the poor, worthy as well of our imitation as of our praise, he whispers to the reapers, "Let fall some handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them that she may glean them." Beautiful picture ! one we love to dwell on.

Our modern system of husbandry has blotted all this out. We have bigger stacks ; we make more money ; but it may be a question whether the country has not lost more morally than it has gained materially by the change—lost more in the dying out of these old kindly customs than gained in the greater produce of the soil. Nor is it possible to look on this picture of an old harvest field, lighted up with the sunshine of human kindness, without some feeling of regret that such scenes belong to the past, and, only found now in books and picture-galleries, are numbered with the things that were.

Still, with its harvests and the bounties of the year, Autumn is a gladsome season. One is glad of it for the sake of the very birds, the sweet choristers of bush and field, and many other creatures else. They rejoice and revel in its profusion ; and, storing up its bounties in hollow tree or homes beneath the ground, are provisioned against the storms of winter. How dead his soul in whom it awakens no feelings of gladness and gratitude to see, in fields where the sheaves stand thick and tall, plenty for man and beast ; ground to hope that the poor of the land shall eat and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord their God.

Its very labours present a cheerful aspect. What sights so pleasant as those it offers ? What toil where the sweat in which man eats his bread wears less the aspect of a curse ? The blue sky flecked with snowy clouds, the neighbouring wood where some late songster peals out her music tinted with the colours of the rainbow, the long stretches of golden corn that bespeak food and plenty, the healthful breeze wantoning with the ruddy cheek and dishevelled hair of youthful reapers, the bright flashes of the sickle, the brighter flashes of happy faces, the merry laughter of light hearts, the robust health that makes a play of work, how pleasant the spectacle ! How different the sunless room in the crowded city, where the workman sits, pale and lonesome, breathing a stifling atmosphere ; or the tall mill, where wan and ill-developed forms stand amid ceaseless whirr and dust, watching from early morn to night the threads and flying spindles ; or the forge where, begrimed with smoke and stunned with din, half naked men swing the heavy hammer and blow the roaring fire ; or the dripping pit, where the grim miner, leaving the sun and green fields, descends to pass his days in the regions of perpetual night, perilling life for the treasures the earth hides in her bowels. What greater contrast than a pale, sickly needlewoman, toiling with thin fingers by the night lamp at her weary task in city garret or hot, crowded, stifling workshop, and yonder rustic maid with form to which health and out-door labour lend grace, mirth sparkling in her eyes, on her cheek roses that shine through the tan, in one hand a reaper's sickle, and in the other the nodding heads of corn. Alas ! that in many country districts their moral should correspond so ill with their material aspects. It is sad to think that beneath those charming scenes of rural beauty that culminate in the happy spectacle of a harvest field, there lies a coarseness of manners, and licentiousness of conduct that makes the innocence of country life, as contrasted

with that of town life, an utter dream. The habits of the peasantry in some quarters are little higher than those of the cattle they tend—a sad and shameful fact; one which calls aloud for a remedy on the part of the ministers, parents, and masters of this Christian and Protestant land.

But to return to the gladsome and joyful aspects of this season. What a pleasant sight, when winds have winnowed the standing sheaves, to see the loaded cart rocking over the furrowed fields; grey-haired peasants who, bent and done with labour, are themselves ready to fall like a shock of corn in its season, leaning on their staves, and mothers with smiling infants in their arms, turning out of doors to see the last load borne home amid the shouts of brawny men, and smiles of maidens, and shrill cheers of troops of boys and girls, who, infected with the general happiness, swell the procession, and cheer—they know not why. And when early snows powder the hill tops, and russet leaves fly whirling through the air and sweep along the road, how pleasant in passing the snug farmstead amid these tokens of coming winter, to see the bounties of Providence stored under roof and thatch, safe from frosts and storm. The precious fruits of the earth safely lodged, let Harvest Home be celebrated. But with cheerfulness, let grateful thanks be given to Him who blessed the hands of labour, and whose paths, as He held the winds in his fist, and measured out due proportions of shower and sunshine, dropped fatness on fields that had otherwise been scorched with heat or drowned with rain. Where or at what other time are thoughtless folly and wild riot more reprehensible? Let people be happy by all means, but holy also; celebrating harvest homes in the spirit of the law which required the Jews to carry the first cut sheaf of corn to the house, and lay it, a pious offering, on the altar of God. The beastly riot, the drunkenness, and wild excesses of other days are happily disappearing from ours. May they everywhere, and soon, give place to the practice,—to her honour first begun in England,—where, with an ample feast and pleasant hours for all who shared in harvest labour, the *fête* is opened by an act of worship; and voices that rung with merry laughter amid the falling corn, and shouted as the last waggon swung in at the gate with its golden load, sweetly mingle in praise to Him to whose mercy we owe alike the bread that perisheth, and what never perisheth—Jesus, the bread of life.

Autumn is a solemn season.

Like a fine piece of music which now sinks into dying strains and now swells into a flood of melody, with passages both grave and gay, this season presents varied features—combining deeply solemn with bright and cheerful aspects. Now the mornings are cool and bracing, the days are clear, and the nights, lighted up by a full harvest moon, shine with unusual splendour; and if flowers, lingering only in gardens, and tempting the bee in the uplands where heather robes the hills in purple, have vanished from field and moor and meadow, the loss is largely compensated. In place of one uniform, sober robe of green, dulled by summer dust and heat, the woods assume the gayest garb, and glow with such bright and varied hues as sets at nought the pride of dress, and highest arts of painters. The tints of Autumn impart such beauty to the earth as glowing sunsets to the sky. Yet, as in that lovely victim of a fell disease, who sits cushioned in a sick chamber, with hands white as the snowy pillows that support her form, and eyes that shine with a strange, unusual lustre, and cheeks tinted like a delicate rose, the beauties of autumn are those of decay: and he who can hold converse with nature may, as if there were "tongues in trees," hear this solemn voice sounding forth on the ears of a heedless world, "We all do fade as a leaf." In these dying leaves, man beholds the affecting emblems of himself. Beautiful, but solemn sight, they teach us that by-and-by this life and world shall know us no more than the trees shall know them.

Autumn leaves fade to fall. The connection between their fragile forms and the stem grows weak, the flow of sap stagnates, and at length ceases—and they die; and now a wind, the howling herald of winter, strikes the tree and strips it naked. Flying leaves fill the troubled air, go whirling along the ground, and, swept from their parent stem to be scattered far and wide, present a sight that suggests sad thoughts to thoughtful minds—how sin has broken the holy ties which united us to God; how sinners are hurried away and along by the power of temptation; in the case of the best, how true the words, "Our iniquities like the wind have carried us away."

Here, thank God, the emblem ceases. Swept away by the gale, tossed by eddies into rotting heaps, left on roads to be trodden under foot and mingled with the mire, or dropped into brawling streams that convey them, madly dancing, to the river which flings its wreck ashore or floats them out to sea, they return no more to the parent from whose arms they were torn. But the ravages of sin are not irremediable. Whom it has carried away from God, Jesus has come to restore, and by faith in his blood restores,—"Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness, I bring near my righteousness." "Return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings." And such power does the grace of God impart to believers, that, though once like withered leaves, which winds whirl into the air, roll along the road, and seizing, fling into flood or fire, they now withstand temptations,—as a crag the roaring blast, or a tree with roots rifted in the solid rock, the tempest that may shake, but cannot remove it—"They that trust in the Lord, shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved."

While her forests with their sere and yellow leaves warn us of our own decay and death, the fields of Autumn recall to thoughtful minds truths yet more solemn. These fields give as they get. This abundant crop, and that scanty one, teach us, that they who in prayers, sacrifices, and labours for the cause of God, sow sparingly, shall reap also sparingly, but that they, on the other hand, who sow bountifully, shall reap also bountifully—learning in heaven, if not on earth, that God loveth a large and cheerful giver.

Moreover, what husbandman ever reaped wheat

from acres he sowed with barley? Be the season favourable or adverse, be the soil the richest loam or hungry moorland, as was the kind of seed sown in Spring, so is the kind of harvest reaped in Autumn. Even so, as in those fields where the same grain falls to the reaper's sickle that fell from the sower's hand, as man soweth in his life he shall reap at his death; "Be not deceived," says Paul, "God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; for he that soweth to the flesh [indulges in the lusts of the flesh] shall of the flesh reap corruption [the miseries of hell]; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

Moreover, the season which reminds us of these truths reminds us of the grand occasion when they shall be realised—to the everlasting joy of some, and the everlasting sorrow of others. Around us the emblems of our death hang in the tinted foliage, and lie at our feet in withered leaves; above us, the sun, as if himself decaying and wan with age, sheds a fainter light, communicates a feebler warmth, and, like man in the evening of life, goes earlier to bed, and is later to rise! but before us the field with its crowd of reapers, and flashing sickles, and falling corn—to be borne off, the grain to the garner, the chaff to the fire—suggests something yet more solemn—the most solemn scene of which this world shall be the theatre; the last great assize: all Adam's family met face to face for the first and the last time, in one vast assembly; the God of Glory descending to judgment; the great white throne filled by the august person of his Son; the crowd of angels, ministers to do his will, and give, in the curse executed on one class and the crowns conferred on another, to every man according to his deeds, entering the vast, awed, agitated, solemn multitude to part it into two great divisions; to call those who have accepted Christ to glory, and consign such as have unhappily rejected him to inexpressible and endless woe. Giving a grandeur and solemnity to the scene which, though unheeded, perhaps, either by the farmer who is thinking only of his profits or the reapers who are thinking only of their gains, belongs to none other scene on earth,—Jesus said, "The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." Yes: let us hear; heed the warning; seek and embrace the Saviour; and in making our calling and election sure, work while it is called to-day, lest we should have to bemoan our folly, and cry, as we look back with unavailing regrets on the past, and forward with shrinking dread on the future, "THE HARVEST IS PAST, THE SUMMER IS ENDED, AND WE ARE NOT SAVED!"

THE OLD AGE OF ST. PETER.

THE life of the great Apostle, to whom the Lord of the Church assigned this name as at once characteristic and prophetic,* may be divided, both naturally and conveniently, into four distinct periods. Of these, the last only forms the special subject-matter of the present inquiry; but, as it can hardly be considered except in its relations to the antecedent history, it will be necessary so far to take a brief glance at them also.

(1.) Of the years, probably between thirty and forty, that preceded the preaching of the Baptist, we are told little or nothing, and are left to inference or conjecture. Within certain limits there is little risk of error in the picture that suggests itself. The boyhood at Bethsaida (John i. 44), spent chiefly in his father's calling: the experience of all the chances and perils of the fisherman's life, stormy nights, and labour often fruitless; intercourse with the peasants of the villages, and the publicans or *douaniers* of the towns of Galilee; visits, annual, or it may be more frequent, to the great feasts of Jerusalem; the weekly Sabbath service in the synagogue; this must have been his life, as it was that of the thousands that were living round him. Education there was probably none but of the most elementary character. When the two, Peter and John, stood before the Sanhedrim, those who listened wondered at their boldness, because "they were unlearned and ignorant men," had received no training like that which was given in the schools of Jerusalem (Acts iv. 13). It was, however, one great blessing of the synagogue system, one which was transmitted to the Christian Church, and has been perpetuated in our own parochial machinery, that it did provide even in the smallest village, wherever there were as many as ten householders, some means for raising the youth of Israel out of the brute ignorance in which the masses in heathen countries were left to live and die. The resident Rabbi was of necessity qualified to be a teacher, and often gathered the boys of the town into an actual school. Few were left in total ignorance of the law, which, at the age of twelve, every Jewish youth was bound to observe.* They learnt to repeat their

* The two occasions on which the name was solemnly bestowed are both of them significant. First, when as yet his faith had only showed itself in accepting the testimony of Andrew, that he had "found the Christ," and coming, for the first time, before his Lord, he was greeted with the strange words, "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona, thou shalt be called Cephas" (John i. 42). And secondly, when he had been ed, this time through no human testimony, but by a direct apocalypse to the yet higher truth, "Thou art *the Christ, the Son of the living God*," and then heard the meaning of the name brought out, "Thou art Peter, and on this *rock I will build my Church*" (Matt. xvi. 13).

* At this age, in the popular language of the Jews, after an examination in the elements of religious knowledge, they became *Children of the Law*, and shared with their parents in the observance of Jewish feasts. Our Lord's journey to Jerusalem, then apparently for the first time going up to Jerusalem, to keep the passover, and his

Shemâ, the great creed of Israel: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord." The verses written on their phylacteries were committed to memory.* The Book of Deuteronomy and the Proverbs of Solomon were probably the chief text books of education. It was no exceptional case when the Apostle, speaking to the offspring of a mixed marriage in a heathen country, said emphatically, "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures daily" (2 Tim. iv. 15).

Of the events of St. Peter's life we of course know nothing; but we may surmise, without much risk of error, that the wild insurrection of the Zealots, who, under Judas of Galilee (A.D. 6), in the days of the taxing (Acts v. 37), dared to defy the whole power of Rome, must have stirred the feelings of his boyhood or early youth. One of these Zealots, once probably a follower of Judas, we have even in the number of the twelve,† and to the confused hopes and dreams thus formed we may look as the source of that longing expectation of "a kingdom to be restored to Israel," to which even the Apostles clung with so strange a tenacity (Acts i. 6). More distinctly we may think of the companionship with his elder brother, Andrew; of his marriage with some Galilean maiden, probably of his own rank in life; of their purchase of a house in Capernaum, and, it may be, a small farm on the shores of the Sea of Galilee; of the children prattling at their knees, the joy of their father's heart.‡ But above all, in those early years must have been laid the deep foundations of that friendship with the son of Zebedee, which lasted even to the end, and of which the Gospel of the beloved disciple bears so many traces.§ The hot impetuosity of Simon, and the fiery energy of the Son of Thunder, must have drawn them together, as kindred natures are attracted to each other, and we can hardly doubt that they, sharing the restless fever of the time, looked for the Son of David, who was to come before long and claim his father's throne. The words of joy at finding the Messiah, imply a long and yearning expectation (John i. 41).

(2.) With the preaching of the Baptist there came the first great change. The rumour spread that a great prophet had risen up; and Simon, with other Galileans, chiefly, it would seem, those who shared his Messianic hopes, went to Bethabara, on the east side of Jordan, where John was baptising (John i. 28). They were among the multitudes who, moved by that strong, earnest preaching, confessed their sins, and plunged into the waters of the Jordan, as washing away the evil of their past deeds, and entering on a better life. What followed is familiar to every reader of the Gospel, and need not be repeated here, except in its leading outlines. To find the new teacher greater than John, and to feel, before any sign or wonder had been wrought, that this was indeed the Christ,—to receive the new name, Cephas, or Peter, witness not of the strength which he then had, but of the work to which he was called, and the character that was needed for it,—to return for a time to the old life, then to leave it, and with it to leave, without abandoning, home, and wife, and children, in order to take his place among the fishers of men,—to be led gradually out of earthly dreams and poor ambitions to the true thought of a kingdom of God,—to take his place first within the circle of the Twelve, and among the Twelve to be called to the foremost rank, to pass into the inner circle, the elect of the elect,—to be present with those other chosen ones in the moment of highest glory on the Mount of the Transfiguration, and the moment of deepest humiliation in the garden of Gethsemane,—after those divine experiences, to forsake and deny his Master through a coward fear of the rough tongues of Roman soldiers and Jewish housemaids, to meet his Lord's reproachful yet forgiving glance, and to rush into the dark, throw himself on the ground, and weep bitterly;—this was what lay before him in the future, which then he saw not. Through all these changes we see the natural character of the man breaking out ever and anon, and showing its evil and its good. He is foremost in his confession, and the first to retract; he alone throws himself into the waves to join the loved Form that he saw through the darkness of the night, and then, his faith failing him, begins to sink; prominent in all questionings and murmurings, impetuous, zealous, but also wavering and inconstant; in years a man, but in character a wayward boy, needing the education of a Divine guide or teacher. That guidance was necessary to lead him to the true thoughts of God, and of the kingdom, and of Christ; it was needed also to prevent the friendship which had been the blessing of his life from passing into bitterness. Peter's question, "What shall we have therefore?"—the prayer of the sons of Zebedee, that they might sit, one on their Lord's right hand, the other on his left, in his kingdom, the vexed displeasure to which that prayer gave rise,—all this gives tokens of a jealous rivalry which, but for the lesson which checked it, might have passed on into the bitterness which M. Renan traces, and may claim as the first discoverer, in the Gospel of the beloved disciple. But the lesson was learnt effectually. On the night of the Last Supper their words and glances show the full confidence of friendship (John xiii. 24, 25). Peter, in the shame or confusion of his repentance, turns to John for help, and is not repelled—with him he must

"sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions," give us the analogous stage in the unfolding of the perfect life.

* The passages so written were the following:—

1. "Sanctify unto me all the first-born," &c. (Exod. xiii. 2—10).
2. "And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee," &c. (Exod. xiii. 11—16).
3. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord," &c. (Deut. vi. 4—9).
4. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God," &c. (Deut. vi. 13—22).

The ground of selection in the first three appears to have been the occurrence of the words, "they shall be a sign upon thine hand," "frontlets between thine eyes." There is something striking and instructive in the fact that words from 3, 4, were the weapons with which our Lord baffled the attacks of the tempter, and that they formed throughout the key-note of his teaching.

† "Simon, called Zelotes" (Luke vi. 15). The name inaccurately given as "Canaanite," in the Authorized Version of St. Matthew and St. Mark, means the same thing.

‡ This seems the natural inference from our Lord's answer to St. Peter's boast, "We have left all, and have followed thee," "Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or *children*, or *lands*" (Mark x. 29). The marriage is more distinctly recorded Mark i. 30; Matt. viii. 14.

§ The assumption that the feeling which shows itself in St. John's Gospel is one of poor rivalry and jealousy, is almost the most groundless as it is almost the most offensive hypothesis in M. Renan's *Life of Jesus*. Such a thought could scarcely have commended itself to any one in whom the capacity for friendship had not been extinguished in sentimentalism.

have spent the hours of that solemn Sabbath that followed the Crucifixion*—with him he went, as if after a midnight vigil, very early in the morning, to the sepulchre in the garden. When Peter hears of the trial in the far future which is to test the thrice-asserted love, and cancel, as it were, the thrice-repeated denial, he turns with eager affection to ask, "Lord, and what shall this man do?" (John xxi. 21.)

(3.) The next period of the Apostle's life is that of highest activity and fame. He takes the place assigned to him as the spokesman of the Twelve; the holder of the Keys, binding and loosing, forgiving and retaining sins. The Spirit descends on him as on the others. He shares with them the marvellous power of the Gift of Tongues, but he stands forth conspicuous among the rest as the chief prophet in that "goodly fellowship." The man who had quailed in the porch of the High Priest's palace, stands unabashed before the High Priest himself, and all the priests, elders, and scribes of the great Sanhedrim, denounces their guilt, reasons with them out of their own Scriptures. His voice we cannot doubt was listened to in the Church with most reverence. By his hands signs and wonders were wrought in the name of God's "holy servant,† Jesus." Men brought their sick and laid them in the streets, that even the very "shadow of Peter," as he passed by, might "overshadow some of them" (Acts v. 15). And still the old friendship lasts. Peter and John go up together to the temple, together stand before the council. For a time, it may be, the new element brought into the Church by the admission of the "Grecians," or Hellenistic Jews,‡ tended a little to diminish his influence. They could not feel the same confidence in the Galilean Apostle as had been felt by those who had seen and known him during the ministry of his Lord (Acts vi. 1); and the very fact that the whole brunt of the persecution raised by Saul fell not on him, but on Stephen (Acts vi. 9, 11), shows at once, both that there must have been a new element in the teaching of the latter, and that he must have occupied for the time a more commanding position among the preachers of the Faith even than the chief of the Apostles. The death of the great martyr, and the dispersion of the greater part of the disciples,§ must have restored the old pre-eminence; and the work assigned to him in the history of Cornelius raised him to a position, if possible, yet more commanding. At Joppa, the great seaport of the South of Palestine, where the crowd of sailors, traders, artizans of other nations, mingled with the Jewish population, living in the house of a man whose calling in the eyes of the stricter Jews was looked on as unclean, his thoughts may well have turned with hope, perplexity, and fear, to the wide Western Sea which spread out before him, and the vision which taught him to think of no man, circumcised or uncircumcised, as "common and unclean," gave him the guidance which he needed. In quite another sense than that which mediæval credulity gave to the words, he had the keys of the kingdom, and, thus taught, he opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles, so wide that no man afterwards, not even he himself, could shut it. It was given to him to be the human instrument of the foundation of the Gentile as well of the Jewish Church. In another than the Romish sense, the Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the Universal Fellowship of Believers, may look to him as to the Rock on which its Lord has built it.

(4.) It would be interesting with an unsurpassed interest to trace step by step the history of the years that followed, but here our materials all but fail us. We see him indeed exposed to the sharp persecution which, under the revived monarchy of Herod Agrippa, and the consequent ascendancy of the Sadducees' faction, attacked the Apostles who had hitherto escaped. We watch what may have been the first step in a life of missionary activity, or more probably of a falling back for a time into the shelter of a hiding-place. Obviously the one great fact, or rather series of facts, in them, of which we should watch the unfolding with absorbing eagerness, would be the relation between the two teachers whose names are foremost in that great period of the Church's history, between the one who was to be known as the "greatest," and him who was content to be thought of as the "least" of the Apostles (1 Cor. xv. 9). Contrasted in many ways, they undoubtedly were from the first. On the one side, a youth and manhood spent in the rough toil of the fisherman and the peasant; on the other, the instruction of the schools of Tarsus, and the full training of a scribe in those of Jerusalem, sitting at the feet of Gamaliel: on the one side, as far as we can gather, a frame indicating strength and energy, a stature that commanded respect, a voice clear and powerful (Acts ii. 14); on the other, a "bodily presence weak," and "a speech contemptible" (2 Cor. x. 10). On the one side, again, not the claim only, but the actual possession of a fuller knowledge of the teaching of Christ on earth, through three years of close companionship; on the other, not the claim only but the actual possession of a fuller knowledge of the mind of Christ as the Lord and Teacher of His Church. In the early stages, however, the contrast did not pass into any real, or even apparent antagonism. In spite of the distrust of the disciples he received the persecutor Saul into his house, as a brother in the faith! (Gal. i. 18) Fourteen years afterwards (years of which we know absolutely nothing of his life or work), when the work of Paul was already coming to be known as wider and

* The two had been together in Gethsemane. Both had gone, John taking Peter into the High Priest's palace (John xviii. 15). John must have been cognisant of, if not an actual witness of the denial; and yet they are once again together, within less than two days, on the morning of the Resurrection. What passed between the two in that solemn interval which the Gospels shroud in silence we know not, but the inference that they must have been together is irresistible.

† Not "child," as in the Authorized Version. The Greek word corresponds to "the Servant of the Lord" in Isaiah xlii. 1, 19; xliii. 10; lii. 13.

‡ Not proselytes from Greek countries, but Jews who were settled in them, spoke Greek habitually, and used the Septuagint or Greek version of the Old Testament. Contrasted with these in the Apostolic Church were the Hebrews, *sc.* the Jews of Palestine, who spoke only or chiefly the Aramaic or degenerate Hebrew of their own country.

§ The fact that the Apostles remained at Jerusalem during this crisis, and could remain safely, while it was in part a proof of their courageous love, shows also that, in some way or other, their teaching was not so directly antagonistic to the system of the Pharisees as that of Stephen had been.

mightier than his own, he was found still faithful to the lesson which the history of Cornelius had taught him. In the great controversy whether circumcision, and with it the whole yoke of Judaism, was to be imposed on the Gentile converts, he gave no grudging or half-hearted support to the cause of which Paul was the great leader, extended to him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, brought forward his own experience, entered his protest against the Judaizing party, as putting a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which the Jewish Christians themselves and their fathers had been unable to bear (Acts xv., Gal. ii.).

Between the council at Jerusalem, and the probable date of the Epistles, our knowledge is still scantier and dimmer. St. Paul is the foremost figure in the Church's work, and all others, even the chief of the Apostles, fall into the background. Here and there we get glimpses of work limited in its range, partly by his acceptance of the "Gospel of the circumcision" as his special trust (Gal. ii. 9), and partly also by the fact that in his mission-work he was accompanied by his wife—like himself no longer young, and unequal, we may well believe, to the more perilous and laborious journeys which marked the activity of St. Paul.* Another influence, however, was at work only too successfully, which tended at once to give him a spurious prominence, and to reduce him, so far as it operated, to a real insignificance. The converted Pharisees, who had brought their Phariseeism into the Church of Christ (Acts xv. 5), the Judaizing party who dogged the footsteps of St. Paul at every turn, slandering his character for truth and purity and consistency and common honesty (2 Cor. i. 17; vii. 2; viii. 20; xi. 12; Gal. i. 10), undoing, as far as it was possible for them to undo, his work, were at this time making desperate efforts to claim St. Peter as their leader. Emissaries from that section of the Church appeared in Galatia and at Corinth, speaking in the name of Cephas, claiming themselves to be special delegates,† clothed with extraordinary power, from the foremost of the Twelve. It was easy to represent this recognition of the Church of the Circumcision as the region of his own activity as showing a want of sympathy with St. Paul's work among the Gentiles, his own adherence to the customs of Moses as a protest against the conduct of one who became to those that were without the Law, as without the Law himself. So accordingly it was that the cry, "I am of Cephas," was heard among the party-watchwords in wild debate at Corinth (1 Cor. i. 12). It lies in the nature of all party warfare, that those who thus used his name would try to force him into accepting the position which they thus assigned to him. They would repeat to him every slander against the rival teacher, which they circulated among the churches. He would hear as James heard, that the Apostle of the Uncircumcision was not only proclaiming to the Gentiles their freedom in the Gospel, but was going beyond the limits marked out by the Synod of Jerusalem, "teaching all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, nor to walk after their customs" (Acts xxi. 21). It would not be difficult for them, by tearing words from the context of thought, or acts from the context of the life, to justify the charge. He had said repeatedly and emphatically, that "circumcision was nothing" (1 Cor. vii. 19; Gal. v. 6; vi. 15), that the Law tended to increase sin (Gal. iii. 19; Rom. iii. 20; v. 20; vii. 7). He had taught men (here, as it might be argued, in direct contravention of the decrees of the Council), that they might without scruple, except in one special case, eat of things sacrificed to idols (1 Cor. x. 27, 28).

It was natural that such resolute persistency should have some result, and for a moment the effect was that of placing the two great Apostles in a real, as well as seeming, antagonism to each other. At some period, probably two or three years after their meeting at Jerusalem, and St. Paul's departure from Antioch on his second missionary journey, and in order, it may be, to fill up the gap left by the departure of so many teachers (Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Mark), Peter came down to the city which was, as it were, the mother of all the churches of the Gentiles, as Jerusalem was of all the churches of the Jews. At that city the disciples had just received the name which has since risen to such a world-wide glory, but which was then comparatively unknown, which was never used by the disciples of each other, or by the unbelieving Jews of the believing, which does not occur once in the whole teaching of St. Paul.* The question which was now at issue was whether he would find in that new name a stronger tie of brotherhood than that of Abraham or Israel, or fall back within the old barriers, behind the old wall of partition. At first he was consistent with himself. He acted as the vision of Joppa and the history of Cornelius had taught him to act. He counted no man common and unclean. He mingled freely with the Gentile Christians, entered into their family life, shared their meals, partook of their *agapæ*, or feasts of charity, united with these feasts the higher Supper of the Lord (Gal. ii. 12). But the Judaizing party, with the reckless and restless tenacity which marked their policy, were determined to counteract this protest against their own exclusiveness. Whether those who came as delegates from James were abusing his name as they had done once before (Acts xv. 24; Gal. ii. 12), or whether they had so far worked on him as to draw from him the expression of some wish, forgetting the different circumstances of the two churches, that Peter at Antioch would follow the same line of action as he was following at Jerusalem, we do not know. In either case it might have been plausibly argued that there was no inconsistency with

* May we not trace an unconscious embodiment of his own experience in the words which bid husbands to "give honour unto the wife as unto *the weaker vessel?*"—(1 Peter iii. 7; comp. 1 Cor. ix. 5).

† "The very chiefest Apostles." There is a touch of sarcasm in the phrase. "The envoys extra-ordinary" of the Mother Church at Jerusalem (2 Cor. xi. 5; xii. 11).

* "The disciples were called *Christians* first at *Antioch*" (Acts xi. 26). It was natural, therefore, that there chiefly the persecution to which the Church was exposed should first turn upon the *name* so given, and in St. Peter's words, "If any man suffer *as a Christian*, let him not be ashamed" (1 Peter iv. 16), we may see the natural result of that residence in Antioch which we learn neither from his own Epistles nor yet from the Acts, but only from St. Paul's incidental mention of it in Gal. iii. 11.

the decrees of the Council, that the Gentile converts were left free to do as they liked in all things morally indifferent, that the Law was recognised as binding upon Jews only. The result of the argument, and of the real or alleged authority of James, was to throw Peter into a state of melancholy vacillation. The scene in the gateway of the High Priest's palace was acted over again, and the Apostle who had been bold before the danger came, or when backed by a numerous following, shrank from standing alone against the violence and yells and anathemas of the Judaizers. "Fearing them of the circumcision, he separated himself," and by that single act undid his former work, went backwards to a standing-ground that he had forsaken, built again the things that he had destroyed, helped, so far as in him lay, to make the chasm between the Jewish and Gentile Churches wider and more lasting.

Such was the position of the two parties at Antioch when Paul arrived there, probably during the journey briefly mentioned but not narrated in Acts xviii. 22.* He saw at once, with his wonted clearness of insight, all that was at stake, and resolved once more, as before in the case of Titus, "to give way by subjection, no, not for an hour." (Gal. ii. 5.) To do so would have been to acquiesce in a condemnation of his own conduct, to sanction a lasting division between the Jewish and Gentile Churches, to make the glorious reality of a Church Universal, the brotherhood of mankind in Christ, an unattainable ideal. He found public feeling outside the narrow limits of the party which St. Peter was identifying with the Church, strongly against him,† but no one, it would seem, had as yet ventured to stand forth in open opposition to the Apostle to whom the keys of the kingdom of heaven had been entrusted, to the rock upon whom the Church was to be built. Yet so skilfully had the faction played its part, professing here at least to recognise the rights of the Gentile believers, and taking their stand on what all had agreed to as a compact, that even "Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation" (Gal. ii. 13). Unconscious of any inconsistency, perhaps priding himself on returning to the same ground that he had occupied before, he too withdrew from those with whom he had lived previously in closest bonds of brotherhood. It was a crisis that called for the spirit of an Athanasius or a Luther, and that spirit was found in St. Paul. Regardless of all the prestige of authority that gathered round the great name of Peter, regardless for the time, though not forgetful, of the great work which he had done for the Church of Christ, he "withstood him to the face before all." He and those who acted with him were "not walking uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel" (Gal. ii. 14); were dwelling on the words of a compact with the hair-splitting dexterity of casuists, not entering into the heart and spirit of the life of brotherhood in Christ. With sharp burning words he pressed home the charge of inconsistency against the great Apostle. "If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews" (Peter continued, it would appear from this, to adhere to the letter of the vision at Joppa, while he lost sight of its significance, eating meats which the Jew would look on as unclean, yet shrinking from the society of the uncircumcised as polluting, or at least unfitting for him) "why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" This was the real question at issue. It was easy to say that the Gentiles were left free, that the yoke of the Law was not imposed on them; but in reality they were brought under a coercion of the most stringent kind. They were practically told that the adoption of Judaism was the condition of their communion with the Church of the Apostles. Without this, there might indeed be a formal recognition of their membership in the Church, but practically they would be treated still as members of a different and inferior body, still outside the barrier, still as "heathens and publicans."

What followed this startling antagonism between the two great preachers of the faith, what other scenes brought the great drama of St. Peter's life towards its conclusion, we know not. The silence of St. Luke as to the contest itself, and as to the whole period of St. Peter's history to which it belonged, is every way significant. Writing as the friend and companion of St. Paul, he wrote, we may well believe, what that teacher would have him write,—would not dwell on the momentary weakness and inconsistency of the Apostle whose name had been set up in rivalry with his, would much rather seek to show how it had been given to him to open the door of faith unto the Gentiles, how he had been a chief instrument in assuring them their freedom. The Acts of the Apostles do not profess to give us any full record of the work of the Twelve. Their labours, journeyings, martyrdoms, are left to the dim uncertainties of tradition. We have but the Acts of St. Peter and St. Paul, and even of these only enough to enable us to see how each worked according to the measure of the gift of Christ,—how, in spite of temporary estrangement, they were one in heart and mind, joined in a brotherhood indivisible.

Beyond this, then, our knowledge of the *old age of St. Peter* is traditional and conjectural. All that we can do is to compare the traditions with notices and hints dropped unconsciously in the Epistles, to see how far the one confirms the other, and to indicate the salient points in the closing pages of the life that thus comes to stand out clearly from the darkness.

(1.) There is a probability indefinitely great that at some period subsequent to the scene at Antioch, Peter found his way, journeying probably through the provinces of Asia, to the great Imperial city. There, still accompanied by his wife, and by the disciple who was as his own son by adoption, still true to his calling as the Apostle of the Circumcision, he preached to his brethren of the stock of Abraham, and became not indeed the founder, but in part the organiser of the Roman Church. Difficult as it is to arrive at chronological accuracy, it seems probable that we may ascribe the journey through the Asiatic churches to

* On this hypothesis, more probable in itself than any other, he came fresh from Jerusalem, better informed perhaps than Peter as to the real wishes and feelings of St. James, and the scene on which he dwells so emphatically in Gal. ii. 13, 14, was then of comparatively recent date, and still fresh in his memory.

† Not, as in the Authorized Version, "because he was to be blamed," but "because he had been condemned."

the period of two years and upwards of St. Paul's imprisonment at Cæsarea and at Rome, and his arrival at the latter city between St. Paul's first and second imprisonments. Neither the Acts of the Apostles nor St. Paul's Epistles, nor yet St. Peter's, give any trace of the two having met again. Once, however, it may be they did meet, or stranger and more touching still, knew of each other's presence in the Imperial city, perhaps in the same prison, without meeting. There, as the old legend tells, Peter, seeking to escape the pressing danger, passing out of the gate of Rome upon the Appian Way, saw in vision the same face that had once before turned and looked upon him in the High Priest's palace, and turned back with a new confidence to bear his testimony unto the death.* There, as he passed to the place of execution, "girded" by another's hand, and carried "whither he would not" (John xxi. 18), he turned to the wife who had been so long the faithful sharer of all the chances and changes of his life, and bade her be of good cheer as being an heir together with him of the grace of life. There sentenced to die, not as a Roman citizen, like St. Paul, but as a Jewish malefactor, he too was crucified, choosing, as the legend runs, which art has made familiar, to be nailed to the cross, not as his Lord had been, but with his head downwards.

The Epistles confirm much that tradition thus reports to us. "She that is at Babylon saluteth you" (1 Peter v. 13). Of the three views which have been taken of this passage, that which rests on by far the strongest grounds is that which sees in "Babylon" not the old half-desolate city on the Euphrates, nor a town of the same name in Egypt, but the mystical name of Rome. The language of the Apocalypse shows how familiar such hidden meanings were, how natural it would be to the Asiatic Christians to understand that by it was meant the new Babylon, the mistress of the nations (Rev. xiv. 8, xvi. 19, xvii. 8).† If, as seems probable enough, we see in the Revelation of St. John the great ingathering of prophecies and visions that had before been presented singly, we may well believe that St. Peter's use of the words was significant. He taught the believers of the dispersion, *i.e.*, chiefly the Jewish converts, to look forward to a judgment upon the city of the Cæsars as searching and overwhelming as that which had broken up the vast monarchy of the Chaldæans. In this case, therefore, we have in the Epistle what coincides with the tradition; and the mention, not of *the Church*,‡ but *of the woman, that was elect with those to whom she sends her greeting, adds yet another* link. She, her husband's companion in travel, might well send a salutation to those whom she had known, whose wives and daughters she had probably taught to aspire after a higher and purer life, to whom she had presented a type of womanhood as yet new and strange to them.* The mention of Mark, whom St. Paul's Epistles show to have been at Rome during his first imprisonment (Col. iv. 10, Philemon 24), and of Silvanus, his friend and fellow-worker, not under the Hebrew name by which Peter had once known him (Acts xv. 22, 32), but under its new Latinised form, leads to the same conclusion.

(2.) To this period of his life also we may assign, without much risk of error, the work which a very early tradition ascribes to him of putting on record, through St. Mark's help as an interpreter and amanuensis, what he remembered and thought it right to publish of his Lord's work and teaching. To trace the internal evidence of that origination of the Gospel which bears St. Mark's name—to show the signs of a vividness of perception and the otuches of graphic power which indicate the testimony of an eye-witness, before whose mind the old past was living once again—to point out the hundred points of contact between that Gospel and the Epistles of St. Peter—will be the subject of a separate study. Here we can only point to words in the Epistles which fall in with the tradition, as indicating something like the purpose which was in this manner carried into effect. These we find in close connection with his recollections of the past, of the vision on the Mount of Transfiguration, of the last recorded scene on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Once and again we have the words, "I will not be negligent to *put you in remembrance* of these things. . . . . Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up *by putting you in remembrance.*" Yet further, "Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to *have these things in remembrance*" (2 Peter i. 12—15). Would not this purpose ripen naturally into act, and lead him to place on record the acts and words which would help to convince others, as they had convinced him, that he had not followed "cunningly devised fables"?

(3.) But at some time or other in this period of his life we must think of him as coming into contact for the first time with what must have been a new treasure of wisdom and knowledge, equivalent almost to a new apocalypse of truth. During the thirty years or so that had passed since the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, the two, as we have seen, had but seldom met. True, he had once heard in brief outline the substance of the Gospel which St. Paul preached to the Gentiles (Gal. ii. 2). True, he had publicly recognised his teaching and his work; but, after this, there had been an interval of separation and distrust, for a time, of actual antagonism, brought about, as we have seen, by ignorance and misrepresentation. During all those years, the only time in which he listened to St. Paul's voice was when it spoke in sharp reproof at Antioch. We have no reason to think it likely that any of St. Paul's Epistles would at that time come within his reach. But two indeed of those now extant were then written. But now, in his old age, he came in contact with Silvanus, who

* The legend may possibly find a partial confirmation in 2 Peter i. 14. The life of St. Paul gives us repeated instances of this personal manifestation of the Lord's presence (Acts xviii. 9; xxii. 18; xxiii. 11). St. John had a like vision in Patmos (Rev. i. 13). Was it strange that the same should be given to St. Peter?

† So in later Rabbinic writings Edom is the received synonyme for Rome, possibly because Babylon had been preoccupied, as it were, by Christian writers. So, even in the time of Jeremiah, prophecies against the historical Babylon were conveyed, by a strange use of cypher-writing, through the otherwise unmeaning name of Sheshak (Jer. xxv. 26; li. 41.) So, also, Rahab had been the prophetic name for Egypt (Ps. lxxxvii. 4, lxxxix, 10; Is. li. 9: and (in the Hebrew) xxx. 7); and Jareb of the King of Assyria (Hos. v. 13, x. 6).

‡ The word "Church," as the italics show, is interpolated by the translators.

* Here again, as before, we are free to trace a personal element in Peter iii. 1—7.

for years had been St. Paul's companion, who was joined with him in the salutations to the churches of Thessalonica, who possibly acted as his amanuensis in writing the Epistle to the Romans.* From him, therefore, Peter may well have obtained a copy of some at least of the great Epistles in which the teaching of the Apostle of the Gentiles has come down to us for an everlasting possession.† Can we not picture to ourselves the flood of new feelings and thoughts which would rush in upon his soul as he sat and read them? Delight to find a heart that beat so entirely in unison with his own, loving Christ as he himself loved Him, a truth essentially the same, though presenting here and there different phases, and including "some things hard to be understood," a new warmth of affection towards the "beloved brother Paul," who, when they last met, had reproved him so sharply—wider thoughts, it may be, than he had had before known as to the mystery of Christ and the hidden symbolism of the types and shadows of the Law,—all these are traceable in his Epistles; and this also, *the influence of the teaching of St. Paul on the mind of St. Peter*, will well repay a distinct and full inquiry.

(4.) Lastly, we must not forget that in every church which he visited he would come under the influence of men speaking by special inspiration, of prophets dwelling fully and in burning words on the sufferings that were coming on the Church and on the glories that were to follow,—glories which they saw as certain in the far horizon, and which to them seemed near and coming quickly, as men count nearness and quickness. One who heard such words again and again, and was persuaded of their truth, could not remain indifferent to them; and yet it might well be that words true in themselves might excite in men's minds unfounded hopes, and so expose them to disappointment and derision. It was needful for him, in the last words of counsel which he, an elder, sent forth to his brother elders, to speak distinctly as to the nature, office, limits of the "prophetic word."

With such fruits fresh gathered into the garner of his old age, with a mind illumined at once by a long experience and by the guidance of the Spirit of Truth, soaring far above the strife and contention with which faction and party had sought to identify his name, looking back upon the past, to the days when his Lord had been with him upon earth, and he saw his glory and listened to his words, looking forward to the time as already near when he would have to put off his tabernacle as that Lord had showed him,—all the feara nd vacillation and self-confidence of the natural man, the Simon Bar-jonah, having passed away,—the true Peter, at last worthy of his name, sends forth the great encyclical Epistles which were then the stay and bulwark of the Church against the hosts of dark and dangerous errors, and which continue to give light to all seekers after truth, and comfort to all penitents and mourners.

E. H. Plumptre.

* Tertius, equivalent in meaning to the Hebrew Silas, has been by some writers identified with Silvanus (Rom. xvi. 22).

† Possibly also of some that have not come down. We have no Epistle from St. Paul to the Churches of Pontus, Cappadocia, and Bithynia, yet St. Peter speaks of letters written to them. The extant Epistles to the Galatians and Ephesians treat but scantily of the subjects in connection with which he mentions St. Paul's teaching (2 Peter iii. 15).

HOW THE MINISTER COMFORTED HIS CHILDREN.

The busy village of Frieden looked as bright as the morning sunshine always made it. It was a new village, that had been made by a few years' run upon the mines; but already it wore a picturesque and sober air, that was owing partly to the houses being built of wood and painted with a rich deep brown, and partly to its comfortable irregularity and its care to avoid having the appearance of a street. The smoke curled at a hundred points out of the thick beech wood, and a hundred mazy paths were worn over the grass. A group of roofs might be sometimes seen across a meadow, or a clearing with children playing before the doors, and at one angle the buildings approached so closely to the rough rutted mountain road that they made almost a street corner. Yet idle and vagrant as such a town might look now, it was a pushing, energetic place three hundred years ago, and, as the folk said, "as new as fire." Men grew rapidly rich in Frieden. The gossips could tell how Hans—Ugly Hans he was called—had come in one evening with nothing but a pickaxe over his shoulder, though now they took off their caps to him as he passed; and how Dirck, the grocer's apprentice, was become the Burgomaster; and the old gentleman, muffled in furs, had been nothing but a lazy cowherd; and how Wurtz, the poor orphan boy, had just finished the great house that stood where the solitary mill-wheel turned thirty years before.

The Minister used to preach against riches, but people got rich notwithstanding, and went to the great wooden church to feel how rich they were. And besides, they liked the Minister. He was a man of great wisdom, simplicity, and love. He knew them, and preached to them as if he had been one of themselves. The miners sang his hymns in their pits and round their smelting fires; the charcoal burners sang them in the woods; on Sunday little groups would come winding down the hillsides and sing them up to the very church door; and sometimes the Minister's heart would run over as he heard the lusty, joyous way in which they lifted up his psalms in the service. The Minister's house stood at one end of the village, under the shadow of the squat wooden spire. The people had built it for him, and for many a year the Minister and his wife had passed in and out of its ivy porch. The poor liked them with all their heart; and the rich could not always forget that they had been poor. Beyond the occasional rudeness of a

churchwarden, and once or twice the panic fear of a failure in the mines, life had been easy and sweet to the good man. Too many of his parishioners would still sit on the alehouse bench; rough oaths would still be heard from rougher men; but there were more readers for the little library he had collected with infinite pains in the Town Hall, more households where God was feared; the misconduct came from strangers who had not settled down to the ways of the place, and the quiet of the dark woods and solemn hills that brooded over Frieden seemed to have crept into the simple daily ways of its people.

Then the Minister's wife sickened and died; the bier passed out through the tangled ivy; and from his window the Minister could look down on the soft swell of grass where he had buried his heart, and watch the shedding of the hawthorn blossoms and the whirl of withered leaves.

It was two years since then. The sun shone before every door, the blue smoke rose softly over the trees, the children laughed and raced as they trudged to school, the tinkling of the cowbells dropped merrily down from the upland pastures, and bluff, cheery voices came and went over the hillsides. Only the Minister's house was sad and still. "We will visit the grave to-day, my children," the minister had said, and had called them into his little study. Great books in well-stamped pigskin bindings lay on the oaken table and on the window settle. On the wall a portrait of Martin Luther, by Lucas Cranach, hung opposite another portrait with the sweetest eye and a gentle mouth. The painter had spent a week once in the parsonage, and had left behind him in remembrance this sketch of its mistress. Underneath it was framed a copy of verses on marriage, written in a cramped and delicate hand, one of her husband's poems that she had copied and that he had found among her papers. Six of the children sat themselves round the room; the Minister took the seventh upon his knee. Before him lay the first German Bible, open at the eleventh chapter of the Gospel of John. "She is not dead, but sleepeth," he said as his eye fell upon the page and then glanced tremulously up to the sweet face against the wall. He was struggling to command himself. "I have brought you here, dear children, to speak to you about your mother, and that you may never forget her, nor think when we walk to the grave that she is there only: for she is with Jesus and all the saints.

"Your dear mother left behind her the testimony of every one in this congregation, that she was a god-fearing, faithful, and Christian woman, who loved and honoured the Son of God, his Word, and his servants. You know as well as I that she never avoided a sermon, and carried her Psalter with her to the church, and read it eagerly at home. Moreover, she would speak of what she heard, and indeed wrote out with her own hand all the sermon of the Lord at the Supper, and the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, which I have laid aside as a treasure for you, my dear little daughter, that you may think of your dear mother who nursed you but six days. O what a busy hearer she was! The text that was expounded she always had open before her. And you, my son, will think of this, that after dinner she read the entire Bible aloud to me, in her clear simple way, three times.

"I must recal for you, children, what I have heard she said when her parents had proposed a husband to her; for she prayed in her own room to God:—'Dear Father, send me one who hath love for thy Word, for I am convinced that for thy sake he will continually love me.' Oh, how often have I heard her passionately thanking God that He had thought her worthy of honour and had made her the handmaid and partner of his servant! For she always remained a rib in our marriage, and never became head. I think how often she has comforted and invigorated me out of the Word of God when I was in necessity and tribulation; how she has warned me that even for our children's sake I should do nothing against God, his Word and my conscience; God her faithful God, would not leave her. When I think of this, my heart melts within me. Willing and ready she was to have gone with me to the end of the world, if there had been need. But God wished to draw her out of this present misery, as indeed her heart had said to her two years previously. She was much shocked and grieved about her dear sister who died in her first week, so that she had heavy and anxious dreams. Thereafter didst thou, my poor dear little Caspar, cause her much trouble and sorrow when God for our sins' sake had placed his mark upon thee in the womb. From that time all her courage and joy disappeared, and she was filled with dying thoughts. Like a true prophetess she often announced to me her death, and passionately comforted me, and always said, 'You are more useful here to God, his Church, and our children, than I,' until at last she lay abed with thee, my darling, and when she had rejoiced over thee until the morrow, fell into a burning fever, that by the will of God carried her away in eight days. Meanwhile, like a Christian and devout wife, she committed her affairs to her God, and many times would comfort me, saying: 'How can you look so? Hath not God taken home the beloved wives of your good friends, and they are not lost? You will find me again. You have prayed for an heir, that our God would leave one of his servants behind you. And now hath God bestowed on you and me seven children, in whom you may see your and mine, and my dear father's and brother's, and your mother's and sister's likeness, whom let them be commended to you for Christ's sake and mine, for God will be with you and them, and soon bring us again together.'

"At last, as her pain increased and her strength was weakened, she thanked God who had called her to the knowledge of the Gospel, and kept her therein until the end; and then she blessed me, and committed her poor soul into the faithful hands of the Son of God. When her mother asked her to whom she would commit her seven little children? she replied, with an earnest sigh: 'To my faithful God and my dear husband.'

"On the seventh day, when she felt the weakness of her head, she said, 'O God, if it were thy will, I would willingly fall asleep, soft and still. Dear Lord

Jesus, comfort me by thy Spirit, and uphold me by thy Word, and receive me in a happy hour, as Thou didst receive the spirit of St. Stephen.' Thereupon she lay some hours, and died out like a candle. God grant her, and all faithful souls, joy in the kingdom of heaven, and a speedy resurrection ; and vouchsafe also to me and all mine such a blessed and Christian death ! Amen.

"I relate all this so that you may not carry a doubt that your dear mother is departed in God, and lives in God, in blessed rest and peace, and that you may not do her the dishonour and shame of fancying that we should redeem her out of purgatory. It is a poor honour to the dead when their heirs believe them to be prisoned, wicked, and tormented folk. God preserve all saints from such honour ! Our mother is at peace, has everlasting light, and lives in God. We believe that, because of God's Word, and her own confession and happy departure ; and, therefore, we will not do the blood of the Son of God, and our dear mother, the dishonour of thinking that Christ's blood has been lost to her and is powerless, and that she is a tortured and imprisoned mother. For it must come to great dishonour of the Son of God and his precious blood and perfect sacrifice, if we set about redeeming a believing man from sin and pain by human works and sacrifices. The Son of God has come into the world : to lead sinners to repentance, and to save all from guilt and pain who hold to Him by a personal faith. Wherefore, whosoever would bethink himself of other mediator, ransom, offering, and intercession, is robbing the Lord Jesus of his divine glory.

"This sure and comfortable doctrine you are to preserve all your life, and to hold all contrary doctrines in abhorrence. Whoso believeth in the Lord Jesus, and by the mercy of God is sprinkled with the blood of the Son of God and renewed through the Holy Ghost, and abideth in faith by the Word of God, and in patience and in a good conscience, he is happy, and hath eternal life, and doth not come into condemnation, nor dare suffer aught more after death. For the blessed angels carry such faithful souls into the bosom of Jesus, as they carried Lazarus. But whoso dieth in guilt, and unbelief, and contempt of God's Word, and without brotherly love and a good conscience, is tormented under the wrath of God, and can find no ransom. Wherefore it is the greatest honour that a husband can show his believing wife, or a child its believing mother, not to doubt of her salvation, and therefore so to live always that we may appear with honour at the last day, before God and our kindred.

"And now, since you have often heard how children should love and honour their parents, I will tell you how you ought to love and honour your dear mother, and my true companion, now passed into the grave and the hidden life.

"Greater honour and obedience you cannot show to your dear mother, than, before all things, to fear, love, and trust your Heavenly Father who has created you, and given you body and life from ours ; and with all your heart to love and honour and call upon His beloved and obedient Son that hath redeemed you from death by His precious blood, and hath made you children of God ; and that by the Holy Spirit you obey the most worthy Gospel, and willingly learn in God's Word, and pray with a true heart, and be diligent in study as baptised and sanctified children and royal priests of our dear Father in Heaven. For this is pleasing to our blessed God, and to the blessed angels, and to all the host of Heaven, and to your dearest mother, as Solomon saith—*Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.* You can give no greater joy and honour to me who am yet in this mortal and sinful life, than when you walk blameless, and are pious and industrious. Shall it not then give joy and comfort to a sainted mother when she knows it in God, or hears from the blessed angels, or at the last day will learn it, by your commendation from the Son of God, that after her death you have remained steadfast Christians ?

"For the piety of children, and whatever is done in true knowledge and heartfelt trust of the Son of God, and after the will of our Father in Heaven, is kept no secret, but God and all the heavenly hosts see it and magnify it, and rejoice thereover (Luke xv.). Nor can anything evil remain secret : but God and our angels see it and lament it, with grieved hearts.

"Moreover, you will do your mother great honour and gladness if with your heart you love and worthily honour me, her dearest husband and your true father, even as she did when she was with me in the body. You may partly remember how she directed all her faculties and thoughts to do whatever was loving and pleasing to me. If you are like her, not only in figure and feature, but also in love and obedience, you will be welcome when she will see you again on that day. Therefore bethink yourself that you are to be like your dear mother in her many fair virtues, and that you are not to grieve your sick old father who, as it is, must carry a heart heavy with sorrow, because he has lost his best friend and most precious treasure on earth, next to God and his Word. Abide in unity and friendship : see that ye fall not out by the way, as Joseph said to his brethren. For have you ever heard an ugly or unkind word from your dear mother, or seen in her a rude unseemly gesture ? I can and must say this, in words of simple truth, that she never had a difference with me. She only spoke when she could help to soften and reconcile ; she loved and honoured my friends, was retiring, genial, and pure, and my most faithful chancellor of the exchequer. I mention these things for the sake of the little ones who did not know their mother, or cannot recall her, that you may have her moral and virtuous example always before your eyes. If, as I hope to God and daily sigh and pray, you remain thus among each other and to me, you will best honour your mother as beseemeth pious children, and when I am taken away from you, God will be with you as He was with me, who, after my father's death, was a poor orphan among strangers, and whom He hath graciously kept and blessed for now eight-and-thirty years. For His gentle goodness and rich mercies have been great and innumerable, as Jacob saith. He is the God of the widow and the orphan, as the Holy Scriptures testify, and as many times I have proved ; and He will be father and mother to you

if you continue to obey Him and me, and will follow your dear mother's virtuous example. And verily you do owe this honour and fidelity to your mother, not only for the sake of God's commandment, but because she bore you near her heart, and with pain and anxiety brought you into this world, and with motherly fidelity brought you up in the fear and admonition of the Lord, as long as God left her to me. You will not forget her fidelity, and will often think with yourself: *So that I may be kept an obedient child to my departed mother, and may not grieve her, I will direct my way in the name of Christ, that I may rejoin my mother at the last day with all Christian and childlike obedience.*

"Think, too, what a joy it will be to your mother, and what an honour to you before God and all the heavenly hosts, when you see her at the right hand of the Son of God, saved by His blood, and wearing the unfading crown of which she was made worthy through grace, in her holy and unblemished married life; for in true faith toward God and in steadfast love and fidelity to me, by a holy and modest life, and bearing her cross with humility and patience, she persevered unto the end. That, my beloved daughters, will be a noble mother for you to love, who will walk through the green fields of the everlasting Paradise, with Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Hannah, Elizabeth, and with the honourable and faithful wives of St. Peter and St. Philip, and other blessed patriarchs, apostles, and servants of the Church, and who, I firmly hope, will have by you this honour, that, to the glory of God, she hath borne and suckled a holy Paul or pious Samuel, or modest and virtuous daughters, who will faithfully teach the Word of God in church and school and home. For on that day she will be the happiest mother who has brought up for God a faithful servant and a good child.

"And so the highest honour that a good child can pay his dear mother is to fear God, to be ready to pray, to love the Holy Scriptures, to act rightly and worthily by his aged father, to be modest and gentle, to be truthful, faithful, and quiet, and to bear himself well to his brothers and sisters, servants and neighbours.

"Furthermore, you will remember that pious children not only honour and love their parents while they live on the earth, but also when they have departed in the Lord. The child of God loveth and honoureth his heavenly Father eternally, and doth his will with joy for evermore. Even so it is right and seemly that the children of men, when they love their parents, should retain that love with all reverence for evermore. For it is a pure, noble, and perfect love when a child with his whole heart and will loveth his sainted mother into eternity, and is loved and honoured back again by her. And this love to God and to our parents and neighbours, the Holy Ghost, who is the very love and fire of God, begins in us by the knowledge of the Son of God; and when sin has cooled its heat, and it seems altogether extinguished, He purifies and rekindles it till the little spark that yet glimmers in our lost nature becomes a great fire and ardour of divine love. Preserve this. Love is a part of our rational and immortal soul, and is the very flame of the loving heart of God; and so love dieth not, nor goeth out in the hearts of pious children.

"Therefore since pious children love their parents living, because of God's word, and the will of the Lord Christ; so do they love them also, departed out of this world, and blend their affliction and sorrow with the hope of eternal life, where they will joyfully rejoin their beloved parents. A pious child doth not forget his father, though he be many years away, but hopeth and waiteth for him every hour, and delighteth himself against his return. How then should a child forget parents in the grave, and whose return is much more certain than if his father had made a journey only as far as Prague or Wittenberg.

"And all this I say to you as to those I love best on earth, for you know that your dear mother, to whom God be gracious, hath wandered out of this painful life into the eternal, and lieth now in her rest, hoping with all saints, for the revelation of the Lord Christ, who will call and awaken us out of our earthbeds, and bring us again together in great honour and everlasting joy, where we shall abide to all eternity in perfect love and righteousness. And this I say, you know; that your dear mother hath been sowed in God's acre, and like a blessed grain, lieth buried in the ground; for you four dear elder ones accompanied her to her sleeping chamber. But you must learn and verily believe out of God's word that your departed mother now liveth in God, for as Christ saith (Luke xxi.), God is not a God of the dead, but of the living. And the living God is your mother's God, for she was sprinkled with the precious blood of the living Son of God and redeemed unto eternal life, and hath believed in the living Word of God. Therefore, although our dear mother seemeth to our eyes stone-dead, yet in God's eyes and hands is she living.

"It is true that by the light of reason we cannot understand that the dead are living, but by the light of grace, which is the Holy Gospel, we believe that all who sleep in Christ have their life hid in Him. The Lord Christ is not to be found among the dead, say the angels at the Holy Sepulchre; nothing dead is found in the Lord Christ. How therefore can your mother be dead, having been baptised into Christ's death, and become one of his members? The Holy Ghost calleth all that rest in their earthbeds, them that sleep. But he that is asleep is not dead, as Christ saith of the Ruler's daughter (Matthew ix.) Moreover, we cannot tell how we live, even when we fall into a soft or gentle slumber, or how we have lived in our mother's womb and in our cradle; and yet we live. Even so do we live also in the grave.

"You will, therefore, be altogether sure of this, that although her body is dissolved and your dear mother lieth in her resting place, and sleepeth her soft sleep, yet is she already with Christ. But how she is occupied in that secret and hidden life, God hath not revealed to us, no further than what the Son of God saith of the rich man, and Lazarus the beggar (Luke xvi.). For there it is plain and clear that the unbelieving and condemned man knows that he had yet five brethren alive, and careth for them. Wherefore, if natural brotherly love dieth not nor is ex-

tinguished in a lost soul, shall not a saintly mother keep her mother's heart and faith to her own flesh and blood? And if a mother's heart can never die, the love and reverence of children must likewise be immortal. Men die, but the fourth commandment dieth not, and it requireth the honour and obedience of children, not only upon earth, but also in eternity.

"When the Son of God brings us together in the air from the four corners of the world, shall we not know each other? Shall not the old love and friendship stir and rekindle in angelic purity and a spiritual nature? After his sleep did not Adam know his Eve, who was taken out of his side, and though he had never seen her nor heard her speak all his days? Did not Mary Magdalen know her dear Lord by His voice, and the rich man see and know from afar Ahraham and Lazarus? Therefore, dear children, we shall not only see with our eyes, and know our Redeemer clothed with our flesh (as Job sings, ch. xix.), but you and I will see our dear mother stand at the right hand of the Son of Man, in a new and glorious body and the brightness of heaven, and honour her, and with her enter into the honour and glory of God, and together with her and all other saints enjoy an eternal, angelic and heavenly habitation, in all modesty and blessedness, and far more glorious than when Adam, with his Eve, walked round Paradise naked, and they were not ashamed. For then the natural life will cease, and the spiritual life will commence,—the life which we live together in God like the very angels, in perfect wisdom, righteousness, joy, and immortality.

"You know, my boys, though the poor and blind heathen have not come out of the light of reason to the knowledge of the true Lord of death, who alone can lead the dead out of death's meshes, yet the best of them have the faith that there will be a life after this, where honour and virtue will be rewarded, shame and vice punished, and so the old king Cyrus, when he earnestly blessed his children, spoke to them of another life, and exhorted them to live uprightly, and so as to give him hereafter pleasure and joy.

"But we who walk in the light of grace, which the Son of God hath brought us out of the Father's bosom, can speak with more certainty of the future life. And, therefore, our faith is more certain, our hope more strong, and our joy greater, in that we journey on happy in the Lord, and with joy expect to meet again. On earth there is toil and labour, care and want, and our days are full of sorrow and trouble, and break off like a thread, because for our sins' sake we carry death about our neck. And if sometimes a ray of sunlight glances down upon us, yet are there so many heavy and dark clouds that we can hope for little abiding joy on earth; for every hour and moment we have to expect the bitter death which divides many a joyful marriage, and breaks many a heart with anguish and woe. But on that day when death is overthrown, and mortality swallowed up, and all sorrow barred back into hell, then will there be joy and bliss without end.

"All this I willingly say to you, my dear children, so that I may quench the woe and sorrow in my heart by these passionate discourses and tears of love, and mitigate my sorrows by a hoped-for joy and comfortable thoughts seized from the living Word of God, and may also comfort you so much as may be, and exhort you to all godliness and virtue. I have lost a true treasure and noble jewel, a modest heart, a good and firm friend, and my heart's comforter; although she is not lost, for God hath taken her into His keeping. In these last and miserable times, when even the very truest and best Christians scarcely stand, she is much better guarded by God's hand than by my arm, and I, moreover, am old and mortal, and would have grieved to leave her behind me in misery and contempt.

"Therefore, I prepare myself for a happy journey that I will take, and go back to those I love the best, and for old love and friendship will speak further with her. You, dear children, do also miss your truest and best friend in this world, you, especially, my poor girls. But He who defended and preserved Jacob on his pilgrimage, Joseph and Daniel in their prisons, me and my brothers after the death of our dear father, will also be your God, and will preserve you, dear little daughters, like Esther and the Mother of the Lord, from sin and shame, and give you many good friends, as He richly hath to me."

At this point the Minister's voice grew weak. He had spoken steadily on, though the tears sometimes rolled down over his sallow cheeks. It was like treading upon thorns to go back thus over his great sorrow. His heart would shrink under his words, as if they had been blows. But he did it deliberately. It would be good for his children: it was fitting he should suffer this for them. The elder ones had been wrapt up in their father's story, and were solemn and hushed as if their mother's steps were on the threshold. Lisbeth had been watching a great white butterfly dancing up and down among the hollyhocks, and wondering if she might play with the sunshine on the grass. But Caspar, who had been wishing he might go out and catch the butterfly, had fixed his eyes suddenly upon his father. He heard him speak of going away, and began to cry in a soft, subdued way, looking at him through his tears. The gentle sobbing caught the Minister's ear. He could command himself no longer. They all wept together. At last he continued:

"You are right, my dear children, when you help me to bear, and soften to me my pitiful pain. These tear-drops are pure and loving water, better than all consecrated water, and whereby our heart's sorrows will be soothed and calmed. We hope for the time when the Son of God shall wash away all these tears from us, and change our light affliction into an eternal glory. But because our dear God, and your dear mother, have commended you to my faithful hand and heart, you shall be for both their sakes my very dearest little friends. For I can say with truth, a dear gift from a dear hand. What her true mother's heart begged for you from her dear Lord, that, I trust, you will have as God may help me. I am persuaded also of you, that you will show me back child-like fidelity, and will not desert me in my old age, and will so behave that, next to my beloved Bible, I

Drawn by H. Barnes. Engraved by Swain.

THE PITMAN TO HIS WIFE.

may have all my joy and pleasure in you before death, and through eternity.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and so will the God of all grace be with you, and will provide you with all good. Therefore, *Lord Jesus, Thou dear Son of God, Thou who hast manifoldly blessed me, and saved me from much sorrow, and sent me good friends, I pray Thee from the bottom of my heart, Let my children be commended to Thee and thy grace: sustain them in their parents' faith, let them be blessed vessels of grace that thy name may be praised, and defend them from all false doctrine and heresy; and fetch us in a happy hour out of this misery, and bring us again with honour and a good conscience to our dearest mother. To that may Christ keep us, the only and beloved Son of God in eternity! Amen.*"

And then the Minister took the eldest and the youngest by the hand, and they all went out. The sun was brighter than ever; the air was filled with the merry sounds of life; the good wives bustled cheerfully about their doors, as the little procession wound over the path to the graveyard. It was very simple, and so was the grave. "Great charges and needless pomp show nothing," said the Minister; "but it pleases me well when a mother adorns the grave of her boy and plants it with a little garden of sweet smelling flowers and herbs. There you see a mother's truth that blossoms winter and summer alike, and the true love's roses that never fade. And I would gladly that children so planted out the graves of their parents." They stood by the little knoll. The children spread fresh flowers upon it from their mother's garden. The Minister took off his hat, and read the fourteenth chapter of John; and as they went back they heard sweet voices singing in the fields the old funeral hymn:—

> She lives where none can mourn and weep,
> And calmly shall this body sleep
> Till God shall death itself destroy,
> And raise it into glorious joy.*

THE PITMAN TO HIS WIFE.

Sit ye down on the settle here by me, I've got something to say to thee, wife;
I want to be a new sort of man and to lead a new sort of life;
There's but little pleasure and little gain in spending the days I spend,
Just to work like a horse all the days of my life, and to die like a dog at the end.

For where's the profit and where's the good, if one once begins to think,
In making away with what little sense one had at the first, through drink?
Or in spending one's time and one's money, too, with a lot of chaps that would go
To see one hang'd, and like it as well as any other show?

And as to the pleasure that some folks find in cards or in pitch and toss,
It's little they've ever brought to me but only a vast of loss;
We'd be sure to light on some great dispute, and then, to set all right,
The shortest way was to argue it out in a regular stand-up fight.

I've got a will, dear wife, I say, I've got a will to be
A kinder father to my poor bairns, and a better man to thee,
And to leave off drinking and swearing, and all, no matter what folks may say;
For I see what's the end of such things as these, and I know this is not the way.

You'll wonder to hear me talk like this, as I've never talk'd before;
But I've got a word in my heart, that has made it glad, yet has made it sore.
I've got a word like a fire in my heart that will not let me be,—
"*Jesus, the Son of God, who loved, and who gave Himself for me.*"

I've got a word like a sword in my heart, that has pierced it through and through.
When a message comes to a man from Heaven he needn't ask if it's true;
There's none on earth could frame such a tale, for as strange as the tale may be,—
Jesus, my Saviour, that thou shouldst die for love of a man like me!

Why, only think now! if it had been Peter, or blessed Paul,
Or John, who used to lean on his breast, one couldn't have wondered at all,
If He'd loved and He'd died for men like these, who loved him so well,—but you see
It was me that Jesus loved, wife! He gave Himself for me.

It was for me that Jesus died! for me, and a world of men,
Just as sinful and just as slow to give back his love again;
He didn't wait till I came to Him, but He loved me at my worst;
He needn't ever have died for me if I could have loved Him first.

And couldst thou love such a man as me, my Saviour! then I'll take
More heed to this wandering soul of mine, if it's only for thy sake.
For it wasn't that I might spend my days just in work, and in drink, and in strife,
That Jesus the Son of God has given his love and has given his life.

It wasn't that I might spend my life just as my life's been spent
That He's brought me so near to his mighty cross and has told me what it meant.
He doesn't need me to die for Him, He only asks me to live;
There's nothing of mine that He wants but my heart, and it's all that I've got to give.

I've got a friend, dear wife, I say; I've got a heavenly friend,
That will show me where I go astray, and will help me how to mend,
That'll make me kinder to my poor bairns, that'll make me better to thee—
Jesus, the Son of God, who loved and who gave Himself for me.

Dora Greenwell.

* The minister was a worthy friend of Luther, and the words he used are his own, as he carefully wrote them down for the sake of the younger children.

A BIOGRAPHY IN HALF A VERSE.

It was an honourable testimony which a succeeding generation bore to one of the sages of Greece, that he had brought philosophy down from heaven to earth. Preceding teachers had dealt too much in lofty, abstruse speculation, which, however sublime it might be in itself, did not arrest the minds and touch the hearts of common men engaged in the struggle of actual life. He was recognised as a benefactor of his race, who made the doctrines of philosophy tell upon the ordinary affairs of the world.

Such honour, in measure unspeakably greater, is due to the Bible. It deals, indeed, with the deep things of God; its themes are spiritual mysteries; but while it begins with these, it does not end with these. It handles them as instruments wherewith to awaken a slumbering, and to heal a diseased world. While the upper end of its revelation lies unseen in heaven, the lower end touches the earth at our feet. While its fountains spring under the clouds that conceal the Creator's throne, its streams meander all through this wilderness.

In dealing with the Scriptures, and their great themes, we are liable to fall into error on two opposite sides. We may aim too high, or too low; and equally in both cases miss our mark. If we deal merely with doctrines, however true and noble they may be,—if we do not touch life with them, we shoot above the mark, and our effort proves abortive; if we deal with temporal affairs only, attempting to influence them for good, without rising to heaven for a power to enforce our lessons, we shoot below the mark, and our effort proves abortive. Go to high heaven for your doctrines, but do not abide always soaring there; touch the earth and man with those mighty motives which you draw from the depths of God's eternal counsel. On the other hand, deal plainly, and hand to hand, with the wants of the world; but in order that your labour may not be lost, trust not to the power of your puny arm; ere you get a purchase sufficient to move the sluggish earth, you must for length of lever go all the way to heaven.

In this respect the Bible is a wonderful book; it is altogether unlike every other. It takes you straight to heaven, in order to send you down with greater momentum upon the earth: it gives you a plain task to do with your own hand, but it draws fire from heaven wherewith to animate your heart and nerve your arm. If we miss the way on either side, it is our own fault. That soldier of Jesus Christ who keeps his eye on his marching orders, will always be found in the right place.

Preaching, for example, is addressed, neither to unencumbered angels on the one hand, nor to creatures who are done when they are dead on the other. Preaching is addressed to beings who have an interest in both worlds. It is not merely a meditation on glorious truths about the being and character of God, the beauty of holiness, and the happiness of heaven; nor is it, on the other hand, a struggle maintained by an arm of flesh against the sins and sorrows of humanity. The beings to whom the preaching is addressed belong to both worlds, and the preaching is moulded accordingly. For the fountain of its power, it ascends to the very throne of God, and wields all the mysteries of redemption; but for practical issue, it touches, not now and then, but always, the wants and waywardness of sinful men. Like the atmosphere that hangs over this globe, its upper edge is unseen, unsearchable in the sky; but its under edge goes into every crevice on the earth's surface, and presses on the earth at all times and at all places. Religion comes from heaven, but literally and emphatically it comes to the earth.

The 16th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans has always appeared to me like a gallery of monuments. These are the only pictures of the ancient worthies which the Lord has permitted to be taken and transmitted. Let us be content with their characters as they are embalmed in the Bible, and attempt not to palm upon ourselves and others spurious paintings of their features. Their names are written in the Lamb's book of life within the veil; and written also in duplicate on this document, hung upon the temple gate outside for our use. When they are raised in glory, all men will see how they look; till then, let us be content with these glimpses of their new nature that are given on the page of inspiration.

This record of honoured names illustrates also the love that reigned in the Christian community, and welded all their glowing hearts into one. At Corinth, Paul remembered many of his fellow Christians whom he had met at various places during his missionary journeys; and he conveys a message to each of them whom he knew to be at that time resident at Rome. He names them affectionately and discriminately. He does not say the same thing twice over. Although the care of many churches lay on his mind, his memory readily recalled the name and distinguishing peculiarities of all who had stood out as eminent in the community for love to the Lord, or kindness to the brethren.

That personal recognition and affectionate salutation which was a habit among the first Christians, is fitted to reprove us to-day. How little of cohesion in the Christian community. How little of the attraction of love binding member to member of Christ's body, in spite of differences as to condition of life. I have seen a quantity of long hairs tied together tightly at one extremity, and loose all along the rest of their length, employed for the purpose of experiment in electricity. When an electric current of one kind was sent through the bundle, all the individual hairs crept together, and lay closely clasping each other, as if they had been plaited into one compact cord. When the opposite current was sent through, they opened as if they had been living crea-

tures; each stood out from all, and all from each, till the compact cord became an outspread fan. They separated, moreover, with a thrill and a haste that almost seemed to betoken mutual animosity.

Thus when love from the fountain-head is the current that courses through a Christian community, its members cleave to each other for mutual helpfulness; thus they are strong for trial or work: but when the contrary current of selfishness and pride, springing from the earth, pervades the society, all start off from each and each from all. Tied to each other at one point by ecclesiastical arrangements, they separate as widely as possible, whenever they are free to move; thus they become useless one to another, and feeble before the common foe.

It is quite true that a severe fight of affliction lay upon the Christian brotherhood in those days; and that the persecutions which they endured acted as a mighty pressure to wedge them together heart to heart; it is also true, that ordinarily persecution has had the effect of entwining the disciples of Christ round each other; but all this does not in the least degree excuse the coldness that often prevails in the Church in a time of prosperity. When all around is prosperous, love should not abate, but abound the more. It is due to the selfishness and worldliness of human hearts, that the goodness of God does not in point of fact do more than the suffering of an evil day to melt all the brotherhood into one. In point of fact, when the sun is shining, Christians seem to love each other less; but they might and should at such a time love each other more. Although we notice the fact that times of trial are generally times of mutual love, we must beware of employing it to excuse our coldness.

From this long, bright, variegated gallery (Rom. xvi.), we select one portrait for fuller study. We pause a while before this likeness of a Christian lady of the olden time, that we may consider what makes her character so winsome, and her life so useful: "*Salute the beloved Persis.*"

First of all, it is the portrait of a woman that we find hung up in a place of honour in this monumental hall. In the Christian community woman finds her true place at last. Such a memorial-monument the Lord himself sets up, (Matt. xxvi. 13.) Woman had her right place by God's appointment at the first; and she will have her right place in the general assembly of the firstborn at the end of all; but between the two elevations there was a grievous fall. The fall of our first parents not only brought both low as regards their common relation to God, it also dislocated the relation of the parts, and left the woman crushed and debased and broken off from the man. This dislocation was universal over the world; and it has remained permanent wherever a power from heaven has not interfered. Even in the Hebrew Commonwealth, although her condition was made immeasurably better, the restoration was not complete. The elevation of humanity from the effects of the fall has been accomplished by two stages; these correspond to the stages of Abraham's experience. He was first called out from among his fathers who worshipped idols beyond the flood, and permitted to dwell for a time in a kind of intermediate state, separated for God and by God from communion with idolaters, but not yet admitted into Canaan, and taught the method of serving God. After he had remained for a while in an intermediate territory and in an intermediate state, he was brought all the way into the promised land, and led into God's gracious presence through the offering of a sacrifice. The Hebrew Commonwealth corresponded to that first call of Abraham out from the heathen and nearer to God; and the Christian revelation corresponds to the second period of Abraham's call,—his full emancipation from old slavery, and his entrance into the liberty of God's children.

Woman was in Israel lifted up, and kept up by God's own hand; but still, like the other creatures, she continued groaning and travailing in pain, until Christ came and wholly delivered her from bondage, introducing her into the glorious liberty of the children of God. (Rom. viii.)

Man could not attain a perfect state until woman was again raised to his side. It is impossible to restore perfect health to a human body while one side is under a paralysis. So humanity at large could not be well while one of its sides hung palsied, not a fit support, but a burden to the other.

These are the last times. We have now a constitution and laws that shall, when fully executed, complete the restoration of the race. Christ has cast down the high things, and exalted the low. Especially has He lifted woman from the dust, and placed her by redemption where she was left by the Creator's hand at first, a helpmeet to man; and the benefit from woman's elevation accrues equally to man and to woman. Both sides of humanity were equally hurt by the dislocation; and both are equally blessed by the healing of the wound. Godliness is profitable unto all things, and all persons, and all times. To men and women, to rich and poor, for time and eternity, to be in Christ is great gain.

Women sat at Jesus' feet to learn, lavished gifts in devotion of soul to his person as Saviour, ministered unto Him of their substance, stood weeping at the foot of his cross, embalmed his body dead, mingled with the Apostles in the upper room at prayer, and went forth hand in hand with man in the blessed mission to convert the world. Behold the tokens of the Healer's power! Behold the union of the broken and scattered fragments of our nature! bone coming to bone, and flesh covering them! Behold the preparation and the pledge of the paradise from which sin drove us,—into which Christ crucified brings the transgressor back.

Look now to the character and work of this particular woman.

Her inner life. She was "in the Lord." Hitherto we have been able to keep our footing with comparative ease in shallow water. At this point a single step takes us far beyond our depth. Few and feeble must our words be on this transcendent theme.

The expression "in the Lord" occurs frequently in Scripture. It indicates the new spiritual life through faith in Christ. It is one of those subjects

that are at once very easy and very difficult of comprehension. Nor let any one suppose that this is merely to utter a paradox. Some of the greatest concerns of men are precisely of this character: they are at once most easy and most difficult. Life itself, for example. We who are living know very well what life is; but when any one tries to tell what it is, he soon comes to his wits' end. The exercise of any of the senses supplies other examples. We know very well what taste is, or smell. There is nothing that we know better; but try to explain what they are to one who has not experienced them, and you will find yourself very helpless.

We must fall back on the plain declarations of Scripture: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "Your life is hid with Christ in God." "He is our life who hath made both one." "Abide in me." "I am the vine, ye are the branches," &c. (John xv.) "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Salute such and such persons who were in Christ before me.

When God's holy law is revealed to the conscience, the soul discovers itself undone. "The commandment came, sin revived, and I died." There is a sense of utter ruin,—of death. Cut off from all other hope and ready to perish, the soul turns to Christ, and clings. "God be merciful to me a sinner." In virtue of its own emptiness, the heart clasps strongly to the loving Redeemer, and that strong clasping brings life. Cut off from all other roots, the branch is grafted into the vine, and henceforth grows. This saved sinner lives now, but Christ is his life.

Persis was once an alien, without God in the world; she was a severed branch, preparing for the burning. Now the change in her is complete. She has not only ceased to contend against Christ; she has not only come over to the side of his church; she has not only come near Christ; she is in Christ: the life that she now lives in the flesh, she lives by faith of the Son of God. She hangs on Christ's person and righteousness for favour with God and an entrance into heaven. She walks about among her fellows in conscious union of spirit with the risen Redeemer. When her heart admits hatred and envy, she grieves because these abnormal beatings in her breast touch and hurt and grieve her Lord, in whom her life has its root. When she does any good work, the emotion which stirs her heart and nerves her arm is Christ's love, not only flowing from Christ to her, but out of Christ through her being, as through a member of his body. She bears about with her the dying of the Lord Jesus, and so the life of Christ also is manifested in her mortal body.

Her manifested character: "the beloved Persis." She was a general favourite. It is not only Paul that loves her: the expression carries much more. He spoke to many, of various conditions and tastes, and he spoke to all of this lady as a beloved one. He knew that they all loved her, otherwise he would not have ventured so to characterize her in a public letter to the church. When one of our ministers is long and far removed from his flock, he may send them a pastoral to be read in the public assembly. He may have occasion in that letter to name one or more of the congregation; in naming them he may, if he please, indicate in a word or two their prominent characteristics; but in such circumstances he must confine himself to what is obviously true; if he venture to indulge in some partiality of his own, he will shock the sense of the community, and so destroy at a blow his own credit. It is demonstrable that this lady was loved not by Paul only, but by all who knew her. Her character had gained her the victory, and she reigned as a queen in the hearts of willing subjects.

Here is one result of her inner life. We read of Christ that "in Him was life, and the life was the light of men." She was in the Lord as to her spirit's life, and therefore she was like the Lord in dignified mien and winsome behaviour. The life was light within, and the light shone through a transparent countenance. "Beloved Persis." Christians ought to be amiable. The more of the life in Christ within, the more of loveliness without. A selfish Christian, a peevish, ill-natured Christian, an evil-speaking, censorious Christian, a hard-hearted, close-handed Christian, a scolding, threatening, angry Christian!—these names are enough; I need not pause to explain the sense, for the sound has already conveyed the warning. These expressions are natural contraries.

We are not able in every case—perhaps not absolutely able in any case—to determine whether these and similar carnal dispositions are only blemishes that mar a Christian, or evidence that the man is still unrenewed. None of us can venture to define the maximum of earthliness that is consistent with the life of the soul. But we do not lose anything by this ignorance; perhaps these dispositions may not certainly prove that you have no part in Christ, but these dispositions in you are certainly not marks of Christ. We must get them crucified quickly, and if any one is slack in the desire and effort to cast out these enemies, on the ground that, though not perfect, he is yet safe, that fact is proof that he is still in his sin, and a stranger to the love of Christ. He may be a disciple who has one or more of these failings still hanging about him, but he is not a disciple who is willing to have them hanging about him still, in the hope, that though they mar his holiness on earth, they will not block up the entrance to heaven. No: it is the business of a Christian to be winsome in all his ways, and to be most loved where he is best known.

Up and be doing. Cut off this right hand and pluck out that right eye when they offend the head and mar the beauty of the living member. Show on all sides a beautiful life, that when its beauty becomes attractive, Christ may be honoured.

Her labour. She seems to have done her work alone. In the earlier portion of the same verse, two women are named, who seem to have associated themselves in their labours of love. Indeed, that is ordinarily both the law and the practice of Christian missions. They go two and two, whether men or women, when they go forth to win souls. Everywhere, however, and in all periods, exceptions occur. Some natures are comparatively strong and independent, while some are tender and timid. Tryphena

and Tryphosa, from their names most probably sisters, at all events sisters in the new-born family of God, evidently were accustomed to lean on each other when they had difficult work in hand. When the mission-field is hard, and the mission agents tender, by all means let them go two and two; but where one is fitted by the Lord for her peculiar work, and a work that she is fitted for lies to her hand, she need not waste time waiting for a colleague. If she has a stout heart let her take to the *stey brae* at once; let her go her own way, leaning only on the grace of the Lord, and accountable only to the Master in Heaven. Such seems to have been the character of Persis. She did her work without a companion; perhaps she had bold fearless ways of her own, where it would have been difficult for any sister to follow her. There, at any rate, she stands alone, with her name embalmed in this blessed book till her Lord come again; there she stands, a living soul, a loved woman, and a great solitary worker on the hard field of the world. This is her honour in the meantime until the earth shall give up her dead, and Persis shall get yet a higher praise,—"Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

It was not soft and languid wishing for the good of her neighbours that occupied the leisure of this Christian lady. Nor was it merely such work as she could do with tender hands in a drawing-room, and thus contribute to the stock of a benevolent bazaar. She did not embroider a costly piece of silk, and then arrange a lottery as the means of squeezing the money from frivolous or covetous hands in behalf of a good cause: she did the thing herself. She went to the needy place, and laid herself along the needy person, and pressed with all the might of a strong faith, and all the gentleness of a lovely character, to tear the lost from their sins, and win them over to the Saviour. The word tells us much. It is well translated,—"laboured." It indicates effort that inflicts pain, and entails weariness. It indicates, indeed, the severest toil—the toil which makes subsequent rest needful and sweet. The task was rough, though the hands that plied it were tender.

Ladies need not be afraid: work to which the love of Christ impels you will never mar the delicacy of true feminine refinement. I could name some things much in vogue at present, which do rub too roughly the tender bloom of newly-ripened womanly beauty; but personal contact with the poor, the ragged, the rude, even the wicked of her race, when she seeks them, as Christ did, in order to save, will throw a halo of heavenly light over the graces of art and nature, at once enhancing their beauty, and securing their permanence. Christianity—the Christianity that flows from an inner life in Christ—is at once the best style of manly courage, and the best style of feminine attractiveness.

I think I see this beloved Persis marching through the lanes of the city, with the children casting themselves in her way right and left to catch a glimpse of her eye, or a touch of her hand. When the eye saw her, then it blessed her. She certainly was not effeminate, who toiled hard amid a degraded heathen population, and toiled all alone; she was certainly not effeminate; but she was feminine. She was strong-minded, for she accomplished a great and difficult mission work alone: but she was refined and gentle; for she was, and was known to be, the beloved Persis.

She "laboured much." When once such a heart begins such a work, it is impossible to check its progress. The life-course of such a missionary is like a river: it is always flowing, and the farther it flows the broader it grows.

But her labour from some cause had ceased. We could not have gathered much from the circumstance that the verb is in a past tense, if that had stood alone: but in the case of the pair of sisters mentioned immediately before, Paul seems to have had the means of knowing that their mission-work was still going on. "Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord:"—he speaks of their labour as a present continued act. Referring in the next breath to the work of Persis, he changes the form of expression, and speaks of it as a thing that was. There must have been a reason for this distinction; but it was not consistent with the brevity of this list to state it, however shortly. We cannot with certainty determine which of several causes may have interrupted this devoted woman's work; but we can without much danger of mistake come very near it. Had she been resident in some Greek city when Paul became acquainted with her and her work, and removed only of late to Rome? If this is the cause of the interruption, the interruption will not continue long. She will soon see something to do in Rome, and as soon as she sees it, she will strike in again. When it becomes your meat to do the Lord's work, you will not stand long idle. Or was she now unfit for labour? Has the soldier been borne by comrades wounded from the front? This is not an unlikely supposition. Do you remember that she was a woman, and that she was alone; that she laboured,—toiled, and toiled much; that she toiled not at man's bidding, or for man's praise; that she served not with eye service, taking it easy when none were near; that she toiled not only at the Lord's bidding, but in the Lord—felt her life hid with Christ, and animated for its work on earth by the beating of his love down into her breast,—remember all this, and you may safely conclude that a fervent spirit carried her faster and farther into the toil than the body could safely bear. She may have lived too fast for living long. The spirit may have been so sharp that in its struggle for a larger room it cut the body through. At the time when Paul wrote, Persis may have been promoted from being the Lord's working servant to be his waiting servant. Perhaps she was laid aside from labour, and fit only to pray: perhaps laid aside for that very end, because the Master had need of more hands in that department. Tryphena, Tryphosa, and the rest will go through a great quantity of work: Persis may be needed within the veil, while the multitude are engaged in the more outward form of worship which consists in working. Joshua will win the battle on the plain, if the hands of Moses are well held up on the mountain.

"The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up!"

This is not so rare a thing in Christ's service as a cold and unfair world would make believe. There is such a thing as a labour so heavy and so abundant, as to shorten the labourer's days ; but a zeal like this is by no means the characteristic feature of the Church ; if it were, the whole world would feel the impulse.

This is the time, this the place, for labour ; "there remaineth a rest for the people of God." Here and now, labour is sweeter than rest ; for rest before labour is merely idleness : there and then, the rest will be sweeter, because the labour has gone before it. Alas ! when will even the disciples of Christ learn from their Lord to shift their life-aim from the question, "How much can we GET of perishing riches," to the question, "How much can we DO, in a labour of faith and love, to leave the world better than we found it ?"

WILLIAM ARNOT.

GARDENS AND GARDENING.

IN the Holy Scriptures frequent allusions are made to gardens. When man was created he was placed in a garden to dress it and keep it. In that garden eastward in Eden the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. A mist from the earth watered the face of the ground, and a river flowed through the garden with its refreshing stream. All was then beautiful and perfect. No noxious weeds were there to destroy the fair face of the vegetable creation, or to cause toil and anxiety to the happy pair who were the sole occupants. Ere long, however, sin entered, and death by sin. From the garden of Eden our first parents were driven, the earth was cursed, and brought forth thorns and thistles ; the one causing injury when touched, and the other with the downy appendages of its fruit spreading far and wide a vegetation which choked the growth of useful plants. Now came the sweat of the brow and the labour required for cultivation. Fair flowers still blossomed, but it required the art of horticulture to keep them in vigour and beauty, and to prevent them from suffering from the encroachment of intruders. Still man was gifted with the power of accomplishing this object, and even the cursed earth was permitted to respond to his efforts in the way of gardening. There was a grandeur in the wreck which still showed the wondrous hand of an all-wise Creator, who made man's fall subservient to his high and eternal purpose of salvation and restoration. While God makes his sun to shine on the just and unjust, and gives to all the capability of enjoying external nature, and specially the flowers which deck the mountain side or unfold their variously coloured petals in the pasture, it is to his own people that He gives the power of discerning a Father's hand in all, and of being able to say, If God so clothe the grass of the field, how much more will He care for us, his adopted children, and give us all that is truly good, both for time and for eternity ?

The attention paid to a garden is a good criterion of the character of its possessor ; what Solomon says of the sluggard's field and vineyard, applies to his garden. Nettles covering the face of the earth, tell us that the tenant is careless and lazy, or that his place is vacant. How many tales do these nettles, these garden weeds, tell ! They follow man in his peregrinations all over the world, and the place he once occupied is indicated by their presence. The Prophets speak of deserted palaces and fortresses as covered with nettles. Look at the Bass-rock, where once a garden smiled, and where still some garden-flower, such as Narcissus, remains to mark its locality ; there we find a profusion of nettles, with their poisoned stings inflicting wounds on the passers-by. On that rock-prison of the firm Covenanters—the Bass, in the Firth of Forth—there was a garden on which, no doubt, the sainted Rutherford and others looked during their days of bondage. How many thoughts would not the flowers, when blooming in the free air of heaven, suggest to them of God's providential care, while they were condemned to inhabit the dreary prison cell for their adherence to the truth as it is in Jesus. They knew that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of the lilies, and they felt that their Heavenly Father had provided for them a brighter and more kingly robe, with which they were even then adorned in their dungeon, and with which they would finally appear before the King of kings, in the free atmosphere of their future home.

Look again at that Highland glen, where once a happy population dwelt, where old and young enjoyed the mountain air, and where, it may be, the sound of prayer and praise arose at the morning and evening Bible-reading : where the sturdy shepherd with his dog tended the sheep on wild pastures, even amidst rain and mist and snow and sleet, and returned to his pleasant home, to be welcomed by the wife of his bosom and the children of his love. What has become of this scene now ? Ruined walls, rooms full of nettles, proclaim the departure of the inmates : no sheep are now beheld, no smiling garden round the cottage, no patches of corn giving greenness to the landscape, and telling the weary traveller that he may expect a welcome. Men desiring to be placed alone on the earth have changed the picture. They wish to be Nimrods or mighty hunters, and the pastoral scene has been exchanged for the deer forest ; the noble deer is protected, not for the enjoyment of beholding it freely grazing on the mountain, but for the rifle practice of the proprietor. Men and women, young men and maidens, boys and girls, sheep and oxen, are all expelled, that there may be full scope for sport. Desolation takes the place of pastoral beauty. Even the hunters for flowers are denied access, and the Alpine saxifrages and gentians are ordered to bloom unseen. Those who would search out in the nooks and crannies of the precipitous rocks the exquisite plants which have been planted there by an Almighty hand, are told that these pursuits must yield to the superior importance of the noble chase.

Surely this was not God's intention when He gave man the ability to study and admire his works, which are sought out by all who have pleasure therein.

The love of flowers and of a garden is inherent in the human heart. Even the hard-working artizan, immured in the closeness of a crowded city, loves to look on the flowers. A country walk on a Saturday holiday is a source of vast delight to the jaded workman whose daily occupation precludes him from such enjoyment at other times. In towns where this privilege cannot be easily secured, much gratification is derived from the contemplation of the growth of flowers at the casement or on the window-sill.

What are the casements lined with creeping herbs,
The prouder sashes fronted with a range
Of orange, myrtle, or the fragrant weed,
The Frenchman's darling? Are they not all proofs
That man, immured in cities, still retains
His inborn inextinguishable thirst
Of rural scenes, compensating his loss
By supplemental shifts the best he may?

* * * * * *

There the pitcher stands,
A fragment, and the spoutless tea-pot there,
Sad witnesses how close-pent man regrets
The country; with what ardour he contrives,
A peep at nature, when he can no more.

The efforts recently made to encourage window-gardening are likely to be followed by a beneficial effect. It was indeed interesting on a late occasion in Edinburgh to behold the floral productions of closes in the High Street and Canongate, noted for their crowded population and forbidding atmosphere. The old iron pot bearing a treasured geranium, the twining plant in its rude wooden or earthenware can, forming its coils around hoops picked up by a cinder-woman among the ashes thrown out in the streets, and numerous other flowering plants, showed the advantage of encouraging the working-classes to care for plant-growing. The posies gathered by the children from five to ten years of age were objects of great interest, and proved that the prizes offered had set the young to collect the beauteous gems which grew wild in the fields, in the meadows, and on the hill-sides; the small collection of named weeds sent by a young boy could not be seen without calling forth sentiments of the warmest sympathy. While the wild flowers of nature or the cultivated plants of the window afford sources of pleasure to the poor, the productions of the garden supply recreation to the rich; thus the floral treasures of the earth contribute to the comfort and gratification of all members of society. In sunshine and shade, in prosperity and in adversity, in the early days of youth, in the vigour of manhood, and in ripe old age, the garden is an object of interest. The philosophers of old meditated in academic groves, and many a man famed in literature and science has derived hints from meditation among flowers.

In speaking of flowers, the poet remarks:—

Everywhere about us are they glowing,
Some, like stars, to tell us Spring is born;
Others, their blue eyes with tarse o'erflowing,
Stand, like Ruth, amid the golden corn.

Not alone in Spring's armorial bearing,
And in Summer's green-emblazon'd field,
But in arms of brave old Autumn's wearing,
In the centre of his brazen shield.

Not alone in meadows and green alleys,
On the mountain top, and by the brink
Of sequestered pools in woodland valleys,
Where the slaves of nature stoop to drink;

* * * * * *

In the cottage of the rudest peasant,
In ancestral homes, where crumbling towers,
Speaking of the Past unto the Present,
Tell us of the ancient games of flowers.

In all places, then, and in all seasons,
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,
Teaching us by most persuasive reasons,
How akin they are to human things.

And with child-like credulous affection,
We behold their tender buds expand;
Emblems of our own great resurrection,
Emblems of the bright and better land.

We do not mean to say that the contemplation and study of flowers in a garden can ever lead us to the true source of permanent peace and joy; such joy and peace cannot come from the contemplation of God's works, they can only be secured by the teaching of the Spirit and the enlightened study of God's Word. The mere knowledge of God's works can never soothe the troubled conscience, nor ease the aching heart in the day of trial. There must be a better foundation, a resting on Him who is the Root and the Branch, the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the valley, and from whom alone all fulness of comfort flows.

In the Song of Solomon the Church of Christ is likened unto a garden whence the richest perfumes flow. The Israel of God are likened by Isaiah and Jeremiah to a well-watered garden, a garden which the Lord shall bless. The times of reviving to the house of Jacob are signalised by the exchange of the myrtle for the briar and thorn: "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." In the final scene as given in Revelation, when the new earth shall be created, there shall be a Tree of Life bearing twelve manner of fruits, and its leaves shall be for the healing of the nations.

When man yielded to the temptation of Satan, it was in a garden; there the curse was pronounced, and there too the Redeemer was promised who was to bruise the head of the serpent. Jesus oft-times resorted to a garden with his disciples. In the garden of Gethsemane our Lord Jesus Christ, God-man, agonised under the hiding of his Father's face, when his sweat was as great drops of blood falling to the ground; there He prayed and poured out his soul in the days of his passion. In the garden Jesus was betrayed into the hands of sinners; and thence he went forth to the judgment-hall of Pilate, thereafter to suffer the accursed death of the cross, and to die, the Just for the unjust, in order to bring us unto God.

J. H. Balfour.

ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BY THE VICAR.

I.

Before I begin to tell you some of the things I have seen and heard, in both of which I have had to take a share, now from the compulsion of my office, now from the leading of my own heart, and now from that destiny which, including both, so often throws the man who supposed himself a mere on-looker, into the very vortex of events—that destiny which took form to the old pagans as a grey mist high beyond the heads of their gods, but to us is known as an infinite love, revealed in the mystery of man—I say before I begin, it is fitting that, in the absence of a common friend to do that office for me, I should introduce myself to your acquaintance, and I hope coming friendship. Nor can there be any impropriety in my telling you about myself, seeing I remain concealed behind my own words. You can never look me in the eyes, though you may look me in the soul. You may find me out, find my faults, my vanities, my sins, but you will not *see* me, at least in this world. To you I am but a voice of revealing, not a form of vision; therefore I am bold behind the mask, to speak to you heart to heart; bold, I say, just so much the more that I do not speak to you face to face. And when we meet in heaven—well, there I know there is no hiding; there, there is no reason for hiding anything; there, the whole desire will be alternate revelation and vision.

I am now getting old—faster and faster. I cannot help my grey hairs, nor the wrinkles that gather so slowly yet ruthlessly; no, nor the quaver that will come in my voice, nor the sense of being feeble in the knees, even when I walk only across the floor of my study. I have not got used to age yet. I do not *feel* one atom older than I did at three and twenty. Nay, to tell all the truth, I feel a good deal younger.—For then I only felt that a man had to take up his cross; whereas now I feel that a man has to follow Him; and that makes an unspeakable difference.—When my voice quavers, I feel that it is mine and not mine; that it just belongs to me like my watch, which does not go well now, though it went well thirty years ago—not more than a minute out in a month. And when I feel my knees shake, I think of them with a kind of pity, as I used to think of an old mare of my father's of which

I was very fond when I was a lad, and which bore me across many a field and over many a fence, but which at last came to have the same weakness in her knees that I have in mine ; and she knew it too, and took care of them, and so of herself, in a wise equine fashion. These things are not me—or *I*, if the grammarians like it better ; (I always feel a strife between doing as the scholar does and doing as other people do ;) they are not me, I say ; I *have* them—and, please God, shall soon have better. For it is not a pleasant thing for a young man, or a young woman either, I venture to say, to have an old voice, and a wrinkled face, and weak knees, and grey hair, or no hair at all. And if any moral Philistine, as our queer German brothers over the Northern fish-pond would call him, say that this is all rubbish, for that we *are* old, I would answer : "Of all children how can the children of God be old?"

So little do I give in to calling this outside of me, *me*, that I should not mind presenting a minute description of my own person such as would at once clear me from any suspicion of vanity in so introducing myself. Not that my honesty would result in the least from indifference to the external—but from comparative indifference to the transitional ; not to the transitional in itself, which is of eternal significance and result, but to the particular form of imperfection which it may have reached at any individual moment of its infinite progression towards the complete. For no sooner have I spoken the word *now*, than that *now* is dead and another is dying ; nay, in such a regard, there is no *now*—only a past of which we know a little, and a future of which we know far less and far more. But I will not speak at all of this body of my earthly tabernacle, for it is on the whole more pleasant to forget all about it. And besides, I do not want to set any of my readers to whom I would have the pleasure of speaking far more openly and cordially than if they were seated on the other side of my writing-table—I do not want to set them wondering whether the vicar be this vicar or that vicar ; or indeed to run the risk of giving the offence I might give, if I were anything else than "a wandering voice."

I did not feel as I feel now when first I came to this parish. For, as I have said, I am now getting old very fast. True, I was thirty when I was made a vicar, an age at which a man might be expected to be beginning to grow wise ; but even then I had much yet to learn.

I well remember the first evening on which I wandered out from the vicarage to take a look about me —to find out, in short, where I was, and what aspect the sky and earth here presented. Strangely enough, I had never been here before. For the presentation had been made me while I was abroad. I was depressed. It was depressing weather. Grave doubts as to whether I was in my place in the Church, would keep rising and floating about, like rain-clouds within me. Not that I doubted about the Church ; I only doubted about myself. "Were my motives pure?" "What were my motives?" And to tell the truth, I did not know what my motives were, and therefore I could not answer about the purity of them. Perhaps seeing we are in this world in order to become pure, it would be expecting too much of any young man that he should be absolutely certain that he was pure in anything. But the question followed very naturally : "Had I then any right to be in the Church —to be eating her bread and drinking her wine without knowing whether I was fit to do her work?" To which the only answer I could find was, "The Church is part of God's world. He makes men to work ; and work of some sort must be done by every honest man. Somehow or other, I hardly know how, I find myself in the Church. I do not know that I am fitter for any other work. I see no other work to do. There is work here which I can do after some fashion. With God's help I will try to do it well."

This resolution brought me some relief, but still I was depressed. It was depressing weather. I may as well say that I was not married then, and that I firmly believed I never should be married—not from any ambition taking the form of self-denial ; nor yet from any notion that God takes pleasure in being a hard master ; but there was a lady—Well, I *will* be honest, as I would be.—I had been refused a few months before, which I think was the best thing ever happened to me except one. That one, of course, was when I was accepted. But this is not much to the purpose now. Only it was depressing weather.

For is it not depressing when the rain is falling, and the steam of it is rising? when the river is crawling along muddily, and the horses stand stock-still in the meadows with their spines in a straight line from the ears to where they fail utterly in the tails? I should only put on goloshes now, and think of the days when I despised damp. Ah! it was mental waterproof that I needed then ; for let me despise damp as much as I would, I could neither keep it out of my mind, nor help suffering the spiritual rheumatism which it occasioned. Now, the damp never gets farther than my goloshes and my macintosh. And for that worst kind of rheumatism—I never feel it now.

But I had begun to tell you about that first evening. —I had arrived at the vicarage the night before, and it had rained all day, and was still raining, though not so much. I took my umbrella and went out.

For as I wanted to do my work well (everything taking far more the shape of work to me, then, and duty, than it does now—though, even now, I must confess things have occasionally to be done by the clergyman because there is no one else to do them, and hardly from other motive than a sense of duty,—a man not being able to shirk work because it may happen to be dirty)—I say, as I wanted to do my work well, or rather, perhaps, because I dreaded drudgery as much as any poor fellow who comes to the treadmill in consequence—I wanted to interest myself in it ; and therefore I would go and fall in love, first of all, if I could, with the country round about. And my first step beyond my own gate was up to the ancles in mud.

Therewith, curiously enough, arose the distracting thought how I could possibly preach *two* good sermons a Sunday to the same people, when one of the sermons was in the afternoon instead of the evening, to which I had been accustomed in the large town in which I had formerly officiated as curate in a proprie-

tary chapel. I, who had declaimed indignantly against excitement from without, who had been inclined to exalt the intellect at the expense even of the heart, began to fear that there must be something in the darkness, and the gas-lights, and the crowd of faces, to account for a man's being able to preach a better sermon, and for servant girls preferring to go out in the evening. Alas! I had now to preach, as I might judge with all probability beforehand, to a company of rustics, of thought yet slower than of speech, unaccustomed in fact to *think* at all, and that in the sleepiest, deadest part of the day, when I could hardly think myself, and when, if the weather should be at all warm, I could not expect many of them to be awake. And what good might I look for as the result of my labour? How could I hope in these men and women to kindle that fire which in the old days of the outpouring of the Spirit made men live with the sense of the kingdom of heaven about them, and the expectation of something glorious at hand just outside that invisible door which lay between the worlds?

I have learned since, that perhaps I overrated the spirituality of those times, and underrated, not being myself spiritual enough to see all about me, the spirituality of these times. I think I have learned since, that the parson of a parish must be content to keep the upper windows of his mind open to the holy winds and the pure lights of heaven; and the side windows of tone, of speech, of behaviour open to the earth, to let forth upon his fellow men the tenderness and truth which those upper influences bring forth in any region exposed to their operation. Believing in his Master, such a servant shall not make haste; shall feel no feverous desire to behold the work of his hands; shall be content to be as his Master, who waiteth long for the fruits of his earth.

But surely I am getting older than I thought; for I keep wandering away from my subject, which is this my first walk in my new cure. My excuse is, that I want my reader to understand something of the state of my mind, and the depression under which I was labouring. He will perceive that I desired to do some work worth calling by the name of work, and that I did not see how to get hold of a beginning.

I had not gone far from my own gate before the rain ceased, though it was still gloomy enough for any amount to follow. I drew down my umbrella, and began to look about me. The stream on my left was so swollen that I could see its brown in patches through the green of the meadows along its banks. A little in front of me, the road, rising quickly, took a sharp turn to pass along an old stone bridge that spanned the water with a single fine arch, somewhat pointed; and through the arch I could see the river stretching away up through the meadows, its banks bordered with pollards. Now pollards always made me miserable. In the first place, they look ill-used; in the next place, they look tame; in the third place, they look very ugly. I had not learned then to honour them on the ground that they yield not a jot to the adversity of their circumstances; that, if they must be pollards, they still will be trees; and what they may not do with grace, they will yet do with bounty; that, in short, their life bursts forth, despite of all that is done to repress and destroy their individuality. When you have once learned to honour anything, love is not very far off; at least that has always been my experience. But, as I have said, I had not yet learned to honour pollards, and therefore they made me more miserable than I was already.

When, having followed the road, I stood at last on the bridge, and, looking up and down the river through the misty air, saw two long rows of these pollards diminishing till they vanished in both directions, the sight of them took from me all power of enjoying the water beneath me, the green fields around me, or even the old-world beauty of the little bridge upon which I stood, although all sorts of bridges have been from very infancy a delight to me. For I am one of those who never get rid of their infantile predilections, and to have once enjoyed making a mud bridge, was to enjoy all bridges for ever.

I saw a man in a white smock-frock coming along the road beyond, but I turned my back to the road, leaned my arms on the parapet of the bridge, and stood gazing where I saw no visions, namely, at those very poplars. I heard the man's footsteps coming up the crown of the arch, but I would not turn to greet him. I was in a selfish humour if ever I was; for surely if ever one man ought to greet another, it was upon such a comfortless afternoon. The footsteps stopped behind me, and I heard a voice:—

"I beg yer pardon, sir; but be you the new vicar?"

I turned instantly and answered, "I am. Do you want me?"

"I wanted to see yer face, sir, that was all, if ye'll not take it amiss."

Before me stood a tall old man, with his hat in his hand, clothed as I have said, in a white smock-frock. He smoothed his short grey hair with his curved palm down over his forehead as he stood. His face was of a red brown, from much exposure to the weather. There was a certain look of roughness, without hardness, in it, which spoke of endurance rather than resistance, although he could evidently set his face as a flint. His features were large and a little coarse, but the smile that parted his lips when he spoke, shone in his grey eyes as well, and lighted up a countenance in which a man might trust.

"I wanted to see yer face, sir, if you'll not take it amiss."

"Certainly not," I answered, pleased with the man's address, as he stood square before me, looking as modest as fearless. "The sight of a man's face is what everybody has a right to; but for all that, I should like to know why you want to see my face."

"Why, sir, you be the new vicar. You kindly told me so when I axed you."

"Well, then, you'll see my face on Sunday in church—that is, if you happen to be there."

For, although some might think it the more dignified way, I could not take it as a matter of course that he would be at church. A man might have better reasons for staying away from church than I had for going, even though I was the parson, and it was my business. Some clergymen separate between themselves and their office to a degree which I cannot un-

derstand. To assert the dignities of my office seems to me very like exalting myself; and when I have had a twinge of conscience about it, as has happened more than once, I have then found comfort in these two texts: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister;" and "It is enough that the servant should be as his master." Neither have I ever been able to see the very great difference between right and wrong in a clergyman and right and wrong in another man. All that I can pretend to have yet discovered comes to this: that what is right in another man is right in a clergyman; and what is wrong in another man is much worse in a clergyman. Here, however, is one more proof of approaching age. I do not mean the opinion, but the digression.

"Well, then," I said, "you'll see my face in church on Sunday, if you happen to be there."

"Yes, sir; but you see, sir, on the bridge here, the parson is the parson like, and I'm old Rogers; and I looks in his face and he looks in mine, and I says to myself, 'This is my parson.' But o' Sundays he's nobody's parson: he's got his work to do, and it mun be done, and there's an end on't.'"

That there was a real idea in the old man's mind was considerably clearer than the logic by which he tried to bring it out.

"Did you know parson that's gone, sir?" he went on.

"No," I answered.

"Oh, sir! he wur a good parson. Many's the time he come and sit at my son's bedside—him that's dead and gone, sir—for a long hour, on a Saturday night, too. And then when I see him up in the desk the next mornin', I'd say to myself, 'Old Rogers, that's the same man as sat by your son's bedside last night. Think o' that, old Rogers!' But, somehow, I never did feel right sure o' that same. He didn't seem to have the same cut, somehow; and he didn't talk a bit the same. And when he spoke to me after sermon, in the churchyard, I was always of a mind to go into the church again and look up to the pulpit to see if he war really out ov it; for this warn't the same man, you see. But you'll know all about it better than I can tell you, sir. Only I always liked parson better out o' the pulpit, and that's how I come to want to make you look at me, sir, instead o' the water down there, afore I see you in the church to-morrow mornin'."

The old man laughed a kindly laugh; but he had set me thinking, and I did not know what to say to him all at once. So after a short pause, he resumed:

"You'll be thinking me a queer kind of a man, sir, to speak to my betters before my betters speaks to me. But mayhap you don't know what a parson is to us poor folk that has ne'er a friend more larned than themselves but the parson. And, besides, sir, I'm an old salt,—an old man-o'-war's man,—and I've been all round the world, sir; and I ha' been in all sorts o' company, pirates and all, sir; and I aint a bit frightened of a parson. No; I love a parson, sir. And I'll tell you for why, sir. He's got a good telescope, and he gits to the masthead, and he looks out. And he sings out, 'Land ahead!' or 'Breakers ahead!' and gives directions accordin'. Only I can't always make out what he says. But when he shuts up his spyglass, and comes down the riggin', and talks to us like one man to another, then I don't know what I should do without the parson. Good evenin' to you, sir, and welcome to Marshmallows."

The pollards did not look half so dreary. The river began to glimmer a little; and the old bridge had become an interesting old bridge. The country altogether was rather nice than otherwise. I had found a friend already!—that is, a man to whom I might possibly be of some use; and that was the most precious friend I could think of in my present situation and mood. I had learned something from him too; and I resolved to try all I could to be the same man in the pulpit that I was out of it. Some may be inclined to say that I had better have formed the resolution to be the same man out of the pulpit that I was in it. But the one will go quite right with the other. Out of the pulpit I would be the same man I was in it—seeing and feeling the realities of the unseen; and in the pulpit I would be the same man I was out of it—taking facts as they are, and dealing with things as they show themselves in the world.

One other occurrence before I went home that evening, and I shall close the chapter. I hope I shall not write another so dull as this. I dare not promise, though; for this is a new kind of work to me.

Before I left the bridge,—while, in fact, I was contemplating the pollards with an eye, if not of favour, yet of diminished dismay,—the sun, which, for anything I knew of his whereabouts, either from knowledge of the country, aspect of the evening, or state of my own feelings, might have been down for an hour or two, burst his cloudy bands, and blazed out as if he had just risen from the dead, instead of being just about to sink into the grave. Do not tell me that my figure is untrue, for that the sun never sinks into the grave, else I will retort that it is just as true of the sun as of a man; for that no man sinks into the grave. He only disappears. Life is a constant sunrise, which death cannot interrupt, any more than the night can swallow up the sun. "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto Him."

Well, the sun shone out gloriously. The whole sweep of the gloomy river answered him in gladness; the wet leaves of the pollards quivered and glanced; the meadows offered up their perfect green, fresh and clear out of the trouble of the rain; and away in the distance, upon a rising ground covered with trees, glittered a weather-cock. What if I found afterwards that it was only on the roof of a stable? It shone, and that was enough. And when the sun had gone below the horizon, and the fields and the river were dusky once more, there it glittered still over the darkening earth, a symbol of that faith which is "the evidence of things not seen," and it made my heart swell as at a chant from the prophet Isaiah. What matter then whether it hung over a stable-roof or a church-tower?

I wandered a little further along the bridge and

along the road. I had not gone far before I passed a house, out of which came a young woman leading a little boy. They came after me, the boy gazing at the red and gold and green of the sunset sky. As they passed me, the child said,—

"Auntie, I think I should like to be a painter."

"Why?" returned his companion.

"Because, then," answered the child, "I could help God to paint the sky."

What his aunt answered I do not know; for they were presently beyond my hearing. But I went on answering him myself all the way home. Did God care to paint the sky of an evening, that a few of his children might see it, and get just a hope, just an aspiration, out of its passing green, and gold, and purple and red? and should I think my day's labour lost, if it wrought no visible salvation in the earth?

Was the child's aspiration in vain then? Could I tell him God did not want his help to paint the sky? True he could mount no scaffold against the infinite of the glowing west. But might he not with his little palette and brush, when the time came, show his brothers and sisters what he had seen there, and make them see it too? Might he not thus come, after long trying, to help God to paint this glory of vapour and light inside the minds of his children? Ah! if any man's work is not *with* God, its results shall be burned, ruthlessly burned, because poor and bad.

"So, for my part," I said to myself, as I walked home, "if I can put one touch of a rosy sunset into the life of any man or woman of my cure, I shall feel that I have worked with God. He is in no haste; and if I do what I may in earnest, I need not mourn if I work no great work in the earth. Let God make his sunsets: I will mottle my little fading cloud. To help the growth of a thought that struggles towards the light; to brush with gentle hand the earth-stain from the white of one snowdrop—such be my ambition! So shall I scale the rocks in front, not leave my name carved upon those behind me."

People talk about special providences. I believe in the providences, but not in the specialty. I do not believe that God lets the thread of my affairs go for six days, and on the seventh evening takes it up for a moment. The so-called special providences are no exception to the rule—they are common to all men at all moments. But it is a fact that God's care is more evident in some instances of it than in others to the dim and often bewildered vision of humanity. Upon such instances men seize and call them providences. It is well that they can; but it would be gloriously better if they could believe that the whole matter is one grand providence.

I was one of such men at the time, and could not fail to see what I called a special providence in this, that on my first attempt to find where I stood in the scheme of Providence, and while I was discouraged with regard to the work before me, I should fall in with these two—an old man whom I could help, and a child who could help me; the one opening an outlet for my labour and my love, and the other reminding me of the highest source of the most humbling comfort,—that in all my work I might be a fellow-worker with God.

II.

These events fell on the Saturday night. On the Sunday morning, I read prayers and preached. Never before had I enjoyed so much the petitions of the Church, which Hooker calls "the sending of angels upward," or the reading of the lessons, which he calls "the receiving of angels descended from above." And whether from the newness of the parson, or the love of the service, certainly a congregation more intent, or more responsive, a clergyman will hardly find. But, as I had feared, it was different in the afternoon. The people had dined, and the usual somnolence had followed; nor could I find in my heart to blame men and women who worked hard all the week, for being drowsy on the day of rest. So I curtailed my sermon as much as I could, omitting page after page of my manuscript; and when I came to a close, was rewarded by perceiving an agreeable surprise upon many of the faces round me. I resolved that, in the afternoons at least, my sermons should be as short as heart could wish.

But that afternoon there was at least one man of the congregation who was neither drowsy nor inattentive. Repeatedly my eyes left the page off which I was reading and glanced towards him. Not once did I find his eyes turned away from me.

There was a small loft in the west end of the church, in which stood a little organ, whose voice, weakened by years of praising and possibly of neglect, had yet among a good many tones that were rough, wooden, and reedy, a few remaining that were as mellow as ever praiseful heart could wish to praise withal. And these came in amongst the rest like trusting thoughts amidst "eating cares;" like the faces of children borne in the arms of a crowd of anxious mothers; like hopes that are young prophecies amidst the downward sweep of events. For, though I do not understand music, I have a keen ear for the perfection of the single tone, or the completeness of the harmony. But of this organ more by and by.

Now this little gallery was something larger than was just necessary for the organ and its ministrants, and a few of the parishioners had chosen to sit in its fore-front. Upon this occasion there was no one there but the man to whom I have referred.

The space below this gallery was not included in the part of the church used for the service. It was claimed by the gardener of the place, that is the sexton, to hold his gardening tools. There were a few ancient carvings in wood lying in it, very brown in the dusky light that came through a small lancet window, opening not to the outside, but into the tower, itself dusky with an enduring twilight. And there were some broken old headstones, and the kindly spade and pickaxe—but I have really nothing to do with these now, for I am, as it were, in the pulpit, whence one ought to look beyond such things as these.

Rising against the screen which separated this mouldy portion of the church from the rest, stood an

old monument of carved wood, once brilliantly painted in the portions that bore the arms of the family over whose vault it stood, but now all bare and worn, itself gently flowing away into the dust it commemorated. It lifted its gablet, carved to look like a canopy, till its apex was on a level with the book-board on the front of the organ-loft; and over—in fact upon this apex appeared the face of the man whom I have mentioned. It was a very remarkable countenance—pale, and very thin, without any hair, except that of thick eyebrows that far overhung keen, questioning eyes. Short bushy hair, grey, not white, covered a well-formed head with a high narrow forehead. As I have said, those keen eyes kept looking at me from under their grey eyebrows all the time of the sermon—intelligently without doubt, but whether sympathetically or otherwise I could not determine.

My vestry door opened upon a little group of graves, simple and green, without headstone or slab; poor graves, the memory of whose occupants no one had cared to preserve. Good men must have preceded me here, else the poor would not have lain so near the chancel and the vestry-door. All about and beyond were stones, with here and there a monument; for mine was a large parish, and there were old and rich families in it, more of which buried their dead here than assembled their living. But close by the vestry-door, there was this little billowy lake of grass. And at the end of the narrow path leading from the door, was the churchyard wall, with a few steps on each side of it, that the parson might pass at once from the churchyard into his own shrubbery, here tangled, almost matted, from luxuriance of growth. But I would not creep out the back way from among my people. That way might do very well to come in by; but to go out, I would use the door of the people. So I went along the church, a fine old place, such as I had never hoped to be presented to, and went out by the door in the north side into the middle of the churchyard. The door on the other side was chiefly used by the few gentry of the neighbourhood; and the Lych-gate, with its covered way (for the main road had once passed on that side), was shared between the coffins and the carriages, the dead who had no rank but one, that of the dead, and the living who had more money than their neighbours. For let the old gentry disclaim it as they may, mere wealth, derived from whatever source, will sooner reach their level, than poor antiquity, or the rarest refinement of personal worth; although, to be sure, the oldest of them will sooner give to the rich their sons or their daughters to wed, to love if they can, to have children by, than they will yield a jot of their ancestral pre-eminence, or acknowledge any equality in their sons or daughters-in-law. The carpenter's son is to them an old myth, not an everlasting fact. To Mammon alone will they yield a little of their rank—none of it to Christ. Let me glorify God that Jesus took not on him the nature of nobles, but the seed of Adam; for what could I do without my poor brothers and sisters?

I passed along the church to the northern door, and went out. The churchyard lay in bright sunshine. All the rain and gloom were gone. "If one could only bring this glory of sun and grass into one's hope for the future!" thought I; and looking down I saw the little boy who aspired to paint the sky, looking up in my face with mingled confidence and awe.

"Do you trust me, my little man?" thought I. "You shall trust me then. But I won't be a priest to you. I'll be a big brother."

For the priesthood passes away, the brotherhood endures. The priesthood passes away, swallowed up in the brotherhood. It is because men cannot learn simple things, cannot believe in the brotherhood, that they need a priesthood. But as Dr. Arnold said of the Sunday, "They *do* need it." And I, for one, am sure that the priesthood needs the people much more than the people needs the priesthood.

So I stooped and lifted the child and held him in my arms. And the little fellow looked at me one moment longer, and then put his arms gently round my neck. And so we were friends.

When I had set him down, which I did presently, for I shuddered at the idea of the people thinking that I was showing off the *clergyman*, I looked at the boy. In his face was great sweetness mingled with great rusticity, and I could not tell whether he was the child of gentlefolk or of peasants. He did not say a word, but walked away to join his aunt, who was waiting for him at the gate of the churchyard. He kept his head turned towards me, however, as he went, so that, not seeing where he was going, he stumbled over the grave of a child, and fell in the hollow on the other side. I ran to pick him up. His aunt reached him at the same moment.

"Oh, thank you, sir!" she said, as I gave him to her, with an earnestness which seemed to me disproportionate to the deed. She carried him away with a deep blush over all her countenance.

At the churchyard-gate, the old man-of-war's man was waiting to have another look at me. His hat was in his hand, and he gave a pull to the short hair over his forehead, as if he would gladly take that off too, to show his respect for the new parson. I held out my hand gratefully. It could not close around the hard unyielding mass of fingers which met it. He did not know how to shake hands, and left it all to me. But pleasure sparkled in his eyes.

"My old woman would like to shake hands with you, sir," he said.

Beside him stood his old woman in a portentous bonnet, beneath whose gay yellow ribbons appeared a dusky old face wrinkled like a ship's timbers, out of which looked a pair of keen black eyes, where the best beauty, that of loving-kindness, had not merely lingered, but triumphed.

"I shall be in to see you soon," I said, as I shook hands with her. "I shall find out where you live."

"Down by the mill," she said; "close by it, sir. There's one bed in our garden that always thrives, in the hottest summer, by the plash from the mill, sir."

"Ask for old Rogers, sir," said the man. "Everybody knows old Rogers. But if your reverence minds what my wife says, you won't go wrong. When you find the river, it takes you to the mill; and when you

find the mill, you find the wheel; and when you find the wheel, you haven't far to look for the cottage, sir. It's a poor place, but you'll be welcome, sir."

III.

The next day I might expect some visitors. It is a fortunate thing that English society now regards the parson as a gentleman, else he would have little chance of being useful to the *upper classes*. But I wanted to get a good start of them, and see some of my poor before my rich came to see me. So after breakfast, on as lovely a Monday in the beginning of autumn as ever came to comfort a clergyman in the reaction of his efforts to feed his flock on the Sunday, I walked out, and took my way to the village. I strove to dismiss from my mind every feeling of *doing duty*, of *performing my part*, and all that. I had a horror of becoming a moral policeman as much as of "doing church." I would simply enjoy the privilege, more open to me in virtue of my office, of ministering. But as no servant has a right to force his service, so I would be the *neighbour* only, until such time as the opportunity of being the servant should show itself.

The village was as irregular as a village should be, partly consisting of those white houses with intersecting parallelograms of black which still abound in some regions of our island. Just in the centre, however, grouping about an old house of red brick, which had once been a manorial residence, but was now sub-divided in all modes that analytic ingenuity could devise, rose a portion of it which, from one point of view, might seem part of an old town. But you had only to pass round any one of three visible corners to see stacks of wheat and a farm-yard; while in another direction the houses went straggling away into a wood that looked very like the beginning of a forest, of which some of the village orchards appeared to form part. From the street the slow winding, poplar-bordered stream was here and there just visible.

I did not quite like to have it between me and my village. I could not help preferring that homely relation in which the houses are built up like swallow-nests on to the very walls of the cathedrals themselves, to the arrangement here, where the river flowed, with what flow there was in it, between the church and the people.

A little way beyond the further end of the village appeared an iron gate, of considerable size, dividing a lofty stone wall. And upon the top of the one of the stone pillars supporting the gate which I could see, stood a creature of stone, whether *natant*, *volant*, *passant*, *couchant*, or *rampant*, I could not tell, only it looked like something terrible enough for a quite antediluvian heraldry.

As I passed along the street, wondering with myself what relations between me and these houses were hidden in the future, my eye was caught by the window of a little shop, in which strings of beads and elephants of gingerbread formed the chief samples of the goods within. It was a window much broader than it was high, divided into lozenge-shaped panes. Wondering what kind of old woman presided over the treasures in this cave of Aladdin, I thought to make a first of my visits by going in and buying something. But I hesitated, because I could not think of anything I was in want of—at least that the old woman was likely to have. To be sure I wanted a copy of Bengel's *Gnomon;* but she was not likely to have that. I wanted the fourth plate in the third volume of Law's Behmen; she was not likely to have that either. I did not care for gingerbread; and I had no little girl to take home beads to.

But why should I not go in without an ostensible errand? For this reason: there are dissenters everywhere, and I could not tell but I might be going into the shop of a dissenter. Now, though, I confess, nothing would have pleased me better than that all the dissenters should return to their old home in the Church, I could not endure the suspicion of laying myself out to entice them back by canvassing or other personal influences. Whether they returned or not, however (and I did not expect many would), I hoped still, some day, to stand towards every one of them in the relation of the parson of the parish, that is, of one of whom each might feel certain that he was ready to serve him or her at any hour when he might be wanted to render a service. In the meantime, I could not help hesitating.

I had almost made up my mind to ask if she had a small pocket compass, for I had seen such things in little country shops—I am afraid only in France, though—when the door opened, and out came the little boy whom I had already seen twice, and who was therefore one of my oldest friends in the place. He came across the road to me, took me by the hand, and said—

"Come and see mother."

"Where, my dear?" I asked.

"In the shop there," he answered.

"Is it your mother's shop?"

"Yes."

I said no more, but accompanied him. Of course my expectation of seeing an old woman behind the counter had vanished, but I was not in the least prepared for the woman I did see.

The place was half a shop and half a kitchen. A yard or so of counter stretched inwards from the door, just as a hint to those who might be intrusively inclined. Beyond this, by the chimney-corner, sat the mother, who rose as we entered. She was certainly one—I do not say of the most beautiful, but, until I have time to explain further—of the most remarkable women I had ever seen. Her face was absolutely white—no, pale cream-colour—except her lips and a spot upon each cheek, which glowed with a deep carmine. You would have said she had been painting, and painting very inartistically, so little was the red shaded into the surrounding white. Now this was certainly not beautiful. Indeed, it occasioned a strange feeling, almost of terror, at first, for she reminded one of the spectre woman in the Rime of the Ancient Mariner. But when I got used to her complexion, I saw that the form of her features was quite beautiful. She might indeed have been *lovely* but for a certain hardness which showed through the beauty. This might have been the result of ill health, ill-

endured; but I doubted it. For there was a certain modelling of the cheeks and lips which showed that the teeth within were firmly closed; and, taken with the look of the eyes and forehead, seemed the expression of a constant and bitter self-command. But there were indubitable marks of ill health upon her, notwithstanding; for not to mention her complexion, her large dark eye was burning as if the lamp of life had broken and the oil was blazing; and there was a slight expansion of the nostrils, indicating physical unrest. But her manner was perfectly, almost dreadfully quiet; her voice soft, low, and chiefly expressive of indifference. She spoke without looking me in the face, but did not seem either shy or ashamed. Her figure was remarkably graceful, though too worn to be beautiful.—Here was a strange parishioner for me! —in a country toy-shop, too!

As soon as the little fellow had brought me in, he shrunk away through a half-open door that revealed a stair behind.

"What can I do for you, sir?" said the mother, coldly, and with a kind of book-propriety of speech, as she stood on the other side of the little counter.

"To tell the truth, I hardly know," I said. "I am the new vicar; but I do not know that I should have come in to see you just to-day, if it had not been that your little boy there—where is he gone to? He asked me to come in and see his mother."

"He is too ready to make advances to strangers, sir."

She said this in an incisive tone.

"Oh, but," I answered, "I am not a stranger to him. I have met him twice before. He is a little darling. I assure you he has quite gained my heart."

No reply for a moment. Then just "Indeed!" and nothing more.

I could not understand it.

But a jar on a shelf, marked *Tobacco*, rescued me from the most pressing portion of the perplexity, namely, what to say next.

"Will you give me a quarter of a pound of tobacco?" I said.

The woman turned, took down the jar, arranged the scales, weighed out the quantity, wrapped it up, took the money,—and all without one other word than, "Thank you, sir;" which was all I could return, with the addition of, "Good morning."

For nothing was left me but to walk away with my parcel in my pocket.

The little boy did not show himself again.

Pondering, speculating, I now set out to find the mill, which, I had learned, was on the village side of the river; and coming to a lane leading down to the river, I followed it, and then walked up a path outside the row of pollards, through a lovely meadow, where brown and white cows were eating and shining all over the thick deep grass. Beyond the meadow, a wood on the side of a rising ground went parallel with the river a long way. The river flowed on my right. That is, I knew that it was flowing, but I could not have told how I knew, it was so slow. Still swollen, it was of a clear brown, in which you could see the browner trouts darting to and fro with such a slippery gliding that the motion seemed the result of will, without any such intermediate and complicate arrangement as brain and nerves and muscles. The water-beetles went spinning about over the surface; and one glorious dragon-fly made a mist about him with his long wings. And over all the sun hung in the sky, pouring down life; shining on the roots of the willows at the bottom of the stream; lighting up the black head of the water-rat as he hurried across to the opposite bank; glorifying the rich green lake of the grass; and giving to the whole an utterance of love and hope and joy which was, to him who could read it, a more certain and full revelation of God than any display of power in thunder, in avalanche, in stormy sea. Those with whom the feeling of religion is only occasional, have it most when the awful or grand breaks out of the common; the meek who inherit the earth, find the God of the whole earth more evidently present—I do not say more present, for there is no measuring of His presence—more evidently present in the commonest things. That which is best He gives most plentifully, as is reason with Him. Hence the quiet fulness of ordinary nature; hence the Spirit to them that ask it.

I soon came within sound of the mill; and presently, crossing the stream that flowed back to the river after having done its work on the corn, I came in front of the building, and looked over the half-door into the mill. The floor was clean and dusty. A few full sacks, tied tight at the mouth,—they always look to me as if Joseph's silver cup were just inside—stood about. In the further corner, the flour was trickling down out of two wooden spouts into a wooden receptacle below. The whole place was full of its own faint but pleasant odour. No man was visible. The spouts went on pouring the slow torrent of flour, as if everything could go on with perfect propriety of itself. I could not even see how a man could get at the stones that I heard grinding away above, except he went up the rope that hung from the ceiling. So I walked round the corner of the place, and so found myself in the company of the water-wheel, mossy and green with ancient waterdrops, looking so furred and overgrown and lumpy, that one might have thought the wood of it had taken to growing again in its old days, and so the wheel was losing by slow degrees the shape of a wheel, to become some new awful monster of a pollard. As yet, however, it was going round; slowly, indeed, and with the gravity of age, but doing its work, and casting its loose drops in the alms-giving of a gentle rain upon a little plot of Master Rogers's garden, which was therefore full of moisture-loving flowers. This plot was divided from the mill-wheel by a small stream which carried away the surplus water, and was now full and running rapidly.

Beyond the stream, beside the flower bed, stood a dusty young man, talking to a young woman with a rosy face and clear honest eyes. The moment they saw me they parted. The young man came across the stream at a step, and the young woman went up the garden towards the cottage.

"That must be old Rogers's cottage?" I said to the miller.

"Yes, sir," he answered, looking a little sheepish.

"Was that his daughter—that nice-looking young woman you were talking to?"

"Yes, sir, it was."

And he stole a shy pleased look at me out of the corners of his eyes.

"It's a good thing," I said, "to have an honest experienced old mill like yours, that can manage to go on of itself for a little while now and then."

This gave a great help to his budding confidence. He laughed.

"Well, sir, it's not very often it's left to itself. Jane isn't at her father's above once or twice a week at most."

"She doesn't live with them, then?"

"No, sir. You see they're both hearty, and they ain't over well to do, and Jane lives up at the Hall, sir. She's upper housemaid, and waits on one of the young ladies. Old Rogers has seen a great deal of the world, sir."

"So I imagine. I am just going to see him. Good morning."

I jumped across the stream, and went up a little gravel-walk, which led me in a few yards to the cottage-door. It was a sweet place to live in, with honeysuckle growing over the house, and the sounds of the softly-labouring mill-wheel ever in its little porch and about its windows.

The door was open, and dame Rogers came from within to meet me. She welcomed me, and led the way into her little kitchen. As I entered, Jane went out at the back door. But it was only to call her father, who presently came in.

"I'm glad to see ye, sir. This pleasure comes of having no work to-day. After harvest there come slack times for the likes of me. People don't care about a bag of old bones when they can get hold of young men. Well, well, never mind, old woman. The Lord 'll take us through somehow. When the wind blows, the ship goes; when the wind drops, the ship stops; but the sea is his all the same, for He made it; and the wind is his all the same too."

He spoke in the most matter-of-fact tone, unaware of anything poetic in what he said. To him it was just common sense, and common sense only.

"I am sorry you are out of work," I said. "But my garden is sadly out of order, and I must have something done to it. You don't dislike gardening, do you?"

"Well, I beant a right good hand at garden-work," answered the old man, with some embarrassment, scratching his grey head with a troubled scratch.

There was more in this than met the ear; but what, I could not conjecture. I would press the point a little. So I took him at his own word.

"I won't ask you to do any of the more ornamental part," I said,—"only plain digging and hoeing."

"I would rather be excused, sir."

"I am afraid I made you think——"

"I thought nothing, sir. I thank you kindly, sir."

"I assure you I want the work done, and I must employ some one else if you don't undertake it."

"Well, sir, my back's bad now—no, sir, I won't tell a story about it. I would just rather not, sir."

"Now," his wife broke in, "now, old Rogers, why won't 'ee tell the parson the truth, like a man, downright? If ye won't, I'll do it for 'ee. The fact is, sir," she went on, turning to me, with a plate in her hand which she was wiping, "the fact is, that the old parson's man for that kind o' work was Simmons, t'other end of the village; and my man is so afeard o' hurtin' e'er another, that he'll turn the bread away from his own mouth and let it fall in the dirt."

"Now, now, old 'oman, don't 'ee belie me. I'm not so bad as that. You see, sir, I never was good at knowin' right from wrong like. I never was good, that is, at tellin' exackly what I ought to do. So when anything comes up, I just says to myself, 'Now, old Rogers, what do you think the Lord would best like you to do?' And as soon as I ax myself that, I know direckly what I've got to do; and then my old woman can't turn me no more than a bull. And she don't like my obstinate fits. But, you see, I daren't, sir, once I axed myself that."

"Stick to that, Rogers," I said.

"Besides, sir," he went on, "Simmons wants it more than I do. He's got a sick wife; and my old woman, thank God, is hale and hearty. And there is another thing besides, sir: he might take it hard of you, sir, and think it was turning away an old servant like; and then, sir, he wouldn't be ready to hear what you had to tell him, and might, mayhap, lose a deal o' comfort. And that I would take worst of all, sir."

"Well, well, Rogers, Simmons shall have the job."

"Thank ye, sir," said the old man.

His wife, who could not see the thing quite from her husband's point of view, was too honest to say anything; but she was none the less cordial to me. The daughter stood looking from one to the other with attentive face, which took everything, but revealed nothing.

I rose to go. As I reached the door, I remembered the tobacco in my pocket. I had not bought it for myself. I never could smoke. Nor do I conceive that smoking is essential to a clergyman in the country; though I have occasionally envied one of my brethren in London, who will sit down by the fire, and, lighting his pipe, at the same time please his host and subdue the bad smells of the place. And I never could hit his way of talking to his parishioners either. He could put them at their ease in a moment. I think he must have got the trick out of his pipe. But in reality, I seldom think about how I ought to talk to anybody I am with.

That I don't smoke myself is no reason why I should not help old Rogers to smoke. So I pulled out the tobacco.

"You smoke, don't you, Rogers?" I said.

"Well, sir, I can't deny it. It's not much I spend on baccay, anyhow. Is it, dame?"

"No, that it bean't," answered his wife.

"You don't think there's any harm in smoking a pipe, sir?"

Drawn by Fred. J. Shields. Engraved by Swain.

"EVEN AS THOU WILT."

"Not the least," I answered.

"You see, sir," he went on, not giving me time to prove how far I was from thinking there was any harm in it, "You see, sir, sailors learns many ways they might be better without. I used to take my pan o' grog with the rest of them; but I give that up quite, 'cause as how I don't want it now."

"'Cause as how," interrupted his wife, "you spend the money on tea for me, instead. You wicked old man to tell stories!"

"Well, I takes my share of the tea, old woman, and I'm sure it's a deal better for me. But to tell the truth, sir, I was a little troubled in my mind about the baccay, not knowing whether I ought to have it or not. For you see, the parson that's gone didn't more than half like it, as I could tell by the turn of his hawse-holes when he come in at the door and me a-smokin'. Not as he said anything; for, ye see, I was an old man, and I daresay that kep him quiet. But I did hear him blow up a young chap i' the village he come upon promiscus with a pipe in his mouth. He did give him a thunderin' broadside! to be sure! So I was in two minds whether I ought to go on with my pipe or not."

"And how did you settle the question, Rogers?"

"Why I followed my own old chart, sir."

"Quite right. One mustn't mind too much what other people think."

"That's not exactly what I mean, sir."

"What do you mean then? I should like to know."

"Well, sir, I mean that I said to myself, 'Now, old Rogers, what do you think the Lord would say about this here baccay business?'"

"And what did you think He would say?"

"Why, sir, I thought He would say, 'Old Rogers, have yer baccay; only mind ye don't grumble when you 'aint got none.'"

Something in this—I could not at the time have told what—touched me more than I can express. No doubt it was the simple reality of the relation in which the old man stood to his Father in Heaven that made me feel as if the tears would come in spite of me.

"And this is the man," I said to myself, "whom I thought I should be able to teach! Well, the wisest learn most, and I may be useful to him after all." As I said nothing, the old man resumed:

"For you see, sir, it is not always a body feels he has a right to spend his ha'pence on baccay; and sometimes, too, he 'aint got none to spend."

"In the meantime," I said, "here is some that I bought for you as I came along. I hope you will find it good. I am no judge."

The old sailor's eyes glistened with gratitude. "Well, who'd ha' thought it!—You didn't think I was beggin' for it, sir, surely?"

"You see I had it for you in my pocket."

"Well that *is* good o' you, sir!"

"Why, Rogers, that'll last you a month!" exclaimed his wife, looking nearly as pleased as himself.

"Six weeks at least, wife," he answered. "And ye don't smoke yourself, sir, and yet ye bring baccay to me! Well, it's just like yer Master, sir."

I went away resolved that old Rogers should have no chance of "grumbling" for want of tobacco, if I could help it. *(To be continued.)*

"EVEN AS THOU WILT."

MATT. XV. 22—28.

"Have mercy on me, Lord!"
She followed Him, and cried; and, when there came
No answer, followed, crying still the same,—
"Have mercy on me, Lord!"

"Send her away," they said—
They who should be dispensers of his grace,
Would have Him turn from her who sought his face;
"Send her away," they said.

He spoke their thought aloud—
"It is not meet to take the children's bread
And cast it to the dogs"—as if He said,
How poor ye are and proud.

"Yea, Lord! and yet the dogs
Eat of the crumbs that from the children fall,"
She pleaded—"and there is enough for all,
For children and for dogs."

And He to her replied,
"Even as thou wilt, so be it unto thee.
Thy heart the measure of the grace shall be
From my rich store supplied."

She had the thing she would—
Lord! if I dip my cup into the sea
It rises full. Such cup each soul may be,
Such Ocean is Thy good!

C.

ABOUT RICHARD BAXTER.

Of those who successfully perform the voyage of life, whilst there are some to whom it is given to float smoothly and serenely to port, with only a few hazards and easily-surmounted difficulties to interrupt their progress, there are others of not less worth and wisdom whose lot it is to sustain a constant battle with adverse gales and angry seas, and who reach their desired haven only by the most determined efforts, and through a succession of the most perilous adventures. Of this latter sort was the life of Richard Baxter. With a bodily frame that seemed every moment ready to fall in pieces; with a mind imperfectly disciplined by early culture, but which in its ardour and strength was ever soaring to the highest spheres of thought, and affronting the most difficult investigations; with a soul that was full of the most generous and kindly emotions, but whose impulses were under the control of a conscience the most scrupulous and exacting; longing for peace, and luxuriating in the contemplation of ideal scenes of rest, yet ever ready to fight to the death for the minutest point of theological belief or ecclesiastical conviction; and cast upon times of unsettlement, controversy, and persecution;—the career of this remarkable man was one almost unbroken scene of storms and struggles, of toil, conflict, suffering, and sorrow. How manfully he endured the agony,—how nobly he bore up against adversity,—how brightly that fervid soul of his shone out from amid the clouds and shadows that encompassed his path,—and how happily and usefully withal his life was spent; it will be our endeavour in this notice of him, so far as our limits will permit, to show forth.

Richard Baxter was born on the 12th of November, 1615, at Rowton, a village in Shropshire, near to High-Ercall, the seat of Lord Newport. His father, whose Christian name was also Richard, resided at Eaton-Constantine in the same county, but his mother was a native of Rowton, and it was in her father's house that her son was born. With his grandfather, whose name was Richard Adeney, the first ten years of his life were spent.

His friends were anxious to bestow on him the advantages of a liberal education; but the means of obtaining this were very imperfectly within their reach. From his sixth to his tenth year he was under four successive masters, the curates of the parish in which he resided with his grandfather; but from them he learned next to nothing; they were all incompetent men, and two of them were men of dissolute habits. His next master was the curate of the parish in which his father resided; he, too, was a man from whom nothing was to be learned—a man who had lost his situation as a lawyer's clerk through drunkenness, and had taken orders as a means of living. With his next master, whom he describes as a grave and eminent man, he spent two years, without receiving one hour's instruction, his tutor being too much occupied in declaiming against the Puritans to attend to the communicating to boys of the rudiments of learning. What knowledge of the learned languages Baxter had, he owed to the master under whom he was next placed, John Owen, master of the Free School at Worcester. By him he was prepared for the University, but instead of going thither, he was persuaded to place himself with Richard Wickstead, chaplain to the Council at Ludlow, who was allowed by the King to take one pupil. Here, again, Baxter was unfortunate. Wickstead was a place-hunter, and neglected his duty to his pupil to pay court to those in power, and but that his residence at Ludlow Castle gave him access to books, Baxter would have profited as little by his connection with this master as he had done by his connection with those who nominally superintended the earlier stages of his educational career.

In addition to the disadvantages accruing from such inadequate training, Baxter had to struggle with those arising from a diseased frame. In his earlier years he "suffered many things from physicians," and instead of being benefited, found himself the worse the more he followed their prescriptions; till at length, after having consulted not fewer than thirty-six professors of the healing art, he resolved to discard their aid, and trust rather to the recuperative force of nature than to the therapeutic power of drugs. But so shattered and broken was he, that at twenty he had, he says, in addition to disease, all the symptoms of fourscore. His life indeed was "one long disease," and while this may account for and palliate that irritability and acerbity of temper which he sometimes displayed, it cannot but enhance our admiration of the mental energy, indomitable perseverance, and high-toned resolution, which enabled him, in spite of such disadvantages, to do what he did both with voice and pen in the service of Christ and his Church.

Baxter's bodily infirmities, however, were not wholly a calamity to him; rather may they be regarded as having had much to do with the development of his higher life, and the consecration of his natural gifts to worthy and noble uses. Writing of himself to Anthony à Wood, and referring to his want of a university education, he finely says, "Weakness and pain helped me to study how to die; that set me on studying how to live; and that on studying the doctrine from which I must fetch my motives and comforts; beginning with necessities I proceeded by degrees, and now am going to see that for which I have lived and studied."* There can be no doubt that his infirm health preserved him from many temptations to which, in that dissipated age, he must otherwise have been exposed, and tended to give force and depth to those early religious impressions which the teaching and example of godly relations had made upon him. His spiritual training had happily been much better than his intellectual. At an early age he was brought under serious convictions,

* Wood, Athenæ Oxon, 1125.

chiefly by his father's pious conversation; and though he did not escape the contamination of juvenile vices, his conscience was always alive, and he suffered so much from its rebukes when he transgressed, that he strove earnestly to overcome the evil tendencies by which he was misled. It was not, however, till his fifteenth year that he became the subject of a decided change of heart. The perusal of Bunny's "Resolution," a work originally written by Parsons the Jesuit, but revised, corrected, and improved by the Puritan Edmund Bunny, rector of Bolton-Percy, was the means of first awakening him to a true sense of sin, and the unspeakable importance of eternal things. He was also greatly benefited by the "Bruised Reed" of Dr. Sibbs, some of the writings of Perkins, and, at a later period, Culverwell's "Treatise on Faith." To these books, together with the conversation of some pious friends, and the solemnising influence of his own fragile health, he was indebted, under God, for that decided repentance of which he never repented, and the fruits of which were brought forth abundantly amid the trials and conflicts of his subsequent life.

Having resolved to devote himself to the work of the Christian ministry, Baxter placed himself under Francis Garbet, minister at Wroxeter, for further instruction. With him he read logic and theology; and at this time he may be regarded as having commenced that gigantic course of study which occupied more or less the whole of his remaining life on earth, and which he pursued in spite of an amount of bodily suffering and outward annoyance such as would have consumed the energies of most men. His attainments in the languages and in the mathematics never exceeded those of a tyro, if we except Latin, which he not only learned to read with ease, but even managed to write after a fashion; but in logic, metaphysics, and theology, he found a congenial field, and there he left nothing which he had not thoroughly mastered. At an early period he plunged into the ocean of scholastic theology, and he was never so happy as when grappling with the ponderous reasonings, or following out the minute distinctions, of these remarkable writers. "I have higher thoughts," he writes, "of the schoolmen than Erasmus and our other grammarians had; I much value the method and sobriety of Aquinas, the subtlety of Scotus and Ockam, the plainness of Durandus, the solidity of Ariminensis, the profundity of Bradwardine, the excellent acuteness of many of their followers." After a long list of writers of this class with whose works he was acquainted, he adds, that he should be loth to take such sauce for his food, and such recreations for his business. "The jingling," he continues, "of too much and false philosophy among them often drowns the notes of Aaron's bells." This was his judgment at an advanced period of his life. In his earlier days he would probably have expressed himself still more strongly in their favour. Certain it is, that his own mental habits were powerfully influenced by the writings of the schoolmen. His style, indeed, as a theologian may be said to have been formed on theirs; for his scientific and polemical treatises are marked by all their peculiarities, whether faults or excellences.

When about eighteen years of age, he was for a season persuaded to relinquish his purpose of entering the ministry, and try his fortune at court, where he had some interest. Here he spent a month in the house of Sir Henry Newport, master of the revels; but what he saw of court life, its meanness, insincerity, and immorality, so disgusted him, that at the expiry of that period he hastily forsook the scene, and never afterwards felt any desire to mingle in its festivities or share in its employments.

Having now finally resolved to follow out his former purpose of devoting himself to the ministry of the Gospel, he was in 1638 ordained by Bishop Thornborough, of Worcester, and accepted the office of master of a school at Dudley—a situation which afforded him the opportunity of preaching occasionally without being subjected to the responsibility of a regular charge, from which, as yet, he shrank. His first sermon was preached in the Upper Church of Dudley; and he continued to officiate in this occasional way for about a year. At the close of this period he resigned his office at Dudley and went to Bridgnorth, where he acted as assistant to Mr. William Madstard, "a grave and severe divine, very honest and conscientious; an excellent preacher, but somewhat afflicted with want of maintenance, but more with a hard-hearted unprofitable people"—troubles with which many "an excellent preacher" has had to contend, both before his time and since. In 1641 he was solicited to become preacher at Kidderminster, the vicar of which, an ignorant man and given to tippling, had, in order to prevent the town from petitioning for his removal, agreed to allow sixty pounds a year to any one whom a committee of fourteen of their number should choose to be their preacher. With this invitation Baxter complied; and thus, says he, "I was brought by the gracious providence of God to that place which had the chiefest of my labours, and yielded me the greatest fruits and comfort." The legal instrument appointing him to this situation bears date April 5th, 1641.

Though at one with the Puritan party in theological views and religious sentiment, Baxter had not, at the time of his ordination, adopted their peculiar ecclesiastical opinions. He was at this time a thorough Conformist, having formed his views from the study of the works of Downham, Sprint, and Hooker. The other side of the question he had not examined; nor was it till he was settled at Dudley that he gave the whole subject that careful examination which it required. Here he received, from some of the Nonconformists, books, by the study of which his previous views were considerably modified. He still retained his adherence to diocesan episcopacy, though deploring the want of discipline then prevailing in the English Church; he accepted forms of prayer as proper and advantageous, and thought such might in some cases be lawfully imposed, though he deemed the existing liturgy of the Church of England deficient in many important particulars; he held the lawfulness of kneeling at the eucharist; and could see no serious objection to the wearing of the surplice, or to the use of the ring in marriage. To subscription, however, he became hostile, and was inclined to deplore his

own rashness in having complied with it; the use of the cross in baptism he renounced; and the giving of the Lord's Supper promiscuously to all who had not been formally excommunicated by the bishop or his chancellor, whatever their character, he denounced as a profanation of that sacred ordinance. Thus far he was a Nonconformist, and thus early did he show that disposition to strike out for himself a middle course between contending parties which characterized him through life, and involved him in innumerable controversies. As he advanced in life, his nonconformity became more extensive and pronounced, and he showed himself as ready to suffer for his conscientious convictions as those who took more extreme views; but to the last he clung to the belief that the truth was exclusively on neither side, and he kept on fighting in the hope that both parties would at length see this as he saw it, and hasten to clasp hands on that middle ground to which he invited them.

In quieter times Baxter would probably have contented himself with theorising and refining on questions of Church order, without setting himself forward in any very prominent way as a reformer of ecclesiastical abuses. But his lot was cast on times when such a course was rendered impossible by the restless jealousy and inquisitorial tyranny of those in power. Determined to secure a rigid uniformity of belief and practice, and vainly imagining that this could be accomplished by the vulgar expedients of outward force, the rulers in church and state sought, by vexatious impositions and severe penalties, to drive men to walk in those strait paths which they had marked out for them. The result was, that many things which were really matters of indifference, grew to be matters of conscience, and burdens were laid on the consciences of earnest and sincere men which they could not endure; so that multitudes who were in no wise previously inclined to revolt, were constrained to rise up against the tyranny to which they were subjected, and the measures which were designed to secure uniformity served only to provoke dissent and fan the flames of discord and conflict. Baxter was among the number of those who were thus forced into open nonconformity. The first thing which startled him from his quietude was the publication of the *et cetera* oath as it was called. This, which formed part of certain canons enacted by Convocation in 1640, was ordered to be taken by all ecclesiastical persons on pain of suspension and deprivation; and it derived its name from the most offensive part of it, that in which it was specified that the juror should never "give his consent to alter the government of the Church by archbishops, bishops, deans, and archdeacons, *et cetera*, as it stands now established." The imposition upon men of such an oath, under whose vague "*et cetera*" might come to be included no man could tell what, Baxter and his friends felt to be an alarming stretch of spiritual despotism. At a meeting of the ministers of Shropshire, the subject was fully discussed; on which occasion Baxter urged the objections against the oath, and carried with him the convictions of the majority. For himself, he not only resolved never to submit to it; but he was led by the occurrence to investigate the whole subject of church government more closely than he had hitherto done. With characteristic energy and sincerity, he set himself to the study of all the books of any weight that had appeared on the questions at issue between Episcopalians and their opponents; nor did he rest until he had mastered and weighed all that had been advanced on both sides. The result was, as he himself tells us in his treatise on Episcopacy, that he was forced into the belief that the primitive episcopacy was a very different thing from that which existed in the English Church; and that to the latter were to be attributed most of the evils under which the Church had suffered. To this conviction he adhered to the end of his life.

Whatever anxiety the consideration of such questions might occasion to himself, he did not suffer them to affect his labours as a Christian pastor. He had accepted the invitation to Kidderminster with a profound desire to be useful to the souls of its inhabitants, and he came amongst them with his heart stirred up "to speak to sinners with some compassion, as a dying man to dying men." He found the people in a state which demanded the utmost exertion of his best powers to promote their spiritual interests. They were ignorant, coarse, and of loose manners; superstitious, sensual, and easily roused to deeds of violence and brutal outrage. Of only a small portion of them could it be said, that they were under the influence of genuine religion. In these, however, Baxter found steadfast friends and zealous helpers in his work; and though from the mass he could expect only derision, opposition, and dislike, there can be no doubt that in due time these hostile feelings would have given way before his faithful and zealous labours for their welfare. He was destined, however, to be driven from his post before he had been long enough in it to reap the fruits of his fidelity. The war between the Royalists and the Parliamentarians had already begun to agitate and devastate the country. Baxter sided wholly with neither party, but inclined rather to the side of the Parliament than to that of the King. This produced unkindly feeling towards him in the minds of many of his parishioners, who were chiefly of the Royalist party; and an order having been issued by the Parliament for the defacing of images in churches and the removing of crucifixes, to which Baxter was supposed to be favourable, occasion was taken by the excited mob to make a violent attack upon him, by which his life was endangered. His friends, alarmed at this, counselled his leaving Kidderminster, which he accordingly did, and retired for a season to Gloucester. After the battle of Edgehill he removed to Coventry, and there he was induced to minister for a year to the soldiers, but without holding a chaplain's commission or receiving any remuneration for his labours except board and lodging in the governor's house. Here, he says, "I followed my studies as quietly as in a time of peace." After a short visit of two months to Shropshire, he returned to Coventry, where he spent another year. Ultimately he was induced to become chaplain to one of the regiments in Cromwell's army, and he has left some most instructive details as to the condition and operations of the Republican forces, with some graphic

sketches of the leading men of that party. Through this episode of his life we cannot follow him minutely. His main inducement to join the army was a disinterested desire to counteract the progress of republican opinions and sectarian divisions among the soldiers. Though a Parliamentarian, Baxter was not a Republican; on the contrary, he abhorred republicanism, and considered the Parliament as worthy of being supported, chiefly because its policy tended to preserve the rights and secure the stability of the throne. Though a Nonconformist, he had no toleration for the sectaries, of whom he always speaks in the bitterest terms. He saw with grief and shame that the views to which he was thus opposed were rapidly spreading among the soldiers; and as he attributed this to there being no regular ministers with the army, he felt impelled to throw himself into the breach and do what he could to roll back the invading foe. It was no enviable post which he had thus selected. To a man of his studious habits the bustle and constant changes of camp and garrison life must have been unspeakably distressing; and as he had fallen amongst men to whom theological discussion was as familiar as military exercise, and who could split hairs as nicely in argument as they could hit heavy blows in battle, his time and energies were consumed in constant debate, often upon points not worth serious discussion. "I was almost always," he says, "disputing with one or other of them; sometimes for our civil government, and sometimes for church order and government; sometimes for infant baptism, and often against Antinomianism and the contrary extreme." He was also involved in controversy with Quakers, Seekers, Levellers, Fifth Monarchy men, and other of the numberless varieties of opinionists who, in that "year of sects and schisms," as Milton calls it, sprang up in the soil of anarchy like mushrooms in a hot-bed. One regrets to find that this multiplicity of sects betrayed him into a position hostile to liberty; for one of the heresies against which he inveighs, and the prevalence of which among the soldiers led him into his "most frequent and vehement disputes," was the opinion that "the civil magistrate has nothing to do to determine anything in matters of religion by constraint or restraint, but every man may not only hold, but preach and do in matters of religion what he pleases." It is strange that so acute a reasoner did not perceive that if the magistrate has *anything* to do "by constraint and restraint" in the matter of religion, he must have *everything* to do; and that, consequently, he was as much in the way of his duty when he imposed the *et cetera* oath on the Nonconformists, or put Baxter and his friends under "constraint" in the matters at which they scrupled, as when he imprisoned Anabaptists and Seekers, or cropt the ears of Leighton and Prynne.

It is not surprising that under the constant excitement, irritation, and toil of such a life Baxter's health should have given way, and that he should have been brought by sickness to the brink of the grave. But it *is* marvellous that amid all this turmoil, unsettlement, discussion, and suffering, he should have been able to write two such works as his "Aphorisms of Justification" and his "Saints' Everlasting Rest,"—the former not indeed one of his most able works, yet characterised by acuteness, and containing the germ of his peculiar theological views; the latter a work which, for elevation of thought, breadth of view, rich experimental piety, sublime devotion, and sustained vigour of composition, stands unsurpassed in the department of literature to which it belongs. If the one of these works gives us an idea of how he disputed with the sectaries, the other shows us where his true life was—in communion with God, and in vivid realisation of heavenly things.

The civil war being at an end, and Baxter's health being somewhat recruited, he returned to his former sphere of labour at Kidderminster. The people wished him to accept the living, which had been sequestrated by parliamentary commission, and the revenues of which had been entrusted to the parishioners to be bestowed by them on any one whom they might choose to be their minister. This, however, he declined; he would accept only the 60*l.* a-year secured to him by the former incumbent, with such addition as might be obtained by means of an augmentation for a chapel in the parish. In all he never received more than from eighty to ninety pounds a-year, with the rent "of a few rooms at the top of another man's house." Having thus showed that he desired not theirs but them, he resumed his place among his former parishioners, determined to do his utmost for their spiritual welfare. During the Commonwealth he enjoyed uninterrupted opportunity of carrying out his plans and operations for this end—a privilege for which he had too much candour and good sense not to be thankful to the remarkable man who then ruled the nation; but it went against both his principles and his prejudices to regard this in any other light than as one of those special interpositions of Providence by which the sins of men were made to contribute to the service of God's cause. "How strange," he exclaims, writing after he had tasted the bitter fruits of the Restoration, "that in times of usurpation I had all this mercy and happy freedom. . . . How mysterious that God should make days of licentiousness and disorder under an usurper so great a mercy to me and many a thousand more, who, under the lawful governor whom they desired, and in the days when order is said to be restored, do sit in obscurity and unprofitable silence, or lie in prison." "For my part," he says again, "I bless God who gave me, even under an usurper whom I opposed, such liberty and advantage to preach the Gospel with success, as I cannot have under a king to whom I have sworn and performed true subjection and obedience; yea, such as no age, since the Gospel came into this land, did before possess, so far as I can learn from history." For fourteen years this halcyon season lasted, and during that time Baxter laboured with unwearied activity in his cherished vocation, preaching, exhorting, visiting, catechising, debating, and administering not only to the spiritual necessities but also to the bodily ailments of his people: for there being no physician within reach, he was "forced for five or six years, by the people's necessity, to practise physic." All this, however, he says, was but his "re-

creation, and as it were the work of his spare hours." His chief labour was in his study, and in the writing of books; "which yet," he complains, "went the more slowly on, that I never even have had an amanuensis to dictate to, and especially because my weakness took up so much of my time." How he found time for this kind of work at all will be matter of wonder to many; but when we look at the result, and find that during these fourteen years he wrote and published nearly sixty volumes, some of them solid quartos, very few of them of small size, and all displaying extensive reading and painstaking thought, we seem to be contemplating a work like those masses of Cyclopean masonry, which suggest the agency of a strength almost superhuman. It is impossible to find language strong enough to express our admiration of the indefatigable industry, weariless zeal, and gigantic power of the man. If, as he complains, his infirmities and official duties left him "but little time for study," he must have possessed a faculty of concentrating his energies upon his subject, and moving along his path of thought and utterance with a momentum such as is rarely enjoyed even by the more highly gifted of our species.

The published works of Baxter remain to speak for themselves. It is pleasing to be able to record that his ministerial labours among the people at Kidderminster were followed by blessed and permanent results. After the first feeling of hostility was overcome, he found them "tractable and unprejudiced," and his preaching met with attentive auditories. A great change for the better was gradually wrought on the manners and habits of the people. The Lord's Day was religiously observed; family worship was generally practised; as one passed along the street on a Sabbath, one "might hear a hundred families singing psalms and repeating sermons," he tells us. Many were savingly converted to the Lord; and though great strictness was observed in the admission of persons to the Communion, he had six hundred communicants, of whom there were not twelve, he says, that he had not good hope of as to their sincerity. A real and wide-spread religious reformation, in short, was effected in the place through his instrumentality, the fruits of which continued long after he was called to his rest. Dr. Fawcett, one of his successors at Kidderminster, writing in 1759, says, "the religious spirit thus happily introduced by Baxter is yet to be traced in the town and neighbourhood in some degree."

Here we for the present pause. Scenes of a very different kind from that last contemplated have to be described, in which the fine gold of Baxter's character was tried as in the fire of a furnace heated seven times. The "usurper" has yielded up the sceptre, and his dynasty is at an end. The legitimate monarch is about to show his subjects with what fatherly interest he cares for their spiritual welfare.

W. L. Alexander.

THE STORY OF BEUGGEN CASTLE.

I.—THE TWO FRIENDS.

In the territory of the Grand Duke of Baden, near the frontier of Switzerland, and only ten miles distant from the venerable town of Basle, stands the Castle of Beuggen. It occupies a charming spot on the right bank of the Rhine, where that magnificent stream flows with a sharp curve, between Säckingen and Rheinfelden, two places well known to those who have studied the history of the great Thirty Years' struggle. It is the centre of a quiet little valley, below the turnpike-road which winds up to Constanz, and under the shadow of a verdant vine-hill. On passing one of the two bridges which span the moat surrounding the Castle, you walk through a gate of mediæval structure into a spacious yard or square, where stands a clump of ten thickly-foliaged chestnut-trees casting their cool shade over a large circular basin of water. To the right you observe the half-decayed ruins of the old building, erected probably in the days of the Hapsburgs, and contrasting romantically with the more recent architecture of the new one, which dates from the commencement of the Seven Years' War.

This Castle has been selected for a work which evinces the wonderful power of charity. Its thirty-two apartments, large and small, are occupied by upwards of a hundred individuals, adults and children. It is worth while to ascend the clean oak-steps that lead up to the spacious school-rooms and dwelling-rooms on the first floor, and to the bedrooms on the second. You will enjoy the roomy landing-places and wide passages, the lofty ceilings of the apartments, the stream of light and fresh air that pours in through the strong-framed windows, and the cheerful aspect of the *ensemble*, where the privileges of ancient princely magnificence are so happily turned to the profit of the needy, the neglected, and the outcast. And when, after a little panting and perspiring, you have reached the top of this grand building, you will find your trouble fully repaid by an enchanting view of the Rhine-valley, encircled on the south by the ever-green Jura Mountains, and on the north by the Black Forest.

But delightful as a visit now is to this place, it must have been very dismal immediately after the War of Liberation. At that period the Castle of Beuggen presented an aspect of misery and desolation. For three years, from 1814 till 1817, it was a hospital for the wounded soldiers of the Austrian army. At the close of the war it was abandoned by its numerous inmates, who left eight thousand of their comrades buried in the fields around the Castle-moat. It was left as it stood on the last day it was occupied, uncleaned and unswept, showing everywhere the disgusting marks of the misery which thousands of wretched creatures had suffered under the scalpel of the surgeon and amid the agonies of death. In this state of filthiness and desolation it continued for

years, avoided by everybody; or, if visited at all, only at night by thieves, who carried off whatever booty they could find. Its sole inhabitants were the owl and the bat, who could here rear their young in peace. And in this state the once attractive spot might have continued till now, had it not become the abode of Christian love, which, wherever it comes, turns death into life, casts out everything unclean, and calls up a fountain of pure living water for the weary and the thirsty.

It will be interesting to learn the origin of this remarkable change, with which a still more important change, in the soul and life of many a lost human being, is connected.

One autumn afternoon of the year 1816 two men were walking up and down the spacious square, which, planted with rows of beautiful trees, graces the rear of the Münster-Kirche at Basle. They were evidently engaged in a conversation that engrossed their whole heart and soul. Was it the somewhat melancholy aspect of the withering creation around, the crackling of the yellow leaves carpeting the path on which they trod, and the chilly autumnal blasts moving the tops of the trees to and fro, and moaning through the leafless branches, that cast a gloom over their minds and caused the serious expression of their countenances? Perhaps it was to some extent. But the chief cause of the concern which so deeply filled their souls was the thought pressing upon them of a decay far more awful and alarming than that of withering leaves and drooping flowers. Their conversation ran on the dreadful state of neglect and misery in which the greater portion of Christendom was left by the recent wars. The condition of the lower classes, and especially of the children, was distressing beyond description. "I visited a small district the other day," one of the two friends said, "where I found upwards of a hundred children who were destitute of any instruction whatever; and, upon entering the huts in which they dwelt, I almost sickened at the spectacle of misery and wretchedness I witnessed. One-sixth of the children of our country are without shelter or support, rambling about in perfect vagabondism. Twice I saw some of these homeless creatures, driven from one canton to another, starving on the public road. Two little boys were found crouching by the dead body of their mother. What is to be done to stop this fearful evil, which gnaws like a cancer at the very root of our national existence? If Christianity is a power unto salvation, is it not here that it ought to show itself?"

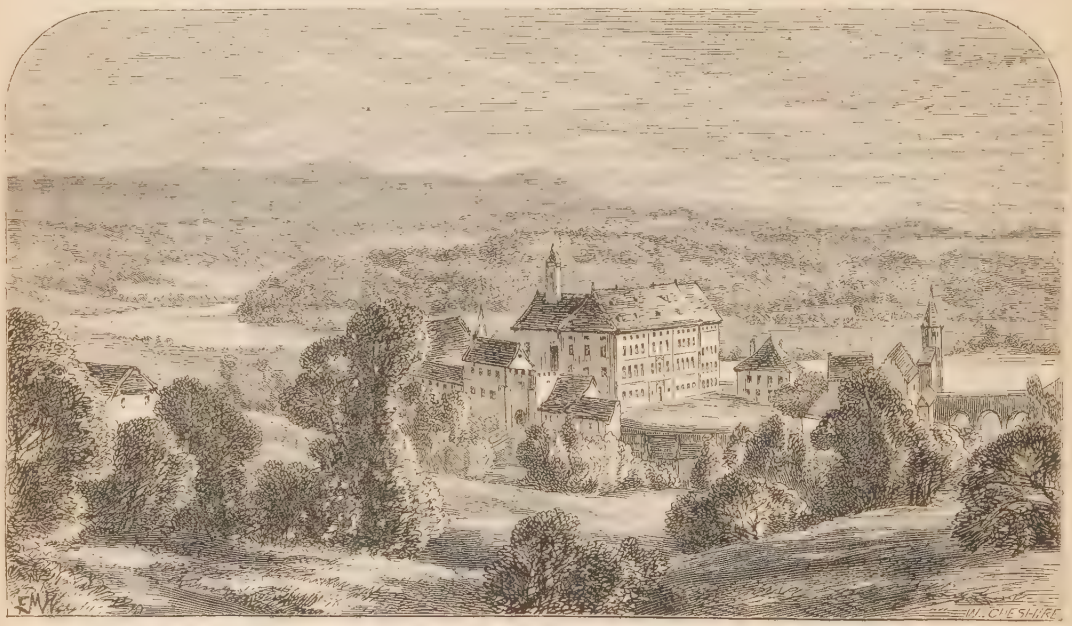
The gentleman who gave this sad description of the condition of the children of the lower class was Mr. Christian Heinrich Zeller, then school director at Zofingen, a pretty town in the canton of Aargau. He was little aware at that moment that this conversation with his friend Mr. Spittler, the celebrated founder of the Basle Mission House, was the first step towards a work which would one day give to his name a European celebrity, and serve as a monument of grateful love in the hearts of all Christian philanthropists, as well as in those of thousands of rescued children. The two friends had just returned from a visit to the Mission House, and thought with pleasure of the resolute young men whom they saw there preparing themselves to carry the Gospel to the heathen world. Far below their feet, at the bottom of the high wall from which they enjoyed the view that stretched out before their eyes, old Father Rhine was rolling along, bending with a graceful curve round the old town, and preparing to take leave of his native land, to carry his fertilising blessings to France, Germany, and the Netherlands. "Alas!" said Mr. Zeller, "it seems to me as if the blessed Gospel-river is also preparing to leave our poor fatherland, to pour its costly treasures over the fields of far distant countries. I cordially wish the poor heathen to drink its quickening waters: but why should our own people, who are in no better condition than the blind heathen of Asia, be deprived of these life-giving draughts? We have just been visiting a school for training teachers of the Gospel for the inhabitants of Hindostan and Africa. What a blessing this Institution would be, if, at the same time, it were a school for training Christian school teachers for the poor people of Switzerland and Germany! For they are the class of persons whom our sadly-neglected communities are fearfully in need of. You know how completely destitute of any Christian school-teaching our poorer districts are, because no teacher can be found willing to bury himself in such abodes of neglect and destitution. If Christian charity deems it necessary to train up young men for work among the heathen, surely it cannot but desire that young men should likewise be summoned, in the name of Christ, to devote themselves with self-denying love to the rescue of the perishing children of our own nation. And if the Mission House, while fulfilling one part of its duty, does not wish to leave the other undone, it must, it appears to me, be thrown open to every Christian young man who wishes to become a schoolmaster to the poor."

Mr. Zeller here took leave of Mr. Spittler, and repaired to his home, where he soon forgot all about their conversation in the bustle of his schools and the numerous occupations of his directorship. But his words kindled a fire in the heart of the noble founder of the Mission House, which nothing could quench. The winter passed on without Mr. Zeller hearing anything about the matter; but no sooner had the spring returned to the valleys of the Alps than he received a letter from Mr. Spittler, requesting him to write down his thoughts on the institution of a Missionary Schoolmaster Establishment. This invitation was as unexpected by Mr. Zeller as the voice must have been by young Samuel which called his name at midnight. He felt quite unprepared for it, and, burdened with school business and examinations as he was, he could hardly find one moment to give his mind to the subject. But it was with him as with his friend some months ago. Mr. Spittler had now, in his turn, thrown a spark into Mr. Zeller's bosom, which, in spite of all his occupations, set his whole soul on fire. The idea followed him into his school, and came out with him again. It went with him to bed, and awoke with him in the morning. One evening the

whole plan stood as clearly before his mind as if he saw the proposed Establishment rising out of the ground, and working in all the branches of its organisation. He took his pen, and wrote down an elaborate paper at one sitting. Mr. Spittler read it with enthusiasm, and caused it to be circulated among the friends of the Mission. Among these, too, the plan met with unanimous approbation. Letters were received from different quarters promising every assistance that could be afforded. The only objection which was felt by any regarded the union of the Establishment with the Mission House. This part of the scheme was dropped in consequence, and it was resolved to found a "Voluntary School for Training Schoolmasters for the Poor." The main features of the plan were these :—

"A number of poor, fatherless, and neglected children should be taken into a spacious, well-appointed building, situated in the country, and not too far from Basle, where they should be instructed in the most important branches of elementary education, in gardening and domestic labour, and in various kinds of handicrafts. In connexion with this a band of Christian young men should be trained as teachers of poor children."

The idea was warmly taken up by many Christian friends, and enthusiastically discussed in various circles. On the evening of the 31st of September, 1817, twelve individuals met at Basle, and committed the matter in prayer to God. They took one another by the hand, and solemnly pledged themselves in the presence of God to do whatever might be in their power, in order to carry their heart's desire into effect. They then united themselves into a "Society for Training Voluntary Schoolmasters for the Poor."



Beuggen Castle.

II.—A HOUSE OF DEATH AND DESOLATION IS CHANGED INTO AN ABODE OF LIFE AND JOY.

No sooner was this union of Christian friends made public, than encouraging letters and gifts came flowing in, in continuous succession, and from different quarters. Among these was a promise from the British and Foreign School Society, London, of 100*l.*, payable on the day when the establishment would be opened. The first thing required now was permission from the Government to build a house on the Basle territory. The Government, however, kept the matter so long under consideration, that the whole of the year 1818 passed without any result ; and as the price asked by the owner of the desired site was extravagant, the society resolved to leave Basle, and try its fortune in the adjacent Grand Duchy of Baden. In the spring of 1819, a friend, who had thrown her whole heart into the undertaking, the widow of Professor Fäsch, and who had some influence in high circles, advised the society to apply to the Baden Government for the use of the Castle of Beuggen. But it was in vain : the Baden Government declined the request at once. The friends, however, were not discouraged, and after many delays and difficulties, and a journey to Karlsruhe, where they had a personal interview with the Grand Duke, they attained their object.

It was on Friday, the 22nd of October, 1819, exactly the same day on which, three years before, the two friends for the first time discussed the matter behind the Basle Münster-Kirche, that they received the required documents from the Baden authorities. They at once set out for Basle, where they arrived on Sunday afternoon. On the same evening a meeting of the society was called, at which Mr. Zeller gave an account of their journey, and their conversation

with the Duke. The whole company were delighted with their success. The President, who, in spite of indisposition, had come to the meeting, felt quite restored by the glad news, and engaged in prayer, thanking God for this unexpected result. Mr. Zeller was then appointed to examine the Castle, and to report as to what would be required to put it in a state of repair.

He found it in a most miserable condition. There was not one unbroken window in the whole building. The fine brass locks, which used to adorn the doors, were all stolen, and so were the large iron stoves, without which no German parlour is comfortable. Heaps of straw were scattered through the rooms and saloons: everywhere there was dirt, and blood and rubbish. The paper was torn from the walls; and even the iron hooks and bolts, which had fastened the frame-work of the roof, were carried off. Still the building could be repaired, though not without considerable expense.

The apartments on the ground floor were designed for workshops, dining-room and kitchen; the large saloon, on the first floor, for a schoolroom and a place for family worship; the other rooms on that floor were partly assigned as a dwelling for the house-mother, partly as bedrooms for the girls. There was also a large apartment for a store-room, and another for an infirmary. The director was to have his dwelling on the second floor, where there was also plenty of accommodation for the female teachers. The rooms on the third floor were appropriated as dormitories for the boys and for the young men who were to be trained as schoolmasters. A numerous band of workpeople was then engaged to put the building in order, according to this plan; and on the first of November, 1819, Mr. Zeller received a letter from the Society, in which he was entreated to take the directorship of the new establishment.

III.—MR. ZELLER MAKES MANY RICH BY MAKING HIMSELF POOR.

Now, a better man than Zeller could not have been chosen. He was a born pedagogue. In his youth his father designed him for the law, and sent him to the university; but no position in society, however splendid, could, in his judgment, outshine that of a good schoolmaster. It was therefore with joy that he sacrificed the prospect of becoming a *Hofrath* for the humble situation of tutor in a private family. Here his talents as a teacher gained him such reputation that a number of respectable citizens of St. Gallen requested him to take charge of a private school, which they had established in order to provide their children with better training and instruction than could be obtained at the public schools of that town. Such was the effect of his admirable labours here that the town-council of Zofingen called him, in 1809, to be director of their public school, while the magistrates of the canton of Aargau appointed him inspector of the schools of the district. At Zofingen, which is one of the most charming spots in Switzerland, he passed a happy life, in which the comforts of affluence were combined with the privileges of intelligent intercourse and the blessings of a useful sphere of labour. He was the centre and soul of the lively and spirited educational life of the district. In addition to his directorship of the town school and his inspectorship of the district schools he was head teacher at the Latin school, and catechist of the Church *Vor dem Wald*. He also conducted an evening class for female teachers, at which he became acquainted with Miss Sophie Siegfried. She became his wife; but being, like her husband, a thorough teacher, she continued her labours at the school, even when, as a house-mother, she had to care for a family of fourteen children, five of whom were her own, and the others boarders.

Now the situation of director of a Poor-school at Beuggen, supported only by voluntary contributions, secluded almost entirely from society, and confined within the narrow sphere of a family of neglected children and uneducated young men, when contrasted with Mr. Zeller's position at Zofingen, must have appeared most absurd and ridiculous in the eyes of mere worldly men.

But he accepted the call, and he did it in the firm conviction that it came, not from man, but from God. People who weigh everything in the scale of profit and loss, cannot understand how such a decision could proceed from a wise and prudent man. Nor is it intelligible even to those, who, though taking higher ground than that of mere financial calculation, yet know no other gauge for their duty than what appears to them to be the most expedient for the moment. His first question in the matter was, not what might appear to be most useful to himself or to his friends, but what was most conformable to the pattern of self-sacrificing love, which the divine Redeemer, by whose blood he himself had been saved, had set before him.

His conduct in this matter had a close connection with his inward life,—with his soul's relation to the person of Christ. During his stay at Zofingen a great change had taken place in his heart. Before that period he had always felt a certain emptiness in his bosom, a want of peace and satisfaction which he could not account for. In his childhood he had been privileged with a religious education, which had taught him to accept the narratives of the Bible with all the simplicity of a child's faith. Even as early as his fifth year, when lying one morning on his back on the green flowery carpet of a hill side, and looking up to the bright blue sky, he received impressions of the greatness and omnipotence of God, which he remembered even in his old age. Two grandmothers, whose piety must have been exemplary, contributed greatly towards planting the first feelings of love and gratitude towards Christ in the child's heart. Even when an octogenarian he would recall, with a feeling of holy emotion, how his grandmother at Felbach used to put him to bed, and pray with him till he fell asleep; and how his grandmother at Böblingen used to tell him about the love of Jesus, the Saviour of the world. And in the last year of his life one could hear the grey-headed man often say to himself, as in benediction:—

"O Grandmother of Böblingen!
O Grandmother of Felbach!"

But these tender impressions of piety and love were buried under the rubbish of rationalistic theories and infidel doctrines, which he acquired when a student at the University of Tübingen. The light conversation which then prevailed among the students had a sad effect upon his mind. It is true, his strongly-developed moral character prevented him from lapsing far into sin; but his childlike faith was all but torn to shreds, and scarcely anything left but the thought: "Still I am a creature of God, and God pitieth all his works, from the beginning of the creation." And God *did* pity the poor wandering sheep. Through the instrumentality of some good friends, such as Handel and Blumhardt, he was brought again to the way of truth. But he still continued to experience something of the deadening, paralysing effect which infidel error leaves behind, even after it has been abandoned. In this state of mind he came to Zofingen. There he was a regular attendant on public worship, and a faithful observer of family worship; he was looked upon as a decidedly Christian man; he was himself a teacher of the orthodox doctrines of the Gospel; he was the centre and soul of an extensive sphere of usefulness, and the means of the conversion of many an erring fellow-sinner. Yet, notwithstanding all these things, he felt inwardly unhappy and unsatisfied. He felt he lacked something; but what that was he was unable to tell. In this state of mind he fell in with a poor man, a mechanic, a man who could neither read nor write, but in whom he observed a profound knowledge of the truths of God, a purity of heart, an amiable simplicity of faith, and a constant joy in Christ, such as far surpassed his conceptions, with all his learning. An intimate friendship sprang up between him and this good man. He soon perceived the cause of the difference between them. Mr. Zeller at that time knew Christ, and loved his doctrine; but his humble friend knew the doctrine, and loved Christ. After this the unlearned joiner would often be found in Zeller's study, engaged in studying the Scriptures, and in prayer. The unlearned man was the teacher, and the learned one his pupil. Nor was this instruction in vain. Mr. Zeller learnt that true Christianity does not consist in the knowledge of a *thing*, but in the love of the heart for a living *Person*, namely, Jesus the Son of God.

Now, this truth, so simple yet so rarely understood, and still more rarely practised, no sooner sunk into Zeller's heart than it made him perceive that Christ is glorified most when love goes out to seek and to save the lost, and bring them to Him. It is true he saw plenty of lost people at Zofingen; but he saw plenty of able and right-minded teachers too, who were prepared to take his place, if he left his situation. But who was willing and prepared to go to the thousands of lost children that crowded the hamlets of Switzerland, the back streets of the towns, and the dens of the begging vagabonds? Even the opposition which his call to Beuggen met with on the part of everybody proved that nobody wanted to go there; and where nobody would go, there he felt *he* must go. This, he was convinced, was the course which Jesus would take, if in his place—"He who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." With this pattern of self-sacrificing love before him he could not take up the scales to ascertain which course would be the most profitable to himself. He now saw clearly that his conversation with his friend Spittler behind the Münster-Kirche was no mere accident. He also realised how his divine Master had since then gently led him on, step by step, in a way scarcely noticeable by himself, to this arduous but noble and important task. And now that, without the slightest effort on his part, the call came straight to him, and to nobody else, he could not but discover the voice of the Lord whispering into his soul: "Arise and go to that place; for there I have a work for thee to do. Be strong and of good courage; for I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

So he accepted the call with a joyful heart; and when asked by his friends what the capital was with which the Institution was to be founded, he pointed them to four Texts of Scripture, which he called his school-fund. They were:—

1 Timothy ii. 4. God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

Mark xvi. 15, and Matt. xxviii. 20. Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

Luke xviii. 16. Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.

Matthew xviii. 5. Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me.

He never repented the step. When an old man he wrote: "Of the fifty-seven years which I have lived as a teacher, the thirty-seven which I have spent at Beuggen have been the happiest.

IV.—"THE LORD DOTH GREAT THINGS, WHEREOF WE ARE GLAD."

Thus the house-father for the new establishment was found. And so also was the house-mother; for the professor's widow, already-mentioned, Mrs. Fäsch, resolved to devote all her life and strength to this work,—to descend from her high station in society, and take her humble place as a mother among the children of the poor. Nor was she a novice in this kind of labour. For some time past she had been accustomed to assemble a number of poor children at her country seat, to train them for a useful life on earth, and a happy one in heaven. On the 1st of April, 1820, she left her beautiful grounds at Riehen never to return again, and entered the solitary castle of Beuggen, which had now been made habitable. Seventeen days after, Mr. Zeller arrived with his family. Their first night was spent in a room where the plague had raged most. Here he threw himself on his knees by the side of his wife, thanked God with tears for his faithful and wonderful leading, and prayed that He might turn this place, once the abode of misery and death, into a house of life, peace, and joy, to many lost and wandering souls.

The society resolved to commence operations with ten young men, and from twenty to thirty children,

all of whom were already chosen. School instruction was begun on the 15th of May. The pupils were of all ages, from the young man of thirty to the child of six; and of all descriptions—able and stupid, kind and cross, cheerful and desponding, well instructed and altogether ignorant, clean and dirty, grateful and insensible. It took some time to examine them so as to be able to classify them. They were then divided into two schools, the upper one for the pupil-teachers and the elder boys, and the lower one for the children. Meanwhile Mrs. Fäsch had taken measures lest her numerous and increasing household should be destitute of furniture. She had opened a large room in her house at Basle for storing gifts that might be sent in, especially for articles of furniture. Gradually a good collection was gathered, but numerous articles were still wanting. Then Mr. Spittler stepped in with his inventive genius. He made a little book of blank leaves, with headings written on the top of each page, such as *Parlour furniture*, *Kitchen utensils*, *Earthenware*, &c. He sent this little beggar from house to house, and each person wrote down the name of the article which he was willing to give. Thus every subscriber could see what had been given already, and what was still wanting, and many a one was thus reminded of gifts which perhaps he would never otherwise have thought of. In many houses the little book was sought for a second time, and thus the good house-mother of Beuggen Castle found herself in due time provided with all the implements that were required for carrying on her extensive household. Nor was Mr. Zeller overlooked in his capacity of schoolmaster. There was a page in the book set apart for school articles, and it was soon sufficiently filled to meet the wants of that important department.

So the ark, with its various inhabitants, both clean and unclean, was launched. And at the close of the first year it still floated along as prosperous as ever. "Twelve months ago," Mr. Zeller wrote in his first annual report, "we had nothing but this house with its empty rooms. It is now inhabited by seventy persons, forty-seven of whom are children, and thirteen pupil-teachers. We have hired twelve *jucharten* (about sixty acres) of land. One part of it is in grass, a second is in potatoes, and the third is an orchard. Thus we eat what the hands of our pupil-teachers and elder children have cultivated, and what God has blessed. We have now three horned-cattle in the cowhouse, and three beehives in the garden. Sixteen sheep, watched and cared for by one of our children, wander about on heath and meadow. Their wool clothes the brethren and the children. The younger boys spin; some of the brethren and the older boys weave the wool, and our tailors make coats of it. Some of the brethren are our shoemakers, others our joiners. Thus we labour together as one family. As to corn, leather, flax, thread, linen, and timber, we must buy them. But the expenses have been comparatively little, for the Lord helped us in a wonderful and glorious way, so that all could be covered by the voluntary gifts of our friends. He has not for one week allowed our box to be empty. In short, we, the seventy inmates of this house, may in truth say: 'The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.'"

These lines give an interesting view of the method of training and teaching which Mr. Zeller adopted for the pupil-teachers. They received their school-instruction in the forenoon, and their afternoon was spent in farming, gardening, and handicrafts; while the children who had spent their forenoon in labours of the same kind were taught at school. Mr. Zeller wanted the young men to accustom themselves to the most humble employments, and sometimes even to hard work. They were thus ever reminded that they were destined to be schoolmasters of poor children, perhaps in the most miserable hamlets of remote districts, where they were to be poor with the poor, living upon small salaries, and obliged to earn part of their livelihood with their own hands; and where, perhaps, they might have to thatch the roofs of their cottages, repair their furniture, dig their potatoes, and mend their coats. Thus at the outset they were inspired with a spirit of humility. And this was in perfect harmony with an article of the Beuggen programme, which was as follows:—"Young men who from bodily or financial needs seek for a place of refuge, or such as want to escape from toil through the medium of a schoolmaster's situation, or such as only want to obtain so-called accomplishments in order to try their fortune as schoolmasters in the world, are not fit for our establishment."

The principle expressed in these words was maintained by Mr. Zeller with iron perseverance during his whole career. "We give them," he says, "such simple teaching that no rich community shall, by alluring offers, call them away from poor communities." This method of training kept the little band clear of unfit members. Their number seldom surpassed fifteen. They came mostly from the farm or the workshop. Mr. Zeller at first hoped that Christian young men of the middle classes, and even of still higher ranks, might come and devote their lives to this humble but useful labour in the vineyard of God. He soon gave up that hope, as he found that rich young men preferred admiration of his self-denying example to imitation of it. So he was left with young men of the peasant and operative classes. Now among these there were not many who at once proved fit for the purpose. It took a good deal of trouble to ascertain whether they ever would be fit at all. Some came with hearts glowing with the love of Christ, but destitute of any talent whatever for teaching. Others came possessed of everything required for a good schoolmaster except a warm loving heart. Mr. Zeller soon found it necessary to introduce a strict system of probation, sometimes for an indefinite time, as he had fallen into the mistake of accepting young men too quickly. His motto was, "Better no schoolmaster at all than a bad one." For providing the poor people with bad teachers no establishment was required. But if he could only bless a few hamlets with well-trained, able, and truly Christian schoolmasters, he thought it would be worth all the trouble and sacrifice he was willing to undergo.

The working of the establishment, as organised by

Mr. Zeller, was characterised by activity, order, and a thoroughly Christian spirit. And what, above all, strikes the present visitor, is the humble simplicity that pervades the whole organisation. There is not the slightest attempt at show. Nothing but what poor children should learn to aim at is put before them. Their education is confined to what they will need in the humble sphere of life which Providence has destined them for. Perhaps, in the opinion of some, a little more time might be allowed for play. But it is questionable whether it would be wise to accustom children who will have to work hard in later life to much recreation, especially as it certainly is not required for health's sake, since they have plenty of bodily exercise in their garden and field labour. Their blooming countenances, and happy, merry looks, tell that their day's work is itself their pastime.

V.—CONFIDENCE IN GOD IS NOT PUT TO SHAME.

The second year at Beuggen, though gratifying as to its results, was marred by a sad loss: the death of the excellent house-mother, Mrs. Fäsch. "How could I be silent," Zeller writes, "about our dear, venerable house-mother, who, from love to Jesus, notwithstanding her great age and her weak body, would sit all day on a humble bench, teaching a band of little children to work? She has now left us to go to her happy home above. For some days her love to the poor boys, and her uncommon faithfulness to her duty, kept up a strife with her increasing illness. At length pain and weakness forced her to a sickbed, which soon became her deathbed. But what a deathbed! Such quiet patience; such gratitude for every trifling service of love; such bright joyful faith; such divine peace in the reconciled heart; such participation of the love of Jesus; such home-sickness for the heavenly fatherland I never witnessed before in a dying saint. I have now seen that it is worth our while to serve the Saviour faithfully, to give up our hearts to Him in faith and love, and to spend all our strength in his service."

The place of this good and noble servant of the divine Master was taken by Mr. Zeller's wife, who henceforth extended her maternal care, hitherto bestowed exclusively on her own family, to the whole household, and during a period of thirty-two years proved a worthy successor to that rare pattern of self-denying Christian love.

Though, on the whole, the forty years during which Mr. Zeller conducted the establishment were years of prosperity and happiness, yet he had his share of this life's thistles and briars, and sometimes it was a hard task to drink the cup that was put before him. The permanency of the Institution, occupying as it did a building which might any moment be claimed by the authorities, was very uncertain. "We are like birds sitting in the branches," Zeller used to say. Indeed, as early as the third year, a report was spread that the Castle was about to be sold. It is hardly possible to describe the anxiety that this rumour, which on examination proved too well founded, caused to the poor friends of Beuggen. They did not know where to go with the eighty souls who were about to be deprived of shelter and food. "Our perplexity was very great," Zeller writes; "but the Lord heard the cries of the poor." Owing to the kind intervention of a princely benefactress the sale was put off, without Zeller knowing anything about it. Nor had he made any effort to obtain that lady's interference. He experienced that his stay in the house was entirely dependent upon the faithful watchfulness of his heavenly Father; and each time when a similar rumour was repeated, it only reminded him that every day he had, as it were, to take the Castle afresh from the hand of God. His childlike confidence was never put to shame. Up to his last moment he saw the establishment stand firm on the foundation he had planted it upon; and it stands there still, after a period of forty-four years, as a memorial of the power of faith and of the blessing of love.

Sometimes the purse of the establishment was all but empty; and it seemed as if the dark picture of Mr. Zeller's future lot which his friends at Zofingen had put before him were about to be realised. One year the number of individuals who paid the board of children was so small that more than half of them were unpaid for; and out of the twenty-two pupil-teachers who were in the house, only two were paid for. Thus nearly two-thirds of this numerous household were entirely on the funds of the establishment. Now, Mr. Zeller never went out to collect money; nor did he send anybody in his place. In the forty annual reports which he wrote there is not even one line in which he asks the public for gifts. Such a thing as a list of regular annual subscribers he had not. A capital fund at the credit of the establishment was not to be found in any bank. It is true the Basle Committee greatly contributed towards keeping up the sympathy of Christian friends; but not one of its members had pledged himself to pay a deficit; and that there would be a tremendous deficit this year, was, humanly speaking, all but certain. "We, too," Mr. Zeller writes on this occasion, "were for some time in anxiety. Misgivings about God's careful love would darken our hearts. But we were served aright, and put to shame; for unexpected gifts, contributions in kind, large and small donations, poured in so abundantly, that we closed the year without owing anything to anybody, except love and gratitude. Among these gifts of love were the mites of the widows, the weekly savings of Christian industry, and the farthings of the sympathising poor, as well as the greater donations of liberal wealth. One benefactress sent us quite unexpectedly 1000 francs; a female friend left her gold chain in our box; and another benefactor presented us with two superb milch cows."

Besides financial difficulties, there were trials of other kinds, which reminded Mr. Zeller of the truth that to love is to suffer; but they were fully compensated for by the heart-rejoicing experiences of the blessed effect of his good work. During the long period of his directorship the establishment always contained from 105 to 115 individuals, of whom there were many who, under his truly paternal and tender, yet firm and serious, guidance, found the way from death to life; and there were none, so far as is known,

who did not at least become better members of society, if not of the Church. Zeller does not say much in his reports about the results of his labours on the hearts and conduct of his pupils. Still grateful joy impels him now and then to tell his readers that some of the boys who are sent out are raised to higher situations, owing to their good conduct; that one of the girls had been appointed house-mother to an establishment for the poor; that other girls have married respectable husbands; that others, who, after they left the house, had taken to a disgraceful life, unexpectedly wrote him to express their grief and contrition, and to ask his pardon. The tone of contentment, of enjoyment, of gratitude, in which he from the first to the last page of his forty reports speaks of his work and pupils, the undaunted enthusiasm with which he, from year to year, continues to carry on his arduous labours, and the urgency with which he on every occasion presses the establishment of as many institutions for poor children as can be founded,—all this, together with the unanimous eulogy of the whole band of German and Swiss Christian philanthropists, shows that his labours must have been crowned with unquestionable success. This may, at least, be said of his work among the pupil-teachers: that they were spread through the whole of the German population of Europe, from Cologne to the Crimea, where, on the shores of the Black Sea, many a poor German and Swiss colony was living in ignorance and misery.

At a later period some of them went to the German colonies in America and Asiatic Russia. To many of those poor emigrants the Beuggen schoolmaster combined in his own person the offices of teacher, minister, burgomaster, notary, and physician. And while he was thus as a fountain of light and life among them, he shared with them the privations and trials of their desert-life, contenting himself with a piece of dry coarse bread, and a draught of cold water, which was the only reward he could obtain for his self-sacrificing love. "As to the children," Zeller writes, "which have left our house and are scattered through the world, I find that, on the whole, only the grateful turn out well. Of course, I am not able to say how they are getting on, nor whether some of them get on at all; but still I find, with joy and gratitude, that by far the greater number of them walk in the ways of usefulness, chastity, and honesty. It is true they may not yet have entered on the way of eternal life; for mere civil honesty and morality are not the righteousness which is of God. But still it is a matter of paternal joy to compare the present condition of these children with the state of utter neglect, ignorance, and misery they were in when they entered our establishment. God be praised for *every* improvement, for *every* change for the better, and for *every* good influence and stimulus. A successful education cannot be brought about by mere human wisdom and skill; and perhaps no phrase is more incorrect than 'the *art* of training' (*Erziehungskunst*). Every one who has experienced in the case of his own children how the success of their education is owing to innumerable impressions which are independent of parental, yea, of human, influence in general, will admit that success in the education of children who are not one's own, is much more the work of Divine grace, and of the Holy Spirit. We receive from time to time written and oral communications from those of our children who are now adults, and engaged in the bustle of life. They unanimously declare that they often remember the warnings and exhortations which they received at the Bible class. Some urgently entreat us never to stop our biblical instruction, since they can assure us from their own experience that it will not be fruitless, though we may not be able to see the fruits at once. One of them writes, that, being on the brink of despair, he was about to commit suicide, when he was kept back by recollecting what he had learnt from the Bible at Beuggen, though at the time he disliked it, and tried as much as possible to stay away when it was read. Another writes that the Bible, which he always looked upon with aversion at Beuggen, afterwards became a sting in his bosom, which left him no peace when committing sin, and drove him at length to the Saviour. Almost all of them agree that the 'third seven years' of their life have been the worst and most dangerous."

VI.—THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER.

An establishment conducted in this spirit could not but obtain the protection, assistance, and guidance of Him, for whose honour it was founded. But so to conduct it required a man like Mr. Zeller.

One of the main features in Zeller's character was his sincere piety, marked by a rare degree of humility, and a deep sense of his own defectiveness and utter dependence upon God. One need only read his reports to be struck with the really touching frankness and simplicity of heart with which he every now and then speaks of his own faults and failures; and those who came into close contact with him assure us that as he appears in his writings, so he was in real life. "My friends," he would write, "all human works are defective, and marred by stumbling. I, alas! have to reproach myself with many faults and mistakes. Always we have to learn the true thing, *i.e.*, the meaning and will of the Lord, by doing our work better to-day than we did it yesterday; and by ourselves becoming better than we were before. When we are inspired by the desire of learning, and by the wish to mortify our own selves more and more, and honestly to serve the best, kindest, and most gracious of Masters, we always receive from his good hand more good than we, unworthy creatures as we are, are able to return to Him. But if we only come to Him with repentance, we *are* already received. The Lord resisteth the proud, but He giveth grace to the humble; yes, to the humble and contrite spirit. Oh, how often have I experienced that! May it strengthen and encourage my fellow-labourers! For we should have to wait too long were we to postpone serving the Lord till we commit no more sins. I could fill a whole annual report with a list of faults and failures. Nor will I promise that I shall never tell them. An honest account of our defects and mistakes might, perhaps, be the most instructive part

of a report. But this time we will rejoice and be glad, for we too have obtained mercy," &c.

"I therefore bow down before the holy God,—who is adored with the greatest reverence by those who stand nearest to his throne, before whose face they cover their faces,—and I confess that I have nothing to boast of in myself. For He sought and found me, a sinful man, who was sunk in the infidelity and pride of our times, and lost in the vanity of this world. He sent me among the poor youth, and has, with a Father's love, kindly supported, protected, and pardoned me and this great household for so many years. And if I look at our natural darkness, at the power and extent of our inward corruption, great God! I cannot but acknowledge and confess that it is only through thy great, all-exceeding grace that we still exist; that this house, notwithstanding all its great defects, still may be called a working-place of the Holy Spirit; that it still is a house of peace, and not a hell," &c.

Now professions of humility are simply disgusting, if they serve only as cloaks for want of energy and skill. But Beuggen could, and up to the present moment can, be quoted as a pattern of activity and able school-training. Nor did Zeller fear to point to his work, when he was attacked on account of his piety and religious spirit. These attacks were not few, nor did they always come from indifferent quarters. "Everything at Beuggen," it was said by a certain party, "is sacrificed to Mr. Zeller's hobby, viz., biblical instruction. Secular teaching is very scanty there. If matters continue in this way, the daily conversation at Beuggen will be composed entirely of texts of Scripture. The children will be able to tell everything about Cain and Abel, Jerusalem and Jericho, but nothing about Gessner and Tell, Basle and Bern. The Beuggen thermometer stands far too high above the freezing-point. Mr. Zeller and his friends are a set of pietists, fanatics, mystical people, and methodists."

Mr. Zeller used to bear up under these invectives with the greatest tranquillity. When called a fanatic or a pietist, he would say with a smile, "It is not at all uncommon in botany to see plants wrongly classified." He even acknowledged the good intentions of some of his antagonists. For them he had always an answer ready. "Is it possible to be too pious? Is it possible to be too faithful to God and his Word? I think not. In this respect we have not to regret that we are doing too much, but too little. After the most accurate examination, I cannot see that there is too much of biblical teaching amongst us. For we know in what condition and from what quarters our children come to us; but we cannot possibly know whither they will be scattered abroad after having left our institution. As to scientific instruction, if some should think that there is too little of it amongst us, I pray them to remember that we never promised, nor do we promise now, that we shall train up scientific men. This was never the object of our simple institution. We would rather leave people without science at all, than give them half-learning and half-knowledge. Half-learned men are the worst of all, and do the greatest mischief in the world."

To whatever cause this estimate of the value of learning and science may be ascribed, it could not be ascribed to want of learning and science in himself. He was an excellent Greek and Latin scholar, and his knowledge of history, both ancient and modern, was as profound as it was extensive. But this certainly makes his judgment about the excellency, the indispensability, and the educational power of the Bible all the more valuable.

Mr. Zeller's high estimation of the Bible and its influence upon the school proceeded from relevant causes. First, his experience of the insufficiency of Pestalozzi's principle caused him to look to the Bible as the only satisfactory corrective. Undoubtedly Pestalozzi's system of teaching and training was a great step between the unsubstantial and flippant teaching of the eighteenth century and the more solid, reasonable, and humane school-teaching of the present time. The great love for the people, "the poor people," which characterised Pestalozzi's life and all his undertakings, however unsuccessful, could not but deeply impress such a heart as Zeller's, nor could he fail to admire the genius which knew so well how to open up the Book of Creation to children, in order to impress them with true ideas of the real nature of things. But a genius like Zeller's could not fail to discover the defect that lay at the bottom of Pestalozzi's system. Education by the mere contemplation of God's work in creation, even though conducted in the most tender and loving spirit, and by the clearest understanding, will never suffice to bring a man to peace with God, with himself, or with mankind, so long as the fearful and fatal disease of sin dwells and rules in his nature. It will always prove insufficient to produce the desired effect, just as the placing of the most excellent and best-tuned organ before a performer whose hands are paralysed, or whose ear is untrue, will fail to bring forth harmonious sounds. Mr. Zeller perceived that a power was required mighty enough to enlighten man's eyes and to purify his heart, so as to enable him to look at creation in the true light, and to understand the invisible things of God by the things that are visible. This power he could only find in the Gospel of the crucified, sin-atoning, and risen Son of God. Thus, as Pestalozzi wanted the children, as it were, continuously to bathe in the rivers of creation, Zeller wanted them at the same time to bathe in the ocean of divine truth—the Scriptures. Nor was Pestalozzi opposed to this; he only lacked the required simplicity of sight to perceive how it could be effected. But he saw it realised at Beuggen, and he marvelled at it with joyful surprise. It was in July, 1826, that the patriarch visited Zeller's Establishment. Upon entering the house, his way on both sides was lined by a row of children and pupil-teachers, who welcomed him with a hymn. Moved to tears the venerable grey-headed man walked up the broad flight of stairs to the large school-room, and took his place at the teacher's desk. An oak-wreath was presented to him, but he put it on the head of Zeller's little son, saying, in a voice almost stifled with tears, "Not to me! Not to me! This wreath becomes innocence!" He stayed four days at the

establishment, and inquired minutely into its organisation and the spirit in which it was conducted. And what was the impression made upon his mind? When walking through the house he constantly said to himself, as overwhelmed with surprise, "What a power! What a power!" It is also asserted that, after having seen Zeller's work, he said, "I wish I could begin my labours over again."

This judgment of the grey-headed veteran in the noble army of educational philanthropists, whose whole life had been devoted to trying to reform society, was undoubtedly the highest panegyric that could be pronounced upon Zeller's work. It contained a plain declaration by the best qualified authority, that Zeller had found the true principle, the right motive-power of real reform. Nor was Zeller himself unconscious of this fact. "My friends," he wrote, after having described the seven causes to which he ascribed the increase of pauperism in Christendom, "this sevenfold corruption gnaws at the moral and social well-being of millions of our fellow-creatures. As long as it continues untouched, no reform whatever will bring better times. Make better men, and you will have better times. Three hundred years ago the cry was for Church reform. Nowadays everybody wants State reform. Very well. But what about heart-and-life reform? Would to God there were as many life reformers at present as there are political reformers! Various means for improving the condition of society are proposed. I expect greater results than all these plans will produce, from the faithful imitation of that beautiful example depicted in a picture on the right-hand side of the main entrance to the Town-hall of Basle. It is the example of Jehoshaphat, under whose government 'they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.'"

Very touching is the humble confession with which Zeller introduces his appeal to his fellow-labourers among the poor people, not to suffer the Bible to be taken away from the schools: "I must admit that sometimes, in moments of despondency, I have been tempted to exclude Biblical instruction from our system. I confess this weakness with shame, hoping that many of my fellow-labourers will be encouraged to read and explain the Word of God to the children, even should no fruit be perceptible. Perhaps this despondency would not have pressed so heavily upon me, had I not often, confident in my supposed dexterity in teaching, neglected to prepare myself for the Bible class by secret prayer to the Saviour, who is the door of his sheep. Consequently, the door-keeper, the Holy Spirit, did not open the door, and I fell into unmeaning verbiage and mere words, by which no impression was made upon the heart, and the sheep did not know the strange voice. The Word of God is far too good and holy for such barren expositions. But it is as a refreshing draught from the everlasting fountain when it is administered pure and clear, with a believing heart, sanctified and strengthened by prayer. Deeply convinced of this truth, I hereby declare that I know no substitute for biblical instruction; that I consider the withdrawal of the Bible from the schools as a sin, and that I look upon any school where such robbery has been committed as stricken with the judgment of God."

Of course the man who preached such doctrine was called a fanatic by men clothed in soft raiment. But where the world at large, and the schools for youth in particular, are in such an unchristian state, surely a man who unfolds the banner of the cross as the only safeguard, and holds up the Bible as the only true weapon against imminent danger, must be looked upon as a noble hero, whose "fanaticism" is a blessing to his country. No wonder, indeed, that Mr. Zeller, after having himself set the example, left no opportunity untried to incite his friends to found Christian schools, and, above all, such establishments for poor children as his own. And it is calculated that not less than between forty and fifty establishments for the poor have been erected in Switzerland and Germany, on the model of the Beuggen School, in consequence of Zeller's incessant exhortations and appeals.

Still the system was neither his hobby nor his idol. If the poor children could have been rescued without the aid of establishments, none would have rejoiced more than Zeller. "I thank God," he wrote in 1829, "that so many refuges have been opened from the Baltic to the Lake of Geneva. But, dear friends, the establishments are not sufficient, and but for God's gracious care they might even turn hot-beds of corruption. I therefore beseech you not to rely on them, and least of all on the large ones. To strike at the root of the evil, the rescuing of neglected children must become a concern of the *Christian family*, and their education must be carried on in the Christian family circle. If in each community only two or three of the poorest children were trained by a Christian schoolmaster, or some other head of a family, something good would be effected. A married couple could easily, and without much expense, take two or three children; for their support would not cost so much as the indulgence of a besetting sin. Only a few voluntary subscribers would be required to enable a poor head of a family to share his bread with the miserable. Thus gradually all existing establishments for training poor children would be superseded. What is the reason there are no children from Steinthal in our establishment? Because so long as the Spirit ruled in Steinthal, through that man of God, Oberlin, no child was neglected in the community. And how was it that there were no neglected children at Steinthal? Because there were always some married couples there who voluntarily took the orphans of their deceased neighbours."

These and similar hints were not without their effect. Some time after this last appeal a Christian family, not far from Zürich, requested Mr. Zeller to send them a child. One of the most wretched children, a fatherless and homeless girl, was selected from the Beuggen family, and transferred with joy to her new home. "Would to God," Mr. Zeller wrote on this occasion, "that fifty other families would do the same! The expense of a whole establishment would be saved, and the work be, perhaps, better done."

Such was the work and such the spirit of a man whose name is only known in the comparatively small circle of Christian philanthropists, but who, had he only served some earthly king on the field of battle, would have earned a celebrity equal to that of the greatest heroes. Nor did he limit his labours within the narrow sphere of Beuggen. It sounds almost incredible, yet it is a fact, that this man, who had upon his shoulders such a laborious work, could yet find time to issue various works on education and school-training, which are highly appreciated by teachers of all classes and countries. His excellent little book, "Lessons of Experience for Christian Teachers of the Poor," has been since 1854 recommended by the Prussian Government in its regulations for the organisation of evangelical seminaries. But among all his writings his excellent *Monatsblatt von Beuggen* ("Monthly Journal of Beuggen") undoubtedly ranks foremost. This paper consists of eight quarto pages. Various religious subjects, both doctrinal and practical, are discussed in it in a popular style. Mr. Zeller conducted it for thirty-two years, chiefly with the intention of making it serve as a medium of correspondence between the establishment and the brethren who were labouring in various parts of the world. It is still continued by his excellent son and successor, Mr. Reinhardt Zeller. Perhaps there never was a periodical published in the German tongue which had such an extensive and beneficial influence upon school and family life. Wherever there is a Christian philanthropic establishment, or a Christian school, or even a Christian family taking interest in philanthropic pursuits in the south of Germany, Zeller's "Monatsblatt" is to be found in the library, in the study, or on the book-shelf of the parlour.

Christian Heinrich Zeller. (From a Photograph.)

Mr. Zeller's excellent wife was about ten years younger than him, yet he survived her two years. She died in 1858, at the age of sixty-seven. She had five children when, with joyful confidence in God, she followed her husband to Beuggen. Here she gave birth to other six. But the care of this large family did not make her shrink from taking the superintendence of a household of about a hundred and twenty persons. "During thirty-eight years," Zeller wrote after her funeral, "she fulfilled her arduous task with such faithfulness and activity, that she was the soul of the economical department of our establishment. But she was more than that. She also assisted in the education of five hundred and seventy-two poor children, and two hundred and forty poor pupil-teachers. She attended them both in health and sickness, and stood by the death-beds of many of them. Such was her self-sacrificing love, that I may point her out as a blessed pattern of a Christian mother."

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. This commandment of God is chiefly . . . . . ." Thus ends a portion of an article on Acts iii. 19—21, in the June part of the "Monatsblatt" of 1860. They were the last words that came from the pen of the venerable patriarch. It ever was his prayer that God might spare him the misery of a decrepit old age, and permit him to die in harness. This desire was vouchsafed to him. On the 11th of May, 1860, he conducted the morning prayers of the whole establishment, and the Bible-class of the pupil-teachers. This was his last work. Inflammation of the lungs laid him on his dying-bed. He was aware of his condition, but no fear or doubt troubled the happy calmness of his soul. During seven days he lay quiet and still as a child on the bosom of its mother. But on his last night he seemed to be inspired with a spirit from on high. With extraordinary bodily exertion he spoke, both consciously and unconsciously, words of spirit and power, which made an undying impression on the bystanders. "Do you know Jesus still?" some one asked. "How can you ask that?" was the reply. "I stand in a personal relation to Him, which has lasted for years, and has never been interrupted. Jesus Christ is the only true foundation. Whoever lays another foundation cannot stand — he is condemned." He spoke a few words to the pupil-teachers. He blessed the children. Once more he opened his kind eyes. Then they were shut never to be opened again. He died

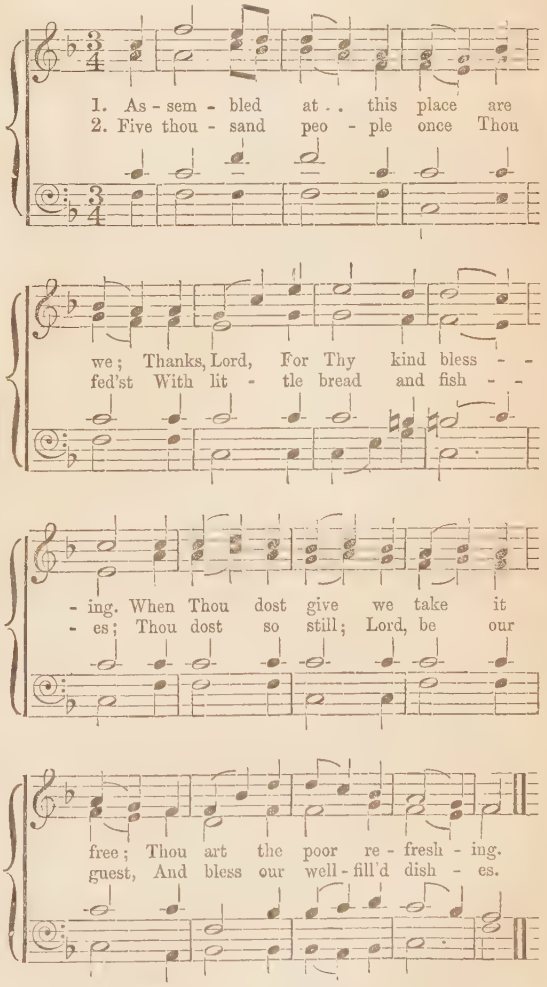
on the 18th of May, 1860, at the age of eighty-one.

It must have been a touching sight when, on the 20th of May, seventy children and fifty pupil-teachers, together with a band of more than a hundred friends, gathered round his grave to bid the last farewell to their beloved father and friend. The late Professor Auberlen, of Basle, the intimate friend and admirer of the deceased, pronounced his funeral oration. Among other things he said, "Zeller's greatness consisted in his keeping himself so humble. . . . With the most simple means he accomplished great things. . . . Zeller reminded one of such men as Boos and Flattich. He had many features in common with both. In theology he was a man of Bengel's school, especially in this, that to him the prophetic word was essential to the right understanding of Scripture. He liked to speak very much about the *magnalia Dei* (the glories of God), and often in his own characteristic way he would change the word into '*hab*alia,' adding, '*Have, have*, we must *have* it!'"

VII.—BEUGGEN TO-DAY.

The Rev. Reinhardt Zeller continues the work in the same spirit in which it was carried on by his godly and venerable father. He is assisted by his brother, Mr. Nathaniel Zeller. Mr. Reinhardt Zeller is about thirty years of age, and if he and his consort are permitted to equal their predecessors in length of days, as they resemble them in love and zeal, Beuggen has still many a happy year in prospect. Travellers, who may happen to be at Basle or its neighbourhood, should, by all means, try to spend a Sunday at Beuggen. If the Lord's day is kept in a Christian spirit anywhere, it is at this quiet, hallowed spot, where a little church of Christ, secluded from the bustle of the world, and living in all the charming simplicity of a patriarchial household, stands as a marvellous monument of the power of the Gospel, as a protest against sin, and as a refuge from misery. I shall never forget the impression which the sight of that little congregation made upon me when I entered at half-past nine a.m. the large school-room, where seventy children were seated on benches before the desk at which Mr. Zeller stood. Sixteen pupil-teachers, together with the other adult members of the household, sat behind them. The hymn, sung in four parts with remarkable correctness, seemed almost to transport the soul to the fields of Bethlehem on Christmas eve. The prayers, short and pithy, were simple enough to be the vehicles of children's thoughts, and sublime enough to carry the minds of all the audience up to the greatest heights. The sermon, from Rom. xiii. 11—14, was as telling upon the heart as it was quaintly divided. Each of its three parts was headed by a preposition thus: *Up!* (ver. 11, Awake out of sleep); *Off!* (ver. 12, Cast *off* the works of darkness); *On!* (verses 12 and 14, Put *on* the armour of light; put *on* the Lord Jesus Christ). After the close of the service, the whole congregation rose, and remained standing. Mr. Zeller, leaving his desk, took the two youngest girls by the hand and walked out of the room, followed in orderly procession by the other children, to the singing of a hymn. This was a sight which it was impossible to witness without being deeply moved. Half an hour later I found the whole household assembled at dinner. More than a hundred individuals were seated at four long tables, with an order and quietness which could only be expected in a well-trained family of ordinary size. The Grace was sung to a tune, which by its sweet melody and correct harmony prepared us thankfully to accept the bountiful gifts of a merciful Giver. There is a special table-hymn for each day of the week, but I think the Sunday one excels them all, both in the beauty of its tune and the homeliness of its words. I cannot refrain from writing them down, hoping that those of my readers who are fond of music will thank me for this. What my translation may want in elegance of language, will I hope be made up for by correctness.

Table Hymn.—Before Dinner on Sunday.


1. As - sem - bled at . . this place are
2. Five thou - sand peo - ple once Thou
we; Thanks, Lord, For Thy kind bless - -
fed'st With lit - tle bread and fish - -
- ing. When Thou dost give we take it
- es; Thou dost so still; Lord, be our
free; Thou art the poor re - fresh - ing.
guest, And bless our well - fill'd dish - es.

I am not able to give statistics of the income and expenditure of the Beuggen establishment. It is, so far as I know, the only charitable institution in the world supported by voluntary contributions which publishes no list of subscribers or balance-sheet. Nor has a balance-sheet ever been asked for during

all the years of its existence. Mr. Zeller himself, and the twelve worthy and venerable Basle gentlemen who formed his committee, were the balance-sheet. And so the establishment continues to this day, cordially supported by voluntary gifts from all quarters, while only a few know how much comes in or how much is wanted.

And I could find only one table of statistics in Mr. Zeller's reports showing the condition of the children both in and out of the house at a certain period. It is in the report of 1843, when the institution had entered the twenty-fourth year of its existence. The total number of children admitted from the beginning of the establishment was at that time 335. Out of these there were :—

Married	40
Master Tradesmen, and supporting themselves honestly	54
Servants and apprentices	77
Behaving badly	23
Dead	23
Little or nothing known of	52
Still in the house	66
	335

Now, leaving out those still in the house, and those who had died, we find that 171 were known as having been successfully redeemed for human society. On the other hand, only 23 had turned out failures. This really shows a favourable proportion, which few establishments can boast of.

And here ends, for the present, the story of Beuggen Castle. And how can it better end than with Zeller's own words, written in 1853, at the close of his statistical review of the 212 pupil-teachers and 488 children, whom he had been permitted to train up :—

"Such a tree, with its numerous branches and twigs, has that little sprig become which was planted at Beuggen thirty-three years ago, and has lived through a series of fertile and of barren vicissitudes. These thirty-three years are the most beautiful and blessed period of my life. When looking back upon them from this my seventy-fifth year, I cannot but fall prostrate, full of gratitude and adoration, at the feet of the Lord, who is a father of the fatherless, a judge of the widows, and a refuge for the poor. We began here in April, 1820, without house or field, or even funds of our own, and we have continued to live till this moment in a hired establishment. But our heavenly Father has during these many years provided for us, and preserved us ; He mightily protected us at a time when we had no Government protection ; and He has so helped us through, that we never lacked what we needed, were always able to pay our rent and taxes, and were never compelled to run into debt. Keeping in mind that we have always had a household of about 108 persons, this is marvellous in our eyes, and is to me an experience which I shall never be able sufficiently to praise my God for."

JOHN DE LIEFDE.

JUDAS ISCARIOT.

THE sceptical tendency which from various causes has of late years acquired considerable strength, and eaten into the faith of many earnest and generous minds, has found it no difficult task to shake the credit of large portions of Scripture, by applying to them inapplicable tests and plunging the unlearned into questions which it requires some research to solve. But the Gospel History has proved "a burdensome stone" to it ; and, if we may judge from the success of the most recent and subtle attempts to destroy its credibility, is likely to fulfil that prediction of Him who is its glorious subject, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder." At present there is no disposition to deny the history *in toto*. Just now, even the most sceptical are ready to admit that there did exist some such person as the Gospel History describes, that he was a Jewish reformer, and that by his hostility to the reigning system of religion and the success with which he propagated his views he brought upon himself the deadly enmity of the rulers, and was put to death as an impostor under Pontius Pilate. But how much of the history contained in the Gospels is strictly historical, to what extent the story of Christ's life is faithfully told there, and how much of the teaching ascribed to him actually came from his lips—the sceptical tendency of our time considers an open question. On this question the views of the sceptically disposed are as various as are their own moral principles and tone of mind. While the men of purity, simplicity, and candour are prepared to read the whole history as genuine, save in so far as it runs counter to what they regard as fundamental principles—in contradiction to which nothing is to be received—the men of undevout mind and lax moral principles, if they read it at all, regard the Gospel History as merely a refined exhibition of religious morality, on an historical basis and a Jewish foundation, which the advanced condition of humanity and the altered state of society has in a great measure superannuated ; though they are ready to admit that a large residuum of truth, for which the world is indebted to Christianity, is destined to enduring life and efficacy among men. Widely, however, as these two classes differ from each other, there is one thing in which they emphatically agree : they reject in common the *supernatural* element in the Gospel History. To read what the best of them write, one would think the line of demarcation between them and orthodox believers in the Gospel of Christ so exceedingly narrow, that to class such with the sceptical rejecters of Christianty would seem harsh and narrow-minded. But the best and the worst have in reality far more in common than what divides them. He who believes that Jesus of Nazareth had in no other sense a *Divine Mission* than any other man

whom Providence raises up from time to time to redress the wrongs of society, and benefit his kind—he who believes that He uttered nothing, wrought nothing, and suffered nothing but what can be accounted for on *natural principles*—is as really an *unbeliever*, however lofty may be his admiration and even love of his character, as the man whose scepticism permits him to deny the heroism, impugn the wisdom, and assail the moral character of Christ. For, to *believe* in Jesus is not to admit his historical existence and think well of Him as a teacher and benefactor of men, even though we should do this in no ordinary degree. Men are not called believers in Socrates, or in Luther, merely because they give credence to what history records of them, and have formed a high opinion of their services to society. To believe in Jesus, or to be a Christian in the lowest admissible sense of the phrase, is to take the view of Him given in the Gospel History—as supernaturally born into the world, supernaturally commissioned to the work which He did, supernaturally attesting that commission as one directly from heaven, and supernaturally declared to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead, his ascension into heaven, and the descent of the Spirit supernaturally thereafter. He who does not believe this is no more a Christian, in any proper sense of the term, than he who sits loose to the entire History.

It is not the purpose of this paper to re-open the question of the truth of the Gospel History; but, taking one of the most remarkable of its subordinate features—what relates to Judas Iscariot,—to examine it in detail, partly as one of the severest tests by which to try whether it be possible to receive the History without taking it *entire;* but partly also for its own sake, as perhaps the most deeply instructive portion of the History next to what relates to Christ Himself.

In every tragic story, some provision must be made for securing that the final catastrophe shall be brought about naturally. The mere existence of a traitor, then, among the more immediate followers of Jesus, by whom He should be eventually betrayed into the hands of his enemies, would be no startling feature in a concerted story of his death. But the entire history of the traitor, as we find it in the four Gospels, presents details so minute and diversified, and when viewed as a whole stands out in such marvellous unity and consistency, as we venture to pronounce unattainable by art and only conceivable as actual history.

The first notice which we have of this man is in the lists of the Twelve whom Jesus chose as his most intimate associates, to be the recipients of his whole teaching, and the first propagators of his doctrine—whom therefore He named *Apostles*. We have three such lists—one in each of the first three Gospels—all containing the same names, all beginning with Peter, and all ending with Judas. There is another list of them in the opening chapter of the Acts, also containing the same names and beginning with Peter; but as they are there named only as part of the hundred and twenty who assembled in the upper room after the ascension of their Master, the name of Judas, who had by that time "gone to his own place," is of course excluded.

He is surnamed "Iscariot," that is, "Judas of Kerioth," a town in the territory of Judah (Josh. xv. 25), to distinguish him from "Judas the brother of James," another of the Apostles (Luke vi. 16). By what motive was Jesus influenced in choosing this man to be an Apostle? It will not do to answer, that it was on purpose to provide a traitor in his person. There are those who have not scrupled to say and write this, as an adequate explanation of the choice in question. But it is no explanation at all. That he did betray his Master is no evidence that he was chosen for that purpose, and to say so seems to border on a fatalistic position. Christ says He will eventually condemn the unbelieving world; but He expressly says He did not come for this purpose, but, on the contrary, that the world through Him might be saved. That Judas, in the spontaneous development of his own character, *would* betray his Lord, was doubtless foreseen and as certainly provided for. But when this is conceded, we have still to inquire by what consideration Jesus was probably influenced in the choice of this man as one of the Twelve.

The question may, perhaps, be answered by applying it to the choice of the rest; and as no reasons are given for the selection of any of them, we are thrown back upon such general considerations as the following. As the ministry of Christ had lasted some time before the choice of the Twelve, during which time He was followed by large numbers partially, and by a few from the first without ever leaving Him, there can be no reasonable doubt that in selecting twelve of these for such a purpose as we have mentioned, He would fix upon those who had either made the greatest progress in the apprehension of his views, or who showed the greatest aptitude to take them in. And as we know of some of them that they had been John's disciples before they attached themselves to Christ, and as such must have made considerable progress in the knowledge of some of the principles of Christ's kingdom, it is not unlikely that all the Twelve (save perhaps Matthew) had been disciples of John, and become constant followers of Jesus just in consequence of John's teaching. At all events, it appears to us next to certain, either that Judas had been one of these—drafted out of the Baptist's ranks into those of Christ—or that he had shown such steadiness in following Jesus, such interest in his ministry, and such aptitude to take in what He taught, as to be on a level in all these respects with the rest of the Twelve. Certain it is, that no trace of the contrary can be discovered in any of the Gospels, and but for the concluding scenes of the History, no reader of it would gather that one of the Twelve differed in character from all his fellows. If there was a radical defect in the moral and religious character of Judas, it certainly remained undeveloped, even to his constant associates, up to the fatal night when they all met for the last time together.

In one thing, at least, some superiority to his fellows must have been seen in Judas. From the time when Jesus chose the Twelve, "that they might be with

Him," up to the time when "they all forsook Him and fled," they made up one family. They travelled together, took their meals together, and must have had but one purse—unless on such exceptional occasions as when those blessed women "who had been healed by Jesus of evil spirits and infirmities," went up and down with Him in one of his Galilean tours, and "ministered to them of their substance." Well, for this family a purse-bearer was required; and of all the Twelve Judas was the one selected for that office. Here again, it is easy to say that this was with the view of furnishing his covetous heart with the required facilities for discovering its detestable character. But this is a poor, not to say unworthy, account of the matter. As well might we say that the innocent occasions of every atrocity done under the sun are divinely furnished for no other end than to develop the wickedness of man. In the present case, we have no doubt that Judas had shown a capacity above his fellows for this particular post—a certain shrewd, ready, wide-awake aptitude for taking the management of the small property of this travelling family—and that in a degree to justify to the rest the choice made of him, and keep him to the last in possession of their good opinion. One circumstance regarding him—mentioned in the only place where we are informed of his holding this post at all—may help to confirm this. "He was a thief (says the fourth Evangelist), and had the bag,* and bare what was put therein" (John xii. 6).† Now though it requires no cleverness to purloin, to purloin from a treasury which at no time could be large, and which we know to have been sometimes low indeed, and do this often enough to justify the charge of his being "a thief," without ever being discovered or even suspected up to the last by any of his fellows, though in daily and hourly communication with him,—this must have demanded no ordinary adroitness; a faculty only evil when ill-employed, and capable of being turned to the best ends.

How early that covetous disposition which lay at the root of his thievishness, and ultimately proved the ruin of Judas, began to put itself forth in the way of meddling with the bag, it is impossible to tell. But one allusion to his reprobate character, the meaning of which none of the rest appear to have apprehended, would seem to show that not many months had elapsed before he began to put forth his hand to the sacred property. It was during some time in the second year of our Lord's ministry, as we take it, that the Twelve were chosen. Before the Passover of the following year Jesus had risen to the zenith of his reputation in Galilee; the crowning manifestation of which was that, having fed five thousand besides women and children on a few loaves and fishes, they could hardly be restrained from taking Him by force and making Him a king. That night He crossed the sea of Galilee, "walking on the water;" and the next day, in the synagogue of Capernaum, He spoke that wonderful discourse about "the bread of life," which by the harshness of its phraseology seemed intended to drive all but determined believers away from Him. This accordingly was the result with "many of his disciples," who "from that time went back and walked no more with Him." Even the Twelve seem to have been staggered; for it is added, "Then said Jesus, will ye also go away?" to which Peter made that noble reply, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life; and we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." It was this that brought out that startling announcement, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is *a devil?*" (John vi. 70.) Possibly this meant nothing more than that the diabolical character who was destined to betray Him was already within the small circle of the Twelve, and the explanatory remark of the Evangelist (v. 71) may perhaps confirm this. But to us it would seem to imply further, that the passion which was to come out at length in so diabolical a form had already been fed by the charge of the bag, and that petty appropriations of its contents had already been begun to be practised.

Still we think there is evidence not only that not the least suspicion attached to Judas, but that he exercised considerable influence over the rest of the Twelve. As this may seem a strange position, we must here state on what we ground it. Look, then, first, at the memorable scene of the Anointing at Bethany, only six days before His death. When Mary expended her alabaster box of very precious ointment on the person of her Lord, it is said by Matthew (who must have been himself present) that "when *his disciples* saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste" (Matt. xxvi. 8, 9), &c. It is true that Mark limits this remark to "some" of them (Mark xiv. 4, 5). But though it evidently came from the lips of one, the statement of both of these Evangelists clearly implies that it was echoed, or at least found a silent response, in the minds of some of the others, if not of them all. Now John explicitly tells us that it came from Judas Iscariot (John xii. 4, &c.), and his language conveys the impression that it was an unworthy and ungenerous speech—such a speech as only such a man might be expected to make. How, then, came it to be echoed by the rest? To us it seems that not the plausibility of the speech itself—its apparent piety or philanthropy—so much as the influence which Judas exercised among his brethren, led them all too thoughtlessly to second his regret at such profuse expenditure. Now apply this thought to some other scenes, and see if it will not throw light upon certain things not otherwise easily explained.

Shortly after the feeding of the *four* thousand, Jesus had directed the Twelve to cross with Him to the other side of the lake; and seizing the opportunity of his being alone with them on the passage, He began to warn them against "the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod" (Mark viii. 13, &c.). What did they think He was speaking of under the name of "leaven"? No one could possibly guess it, but for the following explanation of it given by the Evangelist: "Now the disciples had

* Τὸ γλωσσόκομον, the scrip, or treasure-chest.

† There is no necessity for taking the expression, "*bare* what was put therein," in the sense of "bare it *off*" or "purloined" it. Theophylact, Meyer, De Wette—in his translation, but not in his commentary—and Archbishop Trench, so understand it. But the Vulgate, Luther, Beza, Luthardt, Alford, &c., take the word (ἐβάσταζεν) in its strict sense, of being simply the *bearer* of the little family treasure—as our version, we think, rightly does—giving, of course, his thievish propensity the occasions it sought.

forgotten to take (a supply of) bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread." This misunderstanding was so childish, that one is fain to inquire how such a thing could have occurred to them. Now there was one man among them, whose business it was, as the purveyor of the party, to see that their wants were properly attended to; and Judas, on the word "leaven" being uttered in the form of a warning, remembering probably for the first time his neglect of duty, would at once connect the two things together, and whispering to those nearest to him the emptiness of the bag, would suggest this as the likely cause of the mysterious warning; while they, knowing nothing probably about this want of provisions until informed of it by Judas, and quite at a loss to know what Jesus was referring to, might be disposed for a moment to defer to Judas, and take in the explanation which he had suggested. Only in this way does it seem possible to account for so preposterous a misunderstanding being taken up by any number of the Twelve; and if there be anything in it, it shows, not only that the real character of Judas was at this date quite unsuspected, but that his opinion carried some weight with his fellow Apostles. The effect which this gross misconception of his meaning had upon the mind of Christ is one of the finest strokes of real history—which no art would ever have dreamt of—to be found in all the Gospels. The *nine* questions, following each other in rapid succession, show how deeply He was hurt at this want of spiritual apprehension, and worse still, at their low thoughts of Himself—as if He would utter so solemn a warning on so petty a subject. It will be seen, too, from the very form of their conjecture—"It is because *we* have no bread"—and his astonishment that they should not by that time have known better what He took up his attention with, that He was accustomed to leave the whole care of his temporal wants to the Twelve (whose servant in such matters Judas was); that, finding they were now reduced to their last loaf, they felt as if unworthy of such a trust, and could not but think that the same thought was passing through their Lord's mind; but that in this they were so far wrong, that it hurt his feelings—sharp in proportion to his love—that such a thought of Him should have entered their minds. Whether we are right in thinking that Judas was at the bottom of this little incident or no, one thing must be clear to every impartial and thoughtful reader of the narrative, that it must have been fact before it became history, that no such triviality would ever have occurred, and certainly would never have been *so* conceived, by any writer of unreal history, or the mere embellisher of a few leading facts with incidents which never happened.

Again, the strifes which after this occurred among the Twelve, who should be the greatest in the expected kingdom, receive some light from the position of influence which we have supposed that Judas occupied among them. Human nature being what it is, it would have been surprising if the marked distinction bestowed upon three of them, on more than one important occasion, had not stirred up in the breasts of the rest a measure of jealousy. It will be remembered that Peter, and James, and John, were alone permitted to witness the Healing of Peter's mother-in-law, the Resuscitation of Jairus' daughter, and the Transfiguration. But even of these three, one had been early singled out as destined to occupy a peculiar place in the coming kingdom, and, by his warmth of attachment and readiness to speak and act on all occasions for his Master, had given evidence of his fitness for any post of honour. Still, these three men were as yet but ill able to bear the honour that was put upon them. As for Peter, he was so lifted off his feet by the benediction pronounced upon him, and the distinction promised him in the kingdom which was soon to be set up upon earth, that he ventured to take his Master to task for announcing to them his bloody death as an event which would precede the erection of his kingdom; and the other two, not very long after, put up their mother to solicit from Jesus that the one of them should sit on his right hand, and the other on his left, in the coming kingdom. The "indignation" which this presumption kindled in "the ten" is nothing more than we should have expected. But what adds point to this is, that it seems to have been but the crisis of a number of exasperating dissensions on the same miserable subject. One of these had occurred on their way back from their long journey to Cæsarea Philippi, whither He appears to have taken them with no other view than to break to them for the first time—aside from all their wonted haunts—the tidings of his approaching death. He had repeated this announcement ere they returned to Capernaum; and having there left them to travel by themselves, they fell to disputing which of them should be greatest in the coming kingdom—as if the sad tidings which had greeted their ears had only whetted their confidence in its near approach, and revived all their old jealousies at the preference shown for some of them above the rest. Scarcely had they got home to Capernaum, when Jesus startled and confounded them by inquiring what they had been disputing about by the way. Put to the blush by this unexpected home-thrust, they held their peace. Whereupon Jesus, taking a little child and placing it in the midst, read them that lesson of humility with which our very children are familiar (Mark viii. 27, ix. 37). But this was not the end of it. For when we find Him going on from this subject to warn them at great length, and in the most awful terms, against placing stumbling-blocks in the way of others, to the danger of their souls, and Peter, in the midst of this, eagerly inquiring how oft *his brother* was to sin against him and be forgiven—"till seven times?"—we cannot resist the impression that some one of the Twelve was that "brother;" that in the recent hot dispute he had been putting His forbearance to the utmost test; and that this provocation had been but a repetition of similar treatment on former occasions from the same person. And if there was one of the Twelve to whom Peter had been an object of special envy, and his forwardness in always answering for the rest had been cast up to him by this person, can there be a doubt who that

would be? And if done with that kind of address which an adroit but dark-minded person would know how to use, it would find a response in the unsuspecting minds of the rest, and this would only render it harder to endure. Jesus, however, though He answered Peter's question, made no allusion to the quarter whence the trial probably came, and so the matter was hushed up for the time. But only for a time; for it broke out afresh on an occasion of all others the least likely, one should think, to reopen it. It is the third Evangelist only who mentions it. Immediately after the institution of the Supper, our Lord (he says) added these words, "But behold the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table," &c. And after saying that this led to an inquiry among themselves who the wretch could be, he adds these words, "And there was [or, there had been] a strife among them which of them should be accounted the greatest" (Luke xxii. 24). This occurred probably just before sitting down to the paschal supper, and perhaps it arose from seeing the whole paschal arrangements committed to two of the Twelve—as if this were designed to prepare the rest for the precedency of those two in that kingdom which they seemed to think on the very eve of being set up.

Our object in referring to these incidents has been to put before our readers the following impressions regarding Judas: that, since there were little jealousies among the Twelve on the subject of precedency in the expected kingdom, which seemed ready to be kindled afresh whenever any distinction was put upon one or two of them, and particularly when Peter stepped forward in speech or action before the rest; and since these jealousies were not likely to be felt by all alike, and to break forth simultaneously from every one of them, it is all but certain that some one took the lead in giving utterance to those hurt feelings—and in that case it would surely be the one most given to suspicion, the one to whom unworthy motives would most naturally occur, the one who could least keep such impressions of his brethren within his own breast, yet one who had sufficient address to convey his thoughts in a plausible form, so as to carry the rest along with him. If there be anything in this, there can be no doubt who that would be. And if Judas, after being chosen out of all the Twelve to "have the bag and bear what was put therein," and flattering himself from this that he was high in the confidence of his Master, found that others were entrusted with what was more important, and were manifestly preferred to him, it is easy to see how in a mind like his all that was unworthy would brood and gain strength, and how, if at all adroit, he might work upon the natural infirmities of his unsuspecting fellows and stir up ever and anon unwholesome suspicions and misunderstandings. Still, it is not to be forgotten that up to the very last he maintained his character with the rest, and was never suspected by them till the moment when, believing himself exposed, he went suddenly out from the supper-table to do the deed of darkness.

One other startling fact regarding Judas, before we come to speak of his treason, must not be overlooked. He was sent forth by Jesus, as one of the Twelve, to preach the Gospel of the kingdom and accredit his mission by "healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, and casting out devils." There being twelve of them, all of whom were sent out two and two, there can be no doubt of Judas having had the same commission as all the rest. This is certainly staggering. That a hypocrite should preach as soundly and as eloquently as the most sincere follower of the Lord Jesus, is not so difficult to understand. But that he should be *sent* by Him to whom all hearts were open, is what one would not so readily imagine. But so it was in the case of Judas; and to us it is clear that our Lord had just such cases as his in view, when He said that many should come to Him in the great day and say, "Lord, Lord, have we not *prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name have cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works?*" And the answer which He is to give—"And then will I profess [or protest] unto them, *I never knew you;* depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. vii. 22, 23)—seems expressly designed as a solemn intimation that such a ministry, though in one sense Divine, and carrying with it the apparent signature of Heaven, was no evidence of personal approval, and might be found to consist with a reprobate heart.

But we must now hasten to the *treason*. The more immediate occasion of it seems to have been what passed at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, six days before the last Passover; but this only brought to a head what must have been meditated once and again. As every passion grows by exercise, so the theftuous disposition of Judas would gather strength by every undetected appropriation of the sacred property. At length, "the devil, walking about seeking whom he might devour," and seeing this door standing wide open, determined to enter by it, but cautiously (2 Cor. ii. 11) at first; merely "putting it into his heart to betray" his Master (John xiii. 2), or whispering the thought whether by such a step he might not enrich himself, while He who had wrought so many miracles for the benefit of others would surely, when the danger became extreme, miraculously extricate himself. The next stage would be the conversion of that thought into a settled purpose to do it; but to this he would be loath to come till something occurred to fix it, and that something seems to have been the manner in which his indignation at Mary's wasteful expenditure of precious money on a mere perfume was received by Jesus. His remark had been caught up by others in the company; and coming, as it did, from him who had the care both of the economics and of the charity of the sacred family, he would expect it to elicit general approval for its good sense and piety. Instead of this, to have it rebuked by the Master, and held up as unseasonable, ungenerous, and wanting in that supreme devotion to Himself which was expected—if not indeed hypocritical—this could hardly fail to gall to the quick the man who, up to this time, had stood so well; and if along with this there was the feeling of disappointment at the large sum expended on the ointment being lost to himself, we can easily conceive that the chagrin with which he withdrew from this supper would

suffice to crystallize into a diabolical purpose what had till then been but a floating speculation. Three or four days, however, might easily elapse before he was able to brace himself up to the necessary steps; nor indeed did the opportunity occur until "two days before the Passover" (Mark xiv. 1), when the chief priests and scribes were seeking how they might contrive to get hold of Him when He came up to the feast, without raising a tumult in the crowded city. Just at this time Judas made his appearance among them, and to their great delight showed them how the thing could be done without any noise. So a bargain was struck up between them; and for thirty pieces of silver—the fine paid for man or maid-servant accidentally killed (Exod. xx. 32), and amounting to less than five pounds sterling—did this wretched man engage to betray his Lord into the hands of those who were thirsting for his blood.

Still he had two days to reconsider his bargain, and a last opportunity of retracing his steps was afforded him at the paschal and eucharistic Supper in the upper room. But instead of quailing, he appears to have sat down with the rest, eaten the Passover, and even allowed Jesus to wash his feet—as He did to all the rest—unmoved. The Master could with difficulty endure this, and in the midst of the operation said enough to make the most unsuspecting among them feel that all was not as it should be. "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For He knew who should betray him; therefore said He, Ye are not all clean. . . . . If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass ye may believe that I am He." Still this was not plain enough; and as the time was hastening on, and He had much to say to the Eleven which it would have been incongruous, and hardly possible, to utter while the traitor was with them, He felt it was necessary to be plainer still, and precipitate the exit of the false-hearted one. So "when Jesus had thus said, He was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me." Horror-stricken, the simple-minded disciples first looked one on another, and then each one turning his thoughts inwards upon himself, asked his Lord if he was the wretch that was to do such a deed—until Judas himself was forced to do the same. Peter, impatient to know the truth, gets the beloved disciple, who lay next to Him, to find it out, and by a concerted sign this was accordingly done. Meantime, Jesus, proceeding with his discourse, says, "And truly the Son of Man goeth as it was determined; but woe unto that man by whom He is betrayed." On this, it would appear, "Jesus when He had dipped the sop, gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon." It was a piece of bread soaked either in the wine, or the sauce of a dish; and the giving of this at a meal by one to another, was an ancient expression of regard. This act then, while it sufficed to point out the traitor quietly to the inquirers, was an affecting expression—and the last—of the Saviour's wounded love; and the words of the Psalm which Jesus quoted give us a glimpse of the feeling with which He regarded it: "He that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me." Still, Judas is not quite ripe for the deed of darkness; he has yet to be steeled against all compunction; but the time for that has now come. In what a way is it done? "And after the sop Satan *entered into him.*" There is something appalling in the successive stages by which he reached the climax of his guilt. First, "the devil (simply) *put it into his heart* to betray" Him. But many a struggle may he have endured ere he could nerve himself for the deed. Even with the thirty pieces of silver in his hand, he probably still quailed at the thought of such an act, and for such a sum—the price of the lowest slave! When Jesus stooped to wash his feet, the last struggle may have been only reaching its crisis. But that word, about one that did eat of His bread lifting his heel against Him; the still more explicit announcement that a traitor was at the table; the inquiry which was forced out of him, after it had come from all the rest, "Master, is it I?" and above all, the answer (certainly not audible to the rest), "Thou hast said it" (Matt. xxvi. 24)—would make the feeling irresistible, "I am detected, it is now too late to draw back." And the sop given, and Satan now seated in his breast, he says to himself, with hell in his bosom, "The die is cast—now let me go through with it—Fear, begone!" Jesus, having His eye full upon all this, can endure the man's presence no longer. "Then said Jesus, That thou doest, do quickly." Still, so far were the other disciples from knowing what this meant, that they took it to be some hint to him about future arrangements as treasurer of the family—some supposing it meant something he was to buy for the feast, and others, that he was to give something to the poor. Dear, unsuspecting, happy souls! To you such treason is inconceivable, and the traitor himself, up to this last moment, unimagined. But the mask shall now be torn off, and by himself—"He then having received the sop, went immediately out (thus severing himself for ever from that holy society with which he never had any spiritual sympathy); and it was night"—but far blacker night in the soul of Judas than in the sky over his head.

What does Judas go out to do? To await the exit of the party he has left. But they are not in such haste as he is. For Jesus now, for the first time since Judas entered the sacred circle, felt Himself entirely free with them. Up to this moment there had been more or less restraint, and at the Last Supper, such expressions as "I speak not of you all," "Ye are not all clean," &c., show how painful this restraint had at length become. But the embankment which kept in the volume of living waters having broken down, they burst out, the moment that Judas departed, in a torrent which only ceased on His leaving the supper-room and entering on the next scene of His work—the Agony in the garden. Judas must wait for all that. Those exalted strains in which the Redeemer is now free to address his dear disciples, must have leave to utter themselves

all forth; and those still higher strains in which He pours out his heart into his Father's ear must be permitted to wind up the never-to-be-forgotten scene in the paschal chamber. Nor is all ready for thee yet, Judas. They have indeed issued forth, and Jesus has "gone forth with his disciples over the brook Kedron, where was a garden into the which He entered and his disciples." But matters are not yet ready. Judas knows the place, and expects his Master there, "for Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with his disciples." But "the band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, with their lanterns and torches and weapons" had not arrived. So Judas can do no business yet. Nor, even if they had arrived, should he have had permission; for the mysterious scene of the Agony has yet to be gone through. But what did that mean? Let us see. The view of all that awaited Him came full upon Him. As He felt it coming on, He retired from all but three of the Eleven—His chosen Three—and beginning to be sorrowful and very heavy, He bid them stay together, and watch with Him. The whole bitterness of the cup seemed all at once to rush upon Him, and weigh Him down, even there, to the dust of death. He fell on his face and prayed that if it were possible it might pass from Him. The oppression waxing more intolerable, He could abide the presence even of those Three no longer: so, withdrawing from them about a stone's cast, and having strength for still further endurance supernaturally supplied to Him, He agonized at the sight of the cup which he had to drink, until his sweat was as it were clots of blood* falling down to the ground. But at length the horrors of the cup all disappeared in the glory of an absolute surrender to his Father's will. "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" The bitterness of death is past. The final conflict, full in view, has been anticipated and rehearsed. The victory has been already won on the theatre of an invincible *will* to "give his life a ranson for many;" and it only remains to win it on the arena of the Cross. For that He is now all ready. So, coming to his disciples, whom he finds sleeping, He says, "Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me." While He yet spake the traitor was advancing, having along with him a great multitude with lanterns and torches, swords and staves. For what purpose? It was full moon, but in case He should have secreted Himself somewhere in the dark ravine, they bring the means of exploring its hiding-places—little knowing Whom they had to do with. "Now he that betrayed Him had given them a sign, saying, whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he—hold him fast" (Matt. xxvi. 48)—a speech whose cold-bloodedness was only exceeded by the deed itself. "And Judas went before them, and said, Hail, Master, and kissed him."† The last remains of compunction must have been got rid of ere this act, and the speech that accompanied it, could become possible. "And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come?‡ Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?"—imprinting on the foulest of all acts the mark of tenderest affection. Such wounded susceptibility—common to all generous and beautiful natures—had been partially shown before, but never with such intensity as here.

The wages of iniquity have been well earned; Jesus is a prisoner in the hands of his enemies; all his disciples have forsaken Him and fled; Judas alone walks secure, and is four or five pounds richer than before. What will he do now? Perhaps he was scarcely prepared for the unresisting submission of the betrayed One to be led as a lamb to the slaughter, and he will wait to see what happens. But as he follows the crowd to the palace of the High Priest, the horrors of his crime rise up before him, and with each piece of intelligence as to what is passing within, which he eagerly picks up, the blackness of his deed thickens around him. At length, the trial being over, sentence of death passed, and the mockeries concluded, the judges issue forth and hand over the condemned One to the Roman governor for execution. At the sight of this, it should seem, the courage of Judas broke down; and, remorse taking possession of him, he hasted to rid himself, first of the burning bribe, and then of life itself. "Then Judas which had betrayed Him (says the first Evangelist), *when he saw that he was condemned*, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders." How characteristic is this of the power of a stinging conscience! A short time before, the *promise* of this sordid pelf was temptation enough to his covetous heart to outweigh the most overwhelming obligations of truth, duty, and love; now the *possession* of it so lashes him that he cannot use it—cannot even keep it! But the speech with which he reappeared to those hard-visaged ecclesiastics, with whom he had so lately struck his bargain, is still more remarkable: "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood."* Observe the inexpressible force of this testimony from such lips. For three years had Judas been with Jesus in all circumstances: in public and in private, journeying and resting, at and after meals, his post as treasurer and purveyor (John xiii. 29) for the whole party gave him peculiar opportunity of watching the spirit, disposition, habits, and designs of his Master; while his covetous nature, thievish practices, and quick apprehensions, would incline him to put dark and suspicious, rather than frank and generous, interpretations on all that He said and did. If then he could have fastened on one crooked or questionable feature in all that he had so long witnessed, we may be very sure that no such speech would ever have come from his lips, nor would he have found any difficulty in keeping the money and surviving his crime. How then did the dark ecclesiastics receive this remarkable confession? In a way which we will venture to say must have been uttered first, in order to be written: "What is that to us? See thou to that." "Innocent blood, did you say?

* ὡσεὶ θρόμβοι αἵματος, Luke xxii. 44.

† Contrast 1 Sam. xx. 41, with Prov. xxvii. 6.

‡ The word here rendered "friend" ['Εταῖρε], signifies rather 'companionship,' as in mere social intercourse, and is used on other occasions of remonstrance or rebuke (Matt. xx. 13, xxii. 12). Very different is the endearing term properly rendered "friend" [φίλε], by which Jesus would have addressed a genuine disciple (Luke xii. 4; John xv. 13—15).

* More emphatically, 'I sinned in delivering up innocent blood'—Ἥμαρτον παραδοὺς αἷμα ἀθῷον.

That is your look-out: but we have him now—begone!' Hellish as the speech was, none who know what sacerdotal hypocrisy is capable of will think it, in the circumstances, unnatural from their lips. "And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple"*—his remorse being deepened, probably, into an agony of despair by the sarcastic, diabolical reply which he had got, in place of the sympathy which he would expect, and the arrest which possibly he hoped that it would lay upon the execution—"and departed, and went and hanged himself." What a crowning testimony to the innocence of his Master, and the unsupportable baseness of his own act!

But what is to be done with the money? "It is not lawful for us (they said) to put it into the treasury, because it is the price of blood." The consciences of those holy hypocrites would have been hurt by such a disposal of it: it must be put to some pious use. So, after consultation, it is resolved to buy with it a field called the Potter's Field, to bury strangers in: thus unconsciously fulfilling a prediction five centuries old (Zech. xi. 12, 13).

Such is the story of Judas Iscariot, as given in the Gospel History. And now let us go back upon it in thought, and see what it suggests to the intelligent and earnest reader.

1. Viewing it as a whole, from first to last, what unsophisticated reader will refuse to own that it bears the marks of unvarnished truth—not only of truth *in the main*, but of truth in all its details? In particular, that part of the traitor's story which begins with the supper at Bethany, six days before the last Passover, carries upon its face so many small marks of truth, that we venture to affirm the most practised pen would have found it hard to invent them, and harder still to give them the consistent and harmonious setting which they have in the Evangelical History. But we have this from four independent writers—three of them, at least, all unpractised in any kind of literature, and most certainly in the literature of fiction. Also in the brief dialogue between Judas and those to whom he sold his Master, we have a touch of nature which no art was likely to think of, revealing the workings of very different natures on the same events, both of them lost to all good, but the one in a way not in the least resembling the other. "I have sinned," exclaims the one: "Who cares for that?" reply the others. "I have betrayed innocent blood," rejoins he: "That is none of our business," answer they. The innocence of the Son of God was equally disregarded, and trodden under foot by both parties; but the one, knowing and feeling it, sacrificed and sold it for filthy lucre; while the others, steeling themselves against all evidence of the claims of Jesus, and determined to have Him put to death as an impious blasphemer, gloated over their success through the treason of Judas; and, far from being staggered at his repentance and appalled at his testimony to the innocence of Jesus, they only snapped their fingers, and turned their backs upon him. One and the same deed was regarded with horror by the one party, and by the other (who were "past feeling") with a cool satisfaction from which one shrinks almost more than from the desperation which drove the traitor so quickly to "his own place." Can this be fiction? But if not, then none of it can be fiction, for the different stages of his history so hang together that they cannot be torn asunder without destroying the whole: each presupposes, and would hardly be intelligible without the other. And since the tale of Judas covers almost the whole public life of Christ, as given in the Gospel History, if you admit the truth of what relates to *him* you virtually acknowledge the fidelity of the whole. Thus does the Gospel History approve itself from the consistency of even its subordinate features, and the harmony of its episodes with the main story.

2. Taking the story of Judas then, as we find it in the Gospel History, to be a record of facts, the next question is, by what motive was he chiefly influenced in betraying his Master? This will seem a useless question to those who never imagined and never heard of any other motive than that which stands out on the face of the narrative—the love of money. But the impression which the condemnation of Christ produced upon the traitor, and his inability thereafter to keep the bribe and endure life any longer, have led certain expositors to conclude that there must have been more in it than covetousness; that as the condemnation seems to have taken him by surprise, he must have expected a different issue; that in all probability his object was a good one, arising out of the views current among the Apostles themselves as to the nature and nearness of their Master's coming kingdom; and in short, that, cherishing a confident expectation of a high place in it, and impatient of delays, his object was to force on a crisis, and to hasten its manifestation. In this case they conclude that Judas must have expected that the betrayal would not issue in the actual seizure of Christ,—that it would be resisted,—or, at least, that matters would not be allowed to come to extremities; and that it was the failure of all these calculations, and the certainty that his Master's death was to be the issue of his treason, that appalled and horrified Judas, and precipitated his self-destruction. To this hypothesis it is enough to reply, that as not the most distant hint of it is given in any of the Gospels, so it is totally at variance with the character there given of him. The brand put on him is so black—without one ray of favourable light to relieve it—that before we can accept this theory we must set aside all that we read of him in the Gospel History; and since it is from this only that we know anything of him, we must reject it entirely as a groundless speculation, and a speculation not of the most wholesome kind. We have admitted, indeed, one feature of this theory—that Judas's view of what he had done appears to have undergone an entire change "when he saw that Jesus was condemned." It would not, indeed, necessarily follow from this, that he confidently calculated on His not permitting matters to come to this pass. For deeds of darkness are usually done with little thought of

* ἐν τῷ ναῷ—the temple proper, commonly called "the sanctuary," or "the holy place;" into which none but priests might enter,—and Judas was not a priest. How is this to be explained? It is possible that he flung the money in after them.

their consequences, and even of their nature; and it only requires some event which shall make these stand out in all their nakedness to bring the perpetrators of them horribly to their senses. For aught we know, this may have been just such a case. But when we think how many miracles Judas had seen Jesus work—some of them quite as wonderful as his eluding the grasp of his captors on this occasion—when we consider how, once and again, He did actually escape the hands of those who sought to take Him, it is perfectly possible that the traitor might secretly cherish the hope that Jesus, whom He knew to be innocent, would not allow Himself to suffer the death of an impostor, and that while he himself earned the wages of iniquity, the deed might somehow or other not be done. This length we have gone; and we are inclined to think that, while quite consistent with all that the History says of Judas, it gives the most natural explanation of the horror with which the condemnation of the betrayed One seemed immediately to fill him. But there is no resemblance whatever between this supposition and the modern theory of a good intention on the part of Judas in betraying his Lord—a theory which we take the liberty of pronouncing not only baseless, but of mischievous tendency. The disposition to soften the hard features of evil, and to smooth the rough passages in the Gospel History—to represent the Lord of Glory as all mildness, the truths which He taught us all love, and the enemies of his Person and Mission as less the enemies of God and men than they are there said to be—is a disposition which, however attractive to some, is to be eschewed as inimical to faith, which will have brought into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

3. How awfully consistent with all that we otherwise know of human nature is the fatal influence of one master-passion, uncontrolled, in overthrowing sooner or later the entire character! Even this is a mark of truth in the History which should not be overlooked, and which on some reflecting minds will make a deeper impression than almost any other. But the fact has a dread importance in itself, independent of its apologetic value.

4. Critics have tried to show that the prediction which the Evangelist quotes, as fulfilled in the use made of the thirty pieces of silver, has nothing to do with the events to which it is applied. Into the validity of their criticisms we have no intention of going here. Indeed it would be out of place. But when we look at the person valued, the parties valuing him, and the sum at which he was valued, exactly thirty pieces of silver; the contemptible character of this sum, satirically expressed in the prophecy; and the use made of this sum of money to buy the Potter's Field—when we put all these things together, and then read over again the prediction, which (mean what it may) was certainly penned some centuries before the death of Christ, the conviction forces itself upon us, that the prediction and the history relate to the same events, that the Prophet, personating Messiah thus long before his birth, bids "them of the children of Israel" give Him his price if they thought good, and if not to forbear; whereupon they weigh Him for his price the exact sum agreed on between Judas and the chief priests for the sale of Jesus—thirty pieces of silver: then the Lord bids him cast this to the *potter*—adding, with sublime satire, "A goodly price that I was prized at of them!" whereupon he takes the thirty pieces of silver, and casts them "to the potter in the house of the Lord" (Zech. xi. 12, 13). Now each of these acts was so unessential to the main business, that they might have been quite different from what they were, without in the least affecting it. Jesus could have been identified and apprehended without being betrayed by one of his Apostles. Indeed the plan was first suggested to the authorities by Judas offering to do it for a consideration. And when agreed to, the price offered and accepted might have been more, or might have been less, than what was mutually agreed on. But so it was, that of their own accord both parties arranged that it should be done for precisely the predicted sum of thirty pieces of silver. Nor was this all. For as it would have hurt the tender consciences of those pious ecclesiastics to put the price of blood into the treasury, they resolve to put it to some charitable use; and of all the possible dispositions of it, they fix upon the purchase of the *Potter's* field as a burial-ground for strangers—thus realising, all unconsciously, yet to the letter, this singularly minute prediction; and he who can believe that such a prediction and the events which in point of fact fulfilled it had no pre-determined relation to each other, must have a strange faith in fortuitous coincidences.

5. In such a case as this, as compared with that of Peter, one sees that the true character of repentance is determined, neither by its *sincerity*, nor by its *bitterness*, but by the *views* under which it is wrought. Judas, who betrayed, and Peter who thrice denied, his Master, both repented, it should seem, with equal sincerity, and both with equal pungency, of what they had done. But while the one "went and hanged himself," the other "went out and wept bitterly." Whence this difference? The, one under a sense of his guilt, had nothing to fall back upon; and, deeming pardon for such a wretch utterly hopeless, and unable to live without it, he hastened to terminate with his own hand a life of insupportable misery. The other, having done a deed which might well have made him incapable of ever again looking his Lord in the face, nevertheless turned towards Him his guilty eyes, when lo! the eye of his wounded Lord glancing from the hall of judgment full down upon himself, with a grief and a tenderness that told their own tale, shot right into his heart, and brought from it a flood of penitential tears! In the one case we have natural principles working themselves out to deadly effect; in the other we see supernatural principles working repentance unto salvation not to be repented of. Is not this truth at once historical and moral—shining in its own light?

David Brown.

"COFFEE-POT SAM."

BY A VOLUNTEER MISSIONARY.

I DARE say, my reader, you have often got out of temper when, coming up Cheapside or the Strand, or any other of those crowded thoroughfares which you pass ten or twenty times a-week on your way to and from your office, you find that a large hoarding has been erected, occupying the whole of the pavement at one of the narrowest points. Your irritation, of course, is by no means relieved when you notice further that an auxiliary wooden foot-path—very narrow, very dirty, and very uncomfortable—has been laid down, over which, during the three or four ensuing months, you will every day have to puff and struggle, running the gloomy risk of losing your train, or of reaching home squeezed to the consistency of a lemon, or perhaps striped like a zebra. However, you must submit: and reflecting that your own respectable self is not exempt from the necessity of repair, as proved by many a little doctor's bill, or even by more agreeable recollections of trips taken to the sea-side or the Alps, you try to meet this necessary evil with some cheerfulness of spirit. Week after week passes on, and you do not murmur, being only too well aware that neither frown nor smile will help you a single inch. And sometimes, at the moment you are passing, the door in the hoarding may happen to be open, and you cannot help stopping, just to satisfy your curiosity as to why the work is proceeding so slowly, and what prospect there is of the street being early cleared. A strange view presents itself. The eye meets a wide area of desolation, sufficient to suggest the idea of Macaulay's New Zealander, and to excite a faint image of what he is expected to witness when looking down from London Bridge upon the ruins of London. It is a sort of wild Alpine scene, made up of stones and rubbish. There are hills and glens, and ravines and bridges, very picturesque and very dangerous looking. Large, thick beams lie scattered in wild confusion across the precipices, like sturdy oaks struck down by lightning. Two sinewy athletes, broad and muscular, and with gin-tinctured faces, make an effort to relieve the dusty parchedness of the scene by an attempt at a cascade, a pump-handle being wrought up and down with restless regularity. You gratefully hear the rush of water, and fancy yourself near Schaffhausen. At a distance, a score of other labourers, with either pick-axe or spade in hand, labour in some dark cavern, aided by the fantastic glare of a furnace, upon which a pot filled with some awful-looking liquid is boiling. Half a dozen others, on the top of one of the dust-hills, give you the idea of an avalanche, by throwing basketfuls of rubbish down an inclined plane. Clouds of dust on a sudden wrap the whole scene in a haze, like what tourists tell us they witness from the top of the Righi or of the Jungfrau. Soon, however, the evanescent veil passes away, and you are permitted to enjoy the panorama with all the riches of its manifold peculiarities.

While thus looking and dreaming, in the winking sun heat, it may be you are on a sudden awakened by a push from behind, and the cry, "Mind there!" You turn round and find your shoulder under the frothy mouth of a cart-horse, which alone was wanted to complete the picturesqueness of the scenery. But to you it is a messenger, reminding you that the Bank closes at three, and that what you have been gazing at is but rubbish. So you resume your walk, and looking at the matter in the light of reality, you cannot help feeling thankful for not having been compelled to take your place among the men of whose life you just now got a glimpse: for, despite the poetical suggestions which a minute ago visited you, you feel that no life could well be more prosaic, monotonous, and depressing than that which from dawn till dusk is spent in handling matter in its coarsest possible form, and in seeing nothing the whole day but rubbish and desolation. You think how the spirit and life in those poor people must at length be totally buried under those awful mountains of dirt and dust; and, sad as the thought is, you really cannot wonder that they go to the public-house every now and then to obtain a little exciting stimulus, and having got that, bruise each other's faces, for what they call "a bit of fun."

But you would be sadly mistaken, if you supposed that there were no exceptions to this sort of life among these men. Man's spirit *cannot* be altogether buried and if sometimes by rude violence it is thrust into the grave, it will rise again on the third day. It is not born of matter, and it cannot die through the power of matter either. If the man you put into the magnificently carved pulpit of some splendid cathedral has brought no true spirit with him, he certainly will not get it there, even though the building be a masterpiece of architecture, the pillars patterns of elegance, and the stained-glass windows marvels of painting. Again, if you put a man down on a heap of rubbish, pick-axe in hand, and looking for all the world like a walking pillar of lime, and if he has got an eye for the invisible things of God, and a heart to feel his all-including love, his words will be true music, and his deeds true poetry, though the dust should often choke his utterance, a worm-eaten bench be his chair, and a broken stone his table.

The truth of this was proved a few years ago by Samuel Brown, a common operative, who worked with a score of others of his class at an extensive "job" in Oxford Street. Samuel was a good fellow, not the sharpest or quickest of the band perhaps, but steady and zealous in his work, of a strong robust constitution, and "true as gold." In his speech there was something dry and curt, something extraordinarily phlegmatic, as indeed there was in the whole of his appearance. But if you had chanced to speak a couple of minutes to him, you would have discovered that he had a warm heart, and that a great deal of true good humour shone through those dullish eyes, and played through the features of

that stern-looking face, beautifully softening it at times. That he was a man of character, with the courage to think for himself, and to stand out against public opinion where he deemed it wrong, could not be doubted. He was the only one of the band who never drank ale or spirits. While his comrades spent their leisure time at the public-house, Samuel took his little tin kettle from the corner where he put it every morning, with his jacket over it. In the one pocket of his jacket were two thick pieces of bread, with a slice of ham between them, and in the other a little Bible and a few tracts wrapt in a checkered handkerchief. He would boil his tea or coffee in the kettle, and taking out his big sandwich, sit down where he liked best—sure that nobody would dispute his place with him. For this his comrades nicknamed him "Coffee-pot Sam." But he felt not a straw the less happy for all that when drinking his steaming coffee, and reading a passage of the Gospel, or glancing over a newspaper.

"You are the queerest chap I ever saw in my life," said one of his comrades, who went by the name of "Rough Dick," one day, while preparing to go to the public-house, where the rest of the band had already gone. Now Rough Dick was not exactly a bad fellow, although rather boisterous and quarrelsome, owing to the gin, of which he was never wholly free. Being a strong muscular fellow, and besides a first-rate pugilist, he was generally dreaded by the gang. Samuel was then sitting on a plank, engaged in reading. "You are the queerest sort of chap I ever saw in my life," said Dick, pulling the paper roughly out of Samuel's hand. "What in all the world are you stuffing your brains with every day?"

Samuel looked up quite calmly, but made no effort to get the paper back. Dick read the heading of a tract—"Are you prepared to die?"

"Bah!" he said, flinging down the leaf. "That's only fit for old wives."

"Of course it is," said Samuel drily, "for old wives will die soon at any rate. But it is also for you and me, my lad. Death is a whimsical fellow, you know. He may pass old wives to take the like o' us first. I think it would be as well for you to take this little piece of paper back again, and read it at home, if you don't want to read it now.

"What? Me?" cried Dick, laughing loudly. "Do you want *me* to read that —— humbug?"

"You had better not curse it before you have read it," Samuel said in a serious tone. "It simply puts a question, as you see, which concerns you and me very closely. Or *are* you already prepared to die?"

"I'll tell you what I am prepared for," Dick said, imitating the movement of drinking with his hand. "I will take one this time that will make the whole of London dance before my eyes."

"And suppose death came to you at that moment," said Samuel: "I am afraid your dancing would not be of a very merry sort. Moreover, Dick," he added, in a gentle tone, "you have a wife and children to care for."

"Mind your own business," said Dick, now getting angry. "You are in want of a black eye, I think."

"Not very particularly," answered Samuel.

"You're the only fellow of the gang who has never had one from me," cried Dick loudly.

"Don't know," answered Samuel calmly, and taking up the tract which Dick had flung down.

"Well, then, I'll give you one now," said Dick, clenching his fists and taking position. "Get up, I say, and behave like a man."

"I won't fight," said Samuel, looking into the tract.

"You must," roared Dick, with a horrid oath.

Before Samuel could rise up Dick's fist had visited his left eye with such force that he felt as if it had been turned into a fiery coal. But, quick almost as lightning, he caught hold of Dick's legs, and before a second blow could be dealt, the ruffian was grovelling in the rubbish, where, of course, he had not come down gently by any means. He rose up with a groan, and looking at Samuel with an expression of amazement, he skulked off, muttering something between his teeth, which Samuel did not care either to hear or to understand.

When the work-people returned, Dick was not with them. Samuel became anxious. He was afraid Dick's tumble might have been too much for him, half drunk as he then was.

"Where's Rough Dick?" he asked of one of his comrades.

"At the public house, and snoring like a dog," was the answer; "we could not get him awake."

Dick's work was the boiling of the pitch. There was nobody now looking after it, and considerable damage was sure to ensue, which Dick would, of course, have to pay for. So Samuel went from time to time to see to it, despite his now having only one eye at his disposal.

Two hours elapsed before Dick came back. He walked up to the spot rather hurriedly, and to his astonishment found the furnace all right, and Samuel stirring the pitch.

"Here," said Samuel drily, handing him the stick; "don't be so long another time."

He was off before Dick could say a single word, but Dick felt very much as though the whole furnace had been poured upon his head.

"I'll take care not give *him* another black eye, at all events," he muttered to himself. Debased as he was, he now felt that there was something genuine in "Coffee-pot Sam." Ever after, Samuel had a surprising power over Rough Dick; so much so, indeed, that frequently when he was quite unmanageable, and the others scarcely dared to approach him, Samuel was called to put him to rights. On such occasions Samuel used simply to take Dick's ear between his finger and thumb, and leading him off like a lamb, put him down on a bench, saying, "Be quiet, sir; don't stir, I tell you!" And those who saw it would think: "After all there's more power in Sam's coffee-pot than in all the pewter pots in London!"

Still, to tease Samuel by playing all sorts of tricks upon him was the amusement of some, especially the younger members of the band. Kind-hearted and harmless as he was, he often gave them painful re-

proofs, simply by not behaving as they behaved, and sometimes too by plainly telling them truths which they did not like to hear. One would suppose that nothing in the world could be looked upon as less harmful than to sit down and take a cup of coffee, eat a piece of bread, and glance over a page or two of print. Yet it was owing simply to this that Samuel was actually a thorn in the flesh to many of them. And no wonder. Though he spoke but little, and never preached at his companions, he was nevertheless an ever-present witness against their intemperance, filthy talk, and coarse habits. He was a living proof that it was possible to be strong without strong drink, eloquent without swearing, and cheerful without the aid of bad songs. Nor was this logic of life and action altogether lost upon those who witnessed it, as was demonstrated by the case of William Morgan, who went among the band by the name of "Jolly Bill."

One day Jolly Bill came up to Samuel, who was reading as usual.

"Coffee-pot," said he, with an ironical expression in his face, and holding up his pocket-handkerchief, in which something was evidently wrapped up, "I've something for you. Guess what it is!"

Samuel cast a curious glance at the concealed object. It looked rather bulky.

"How can I know?" he said.

"Guess!"

"Is it something to eat?"

"No, it ain't that."

"Is it a book?"

"No, nor that neither."

Samuel looked again, this time more carefully.

"It's something living," he said; "a kitten, perhaps."

"No, it isn't."

"A puppy, then?"

"Yes," said Bill, uncovering the little creature and dropping it on Samuel's knee. It was an exceedingly ugly little beast, of a dirty yellowish hue. It had a plump bull-head, scarcely a body at all, and no tail to speak of.

"Poor little thing!" said Samuel, taking the shivering animal in his hands. "What do you want me to do with it?"

"Why, don't you see?" said Bill. "Give it a training, to be sure, and you'll have a dog to lead you when you get blind."

"I don't want to be blind," said Samuel, holding the puppy against his cheek.

"I daresay not," was the reply; "but you *will* be blind soon, depend upon it. You'll soon have your eyes destroyed with all that reading o' yours, as my own mother did, who used to read books and tracts day and night till she got as blind as a mole."

"Is your mother blind?" said Samuel in a compassionate tone. "What's her age?"

"Fifty-two, or thereabout, I think," answered Bill, in a more serious voice. "Poor body! it's hard for her. It's now two years since she lost the sight of her right eye, and six months later her left eye was useless too."

"Did you see the doctor about it!"

"Of course we did. She was a month in the hospital; but it was no use."

"That's very sad. Is she living with you?"

"Yes, in course. She's my housekeeper, you know."

"So you are unmarried?"

"I am."

"Then is she quite alone in the house while you are at work?"

"Of course she is; but she manages things wonderfully well. You could hardly believe it, if you saw her cutting bread and making tea, or dusting the room. You would scarcely take her for a blind person if you did not know it. Of course she can't cook very well, nor can she walk out to the shops; but she often gets her dinner with a neighbour. They all pity her, and are fond of her, and there's always a girl about willing to run an errand for her."

"She must feel lonely," said Samuel. "And then it's always a dangerous thing to leave a blind person alone in a house. Could you not get a little girl to help her?"

"Can't afford it," said Bill gravely, shaking his head and contracting his brow.

"Why, you earn as much as I do," said Samuel; "and I support a wife and six children."

Bill was silent.

"Billy, Billy!" said Samuel, lifting up his forefinger, "you could afford to give her two servants if you only left the public-house alone."

"All very well for you, who have a wife and family," said Bill doggedly; "but where am I to go in the evenings? You can't expect me to sit down with a blind person the whole night after a hard day's labour."

"Why not?" asked Samuel. "Couldn't you read something to her? You said she was fond o' readin', and—she's your mother."

"Pshaw! you want me to get blind too, do you? That's too bad. One blind person's enough in a family, I should think. Besides, when I take up a book, I dose before I read ten words."

"Of course you do," said Samuel, in a soft, but serious tone; "of course you do, after having been drinking ale all the day."

"You're a —— coffee-pot," answered Bill, striding off. Having walked a few yards, he stopped, and, turning round, cried: "I say, Coffee, mind the dog. You'll want it soon."

Samuel took the puppy home. Upon entering his room, he found his wife and children as usual waiting him for supper. A fine girl of fourteen, a boy of twelve, and two girls of eight and six, were sitting round the table, while two little boys were already in bed.

"There's father!" was the unanimous expression. "Now, mother, now for the dumplings!"

Samuel gave his wife a kiss.

"Stop a minute," he said, "I have brought you a guest."

He put the puppy on the table, and the whole party broke into laughter when they saw the queer little animal sprawling about.

"What an ugly little thing," cried Jane, the eldest girl, spreading out both her hands.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Fred; "it's lost its tail: how funny."

At this juncture little Mary got frightened, and began crying.

"Don't cry," Samuel said, taking her up kindly on his knee, "it won't do you any harm. It is a nice little creature."

Thereupon he put the puppy before her, and soon prevailed upon her to stroke it gently with her little hand.

"But where did you get it, dear?" asked his wife, meanwhile putting down the dish with the dumplings.

Samuel told his story.

"And now," he said to Jane, "I'll entrust the puppy to you. It is not a pretty thing, but it belongs to a very sagacious and docile race: you can teach it almost anything. Try and train it well, make it tidy and obedient, and when you have done that I'll tell you what to do then."

The very next evening Samuel, on taking up his jacket and little kettle to go home, found himself in an awkward predicament. The sleeves of his jacket were sewn up from the very shoulders to the cuffs; so also were the pockets. Fortunately he had a knife, but as it was dark, and every caution had to be taken not to cut the material, it took him fully half an hour before he could put the jacket on. This caused considerable disappointment and concern to his family, and his good wife was only too happy to find that a trick, and no accident, was the cause of his delay, and that the shot had this time been aimed at his jacket sleeves, and not his eyes. Jane took her mother's scissors, and cut up the pockets. The little Bible and the tracts were gone, and in their stead Jane pulled out of one pocket a mass of pebbles, potato skins, and old corks, and from the other a bundle of printed papers. John at once took some of the papers, and began reading aloud:—

"'The merry life of Jolly Johnnie, a new song to be sung by all the jolly Johnnies——'"

"Give those papers to me," said Samuel, before John could look at another.

John obeyed, though reluctantly. He was curious to know the contents of the other papers. They seemed to him so funny!

Samuel examined the bundle minutely. The papers were all of the same stamp. Among them was a bit of a shoemaker's bill, upon which was written the name of William Morgan.

"I thought Bill was at the bottom of it," said Samuel to himself. "I shall not read his papers, but I hope he will yet read mine."

The next morning he found his little Bible and the tracts safe in his own corner. Samuel met Bill several times that day, Bill casting waggish looks at him, Samuel taking no notice of what had been done.

"Jane," he said to his daughter that evening, "put on your bonnet. We'll call on Bill's blind mother."

They entered a dark room.

"Who's there?" inquired a female voice.

"Are you Mrs. Morgan?" asked Samuel.

"That's my name, sir."

"Is your son in?"

"He is not, sir."

"Will he be long?"

"Can't tell. It may be midnight or later; not much earlier, at any rate. Could you not tell me what you want?"

"Well, yes. My name is Samuel Brown. Bill and I work together in Oxford Street. I've got a parcel which belongs to him."

"One minute, please, and I'll light a candle. I'm blind, you know."

A stirring was heard in the corner, and soon the sound of a press opening, then the scratch of a lucifer match over a rough object. A tall figure became faintly visible. She was trying to light a candle which she held in her left hand. Samuel stepped forward, but before he could give her any assistance, the candle burned brightly. It was wonderful to see how cleverly the blind creature managed it all, and how cautiously she threw the match into the fire-place. Still Samuel could not help seeing that it was very dangerous for her to be so lonely.

The little room had evidently seen better days, but now bore signs of poverty and neglect. It was not very dirty, it is true; but the cobwebs hanging from the ceiling and down the walls at several spots, showed clearly it was kept in order more by the touch than by the sight.

Having seated themselves at the good woman's request, Samuel expressed his compassion for her in her sore affliction. Mrs. Morgan then told him very simply her whole story. Expressions occurred in the course of her narrative proving that she was no stranger to the Gospel.

"What Bill told you about reading being the cause of my blindness is all nonsense," she said. "Much to my grief he got into the habit of coming home very late, often after midnight, and as I never could go to bed before he was safe home, I often passed the long hours in reading; and of course he used to find me doing so when he came home. But the loss of my eyes was owing to erysipelas, as I have told you; I am thankful I was able to read so much, as it is a source of great comfort to me in these dreary, lonely days."

"What a blessing that the eyes of your mind were opened before those of your body were shut!" Samuel observed. "If you cannot see men on earth, you can at least see One seated in Heaven."

At these words the good woman's face brightened all over with joy.

"Ay, sir, that's it," she said; "I shall not be blind for ever. He who in his good mercy opened the eyes of my soul, will also one day give me new eyes to behold his glory in heaven.

"Just so," said Samuel; "some have eyes, and yet are blind; and others have no eyes, and yet see. Blind Bartimeus could see the Son of David, whom the sharp Pharisees saw not. The man who was blind from his birth, and whose vision the Lord restored by anointing his eyes with the clay spittle, obtained the outward eyesight because his inner eye was clear."

"Oh, I often, often think of that!" said the

woman. "I asked Bill to read it to me, but he never did it."

"Well, perhaps you will let me read it to you," said Samuel: "or maybe Jane, my daughter, will read it for us. Now, Jane," he added, handing her his little Bible, "read as clearly and distinctly as you can."

Jane turned up the 9th of John, and read it. No minister could have done so better or more touchingly. She knew it by heart.

"Delightful! What a treat!" cried the blind woman; "How nicely she reads!"

"She might have done even better than that," said Samuel: "but she is a little shy, you know. If you would like to hear her read, and if you can understand her, she might often come and read a chapter to you. We don't live far from this—only about five minutes' walk; and I will sometimes come myself and see you as well."

Mrs. Morgan could scarcely find words to express her thanks. Samuel now gently led her on to speak of her present experiences and her hopes; and then took his leave.

It was beyond midnight before Bill came home. His mother gave him the parcel, and told all about the pleasant visit from Samuel.

"Ah, Coffee-pot!" he exclaimed in astonishment.

"Coffee!" said his mother. "You know, Bill, I have no coffee for you *now*—it is so very late!"

"Well, never mind," he muttered; and away he went to bed, very likely to sleep off the effects of gin.

It soon became a nice change to Jane to spend a couple of hours twice a week with Mrs. Morgan, reading to her and helping her. Sometimes, too, Samuel would go and have a chat with the blind old woman. And it would be wrong not to tell that one morning Jane entered Mrs. Morgan's room fully prepared to wage war with the cobwebs on the roof and on the walls; and that in the evening of the same day her father brought long steps and a brush, and a pot full of paste, and put all the paper right upon the worn walls.

"Will you be at our house to-night?" Bill asked of Samuel one day.

"Yes, I think I will," was the reply.

Samuel, rather to his surprise, found Bill at home that evening. An interesting conversation took place between Samuel and the poor mother, to which Bill listened with marked attention. Though he scarce ventured a word himself, yet he seemed interested in it. Jane also read, and he noticed the intense pleasure it gave his mother. When Samuel and Jane left, he observed that they were good people indeed, and that he had spent a very pleasant evening. As it was already half-past nine, he said he would not go out of doors again that night. So, after having taken a little bit of supper, and quietly smoked a pipe, he went to bed. This was the first time for many, many months that blind Mrs. Morgan had locked the door at such an early hour.

The two following evenings Bill was late as usual. Habit was strong; and the door of the public-house, like the drunken mouths it admitted, were constantly open; but on the third night Jane was there, and read to his mother, and he was present again. The next evening he thought he had better go home at once, and not wander to *The Fountain*, where he was not wanted at all. The reflection that his poor mother was quite alone strengthened the good resolve. And though he was not a great scholar, and could not read so well as little Jane, yet he would try. He now felt ashamed that other people had come into his house to do what he saw he ought to have done himself. Mrs. Morgan for a time thought she was dreaming, when soon after dusk Bill regularly came home, and after having taken his supper, took the Bible, and said: "Now, mother, if you have no objection I will read a chapter to you." But the good woman, to her unspeakable joy, soon found that she was not dreaming, though things were changed for the better in such a manner as she had hardly hoped, or even dreamt.

The purse is a good metronome: it tells pretty correctly how time is measured or divided by a working man, or indeed any man. Bill soon experienced a change in his purse, too. He found that he could easily afford to pay a girl a shilling a week and her meals to make things comfortable at home. He spoke about this to Samuel. After some talk, during which they had wandered away a little from the theme they started with, Morgan at length relieved himself by saying that he knew no better girl than Jane. Samuel understood him: and as he could not fancy a better mistress for Jane than Mrs. Morgan would be, the thing was soon settled.

On an early evening Samuel and his wife accompanied Jane to Mrs. Morgan's, to introduce her to her new situation. Bill and his mother were already waiting them, with coffee and cake on the table. The guests having been seated, Bill, who was sharp in his own way, noticed that Jane had brought something under her cloak.

"What have you got there?" he asked.

"Guess," said Jane, smiling.

"How can I know?" he replied. "Perhaps a pair of shoes?"

"No, it isn't that," she said, with a waggish shake of the head.

"A book?"

"No," she replied, trying this time to look grave.

"A doll, then?"

"A doll!" Jane repeated, in a tone of affected displeasure.

Just at this moment a sound from under Jane's cloak solved the problem.

"What! a dog?" cried Bill.

Out jumped poor puppy, as ugly as ever, it is true, but now grown much larger. Exceedingly kind and cheerful, he sprang up on everybody, and licked everybody's hands. The party was delighted.

Mrs. Morgan begged they would let her touch the little creature. And so she took puppy on her knee, and stroked it kindly all over, while it, by way of grateful return, licked the old wrinkled face, which did not by any means lack expression.

"Just so," said Samuel; "that's exactly what you

brought it for, is it not, Jane? Bill gave it to me six months ago to get trained for a blind person. It hasn't completed its education yet; but Jane will carefully finish it off here, I daresay."

Bill looked a little grave; and, after a pause, he said—

"Mother, didn't we read the other day words like these: 'Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto you for good'?"

"Ay, lad; it was in the story of Joseph."

"I've been thinking about these words of late," said Bill.

Very probably something glistened in Bill's eyes as he said this, but nobody chanced to notice it, and a minute after he turned round to pat puppy, which was quietly lying in his mother's lap.

Henceforward Bill was Samuel's staunch friend. He very soon lost the epithet of "Jolly" which had been attached to him; and he also cast off the ill habit of which it was the sign, as the serpent casts its encumbering skin. His behaviour, now proper and temperate, made the epithet, of course, quite unsuitable any longer. Nor had Samuel few friends among the band. Such manifestations of his noble character as Rough Dick and Bill had witnessed, did not fail to gain the esteem and kind feeling of those rough fellows, who will yield to the logic of a kind act when nothing else will impress them. Indeed, there were few who did not like "Sam."

Evidence of this was conclusively shown one day, when a worthless lad, who went by the name of "Red Bob," tried to indulge his propensity for low malicious jokes at the expense of "Coffee-pot Sam." Bob killed a mouse; and, stealing to the corner where Samuel's jacket lay, took out the customary sandwich, and put the dead animal between the slices of bread. No sooner, however, had he done this, than a very rough fellow, "Pickled Jam," who had noticed his doings, came up, seized him by the collar, and boxed his ears most unmercifully. The lad's screams brought half a dozen of the work-people to the spot. When "Jam" told them what "Red Bob" had done, and showed them the dead mouse in Samuel's sandwich, they with one consent pounced upon Bob, and actually kicked him off the works. The case was soon known to the whole band, and there was not one who did not say: "Well done, Jammie, you served him right. We'll take care he shan't come back again."

Now Bob was a nephew of the overseer, to whom he told his own version of what had happened, and asked him to go along with him to the work, as he had not the courage to return alone. But, notwithstanding all this, and the natural wish to try to stand well with the overseer, no sooner had uncle and nephew made their appearance, than "Rough Dick," who happened to be nearest the entrance, ran up to his companions to tell them who were coming. The whole band moved together to meet the overseer and the lad.

"Beg your pardon, sir," said Dick, "but that lad can't be admitted."

"Who are *you?*" said the overseer, imperiously. "Are *you* the master of this place, pray?"

"No, sir!" cried several voices; "but Bob must go."

"And I say he shall not!" cried the overseer in return. I see this is just a riot got up among you."

"Very well, then *I* shall go," answered Dick, throwing down his spade.

"And I! And I!" cried several voices.

Samuel here stepped forward to speak a word in favour of the boy, but Dick pushed him back.

"Don't speak a word," he said; "you have nothing to say here. Sir," he continued, addressing the overseer "would you like to eat a dead mouse? Had Bob done what he did to *myself*, I should merely have given him a box on the ear, and done with him; but he did it to 'Coffee-pot,' and——"

"Hip, hip, hurrah!" cried the band simultaneously, and in a moment Samuel was lifted up off the ground and placed upon the shoulders of two of them.

"Ay, sir, what d'ye say to that?" said Dick, pointing to Samuel, who in vain struggled to get down.

The overseer could not help laughing heartily.

"All right, lads," he said; "it's of no use fighting against such a king as yours!"

And off he walked with his nephew.

When they were outside the gate, he said, "Bob, I see you have offended the king of the place. I never knew till now there was such power in 'Coffee-pot Sam.'"

PRAISE GOD UPON THE EARTH!

"Great and marvellous are thy works."

Praise God! Upon the earth
His praise is sounding;
On every ocean shore
Voices of many waters are resounding
His praise for evermore.

Praise God upon the earth!
To Him untrodden, snow-clad, star-crowned mountains
Lift up their altars hoar,
To Him, from far off undiscovered fountains
Unsullied rivers pour.

Praise God upon the earth!
Him in dense forests, yet unpenetrated,
The great trees bow before;
To Him unhunted herds look up unsated,
And savage creatures roar.
Praise God upon the earth!

In the dread repose
Of the silent snows,
In the upper zone,
Whose paths are known
To the stars alone,

Drawn by J. Wolf. Engraved by Swain.

"GREAT AND MARVELLOUS ARE THY WORKS."

The mountain has lost its voice—lies mute
Praising God at his white throne's foot.

From its snow-fed source,
On its glorious course
The river is streaming;
Gushing and gleaming,
Gathering and growing,
Flashing and flowing,
Forest-fringed, miles on miles,
Studded with isles on isles,
Dashing down thund'rous,
Rainbow'd and wond'rous,
Over the mighty rocks
Leaping with lightning shocks,
With a great rushing voice
Crying aloud, "Rejoice!"
And through the valleys of virginal sod,
Through plains unpeopled, awaiting new nations,
Unseen, unsullied by man's habitations,
One great drink-offering pouring to God.

In the cool, green shade,
By the branches made,
In the noontide heat,
The strong and the fleet
At the waters meet:
The reeds are shaken,
They crash and quiver;
The beast has taken
A plunge in his river:
The herd is rushing,
With snort and pant,
Trampling and crushing
The herb and plant.
Mild-eyed and bearing meek heads aloft,
Where the trumpet-blossoms hang thick and soft,
Great gentle creatures start in their fear,
While quick bright eyes from the branches peer.

Praise God upon the earth!
Above the mountains
The High and Lofty One,
The source of good beyond the hidden fountains
From whence the rivers run.

Praise God upon the earth!
The bounteous Bringer
Of life to all that lives:
Praise God upon the earth,
O man, the singer,
To whom the whole He gives.

Isa Craig.

STRAIGHTWAY.

There are many beginnings in this world which stand alone, or which shine out in mocking contrast with all that comes after. Many a rosy morning becomes a cloudy noon, precursor of a stormy night! Many a blossom is nipped by frost! Many a green-leaved tree withers! Many a man who starts in life well, swerves and wavers as he goes on. In civil society, in mercantile life, one often hears the question, "How is he standing?" "How is he doing?" The divine life in the soul has, humanly speaking, the same uncertainties about it. You cannot predicate absolute safety of a beginner. God can do so, who knoweth all, but *we* cannot. However bright and clear the spiritual change may be, however favourable the conditions and auspices, we cannot say in any one case, "Here is everlasting salvation achieved." We must wait for the proving, the growing, the fruits, the "patient continuance in well-doing," the "endurance unto the end."

Therefore, some men are apt to say, "No matter how men begin, if only they do. If clearly, like the mountain spring which gushes into life, well; if uncertainly and invisibly, like the waters which come trickling from a mossy soil,—still, it is well. It will be the same with both in a little while. It will certainly be the same in the end." Not so. No doubt there are some elements of life common to all beginnings which are true, and there is a common glorious ending in "the everlasting kingdom." But also, there are differences at the outset which continue to make differences all through the progress, and which will leave shades of difference still, through eternal days. It is well to turn into the way of life, however haltingly; but surely it is better, if that may be, to have the saliency of life from the first. I plead in this paper for clear, bright beginnings, as far as they can be had; for promptitude and instancy in the action, corresponding with the inward feeling. There is a certain force in the spiritual, as in every other kind of life which makes itself known by impulse and pressure. Let such impulse and pressure have "free course." Restrain the restraining hand. Turn it to other uses. Lift away the hindrance. Open the door of circumstance. Grasp the handle of opportunity. Be ready for every good work—"Straightway."

When the fiery destruction was about to descend on the doomed cities of olden time, it was no uncertain note of warning that fell upon the ear of Lot—no step of wavering hesitancy sufficed for the emergency. "Up, get you out of this place. Escape for thy life, look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest thou be consumed."

When the last day of the long Egyptian bondage had closed over Israel, and family by family they were gathered to their homes to partake of that mysterious supper—"*Thus* shall ye eat it, with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand"—ready for the march to freedom—for *instant* departure, now that God's time has come.

Simon and Andrew "*straightway* left their nets

and followed Jesus." James and John, the sons of Zebedee, "*immediately* left the ship and their father, and followed him." Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom, heard but two words from the Master, "Follow me." "And he arose and followed him." "Zaccheus *made haste* and came down, and received Him joyfully." Our Lord refused to accept the allegiance of him who said, "Suffer me first to go and bury my father;" of him who pleaded, "first to go bid them farewell, who are at home in my house." When Paul and Silas spake to the Philippian jailor "the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house," "he took them, the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his, *straightway*."

A more notable instance still of the promptitude we are commending, occurs at the grand turning point in the life of Saul of Tarsus, when "straightway he preached Christ in the synagogue of Damascus that he is the Son of God." "What wilt thou have me to do?" had been his anxious question, a few days before, when he was arrested on the way. "Do this," is the answer, not audibly spoken indeed, but elicited with authority from his renewed consciousness, "Preach. Preach me. You know me now—who I am, what I have been to you;—as earnestly as you have hitherto persecuted, you must now preach."—"And *straightway he preached Christ.*"

"Well, but what else *could* he do in the circumstances? It seems the most natural thing in the world that he should have done just what he did." So, great things always seem the most natural after they are done. And a noble career the easiest. It *is* the easiest when men have the heart to it, when they take "straightway" out of the conscience and put it into the life. But it is evident that Paul, at this juncture, had the usual struggle between promptitude and caution, between saliency and reservation; for, in giving the history of the matter, long after, he is careful to put emphasis on the immediacy of his action—"when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me that I might preach him among the heathen, *immediately* I conferred not with flesh and blood." *That* is what he might have done. He might have "conferred with flesh and blood," he might have taken advice from friends, from fellow-Christians, from those who were Apostles before him—Peter, James, John, at Jerusalem. If he had so "conferred" it is quite certain that his whole course would have been different. Some would have said, "Stay awhile—keep in quietness until the memory of your career as a persecutor has somewhat died away." Others, "Be cautious. Do not commit yourself so early. You may repent it in a while, if you do; your present convictions may be only transient; what seems a deep life-purpose may be no more than a momentary impulse. It can do no harm to wait." Suppose he had sent or gone to Jerusalem to consult with the Apostles—what would Peter have said? We know that about this time he said to the Master, "Not so, Lord." He would have been quite as ready to say, "Not so," to the servant. Not Peter alone, but all the Apostles, would have said "Come up hither, and wait on us awhile. Let your Apostleship be proved. Let your faith be stronger. Do not preach yet, and especially not away in Damascus; wait to see the effect of our preaching here in Jerusalem." In short, there is not the least likelihood that a consultation with flesh and blood would have put into Paul's history that one word which stands so conspicuously at the beginning of it, "*Immediately!*" But it was all-important that that word *should* be there—representative of the promptitude which it expresses. That promptitude saved him from many difficulties, which else would have beset his course. It raised his conversion above suspicion. It confirmed his faith. It enlarged his knowledge. It opened his way. It gave him an advantage against any who might be his enemies. It put him in possession of the ground. It made retreat more difficult. It made him a fit and profitable example for all who are beginning the Christian course, to the end of time.

That word "*straightway*" will be needed, will be applicable as long as there are beginnings in the Christian life; I commend it to all who are beginning, to all who have just begun. The first sign of a rectified conviction is the prayer "what wilt thou have me to do?" The next sign is to do it "straightway."

The thing to *be* done will of course be very different in different cases. Comparatively few are required to devote their lives to the *preaching* of the Gospel; but every one who receives it must live according to its laws, must breathe its spirit, and must seek its extension in every possible way. In a sense, there is to every one a preaching of the Gospel when it is received—*something* to be done, which is as much, in relation to the past life and present circumstances of that individual, as preaching Christ in the synagogues of Damascus was, in relation to the character and career of Saul of Tarsus. Nothing *less* than preaching would have done for him—open, fearless, earnest preaching of Christ. Why? Because he had been open, and fearless, and earnest in preaching and striving against Christ. He felt that he must undo and unsay all that, in so far as he could, and that it could only be undone and unsaid by as much openness and publicity on the right side as formerly he had shown on the wrong. Anyone now, speaking against Christ, writing against the Christian cause, on coming to a better mind, would require to do just as the Apostle did—to stand out and say, "I am *for* Christ now;" or to write and say, "I am for the Christian cause amongst men;" and to do this "immediately."

There are some who seem to hold another view; who favour rather the doctrine of *reserve* in regard to religious feeling and conviction. It is thought to be right that a man—even a man who assumes the position of a literary teacher, who is accustomed to think and to express his thoughts—that such a man should keep comparative silence through his whole life on the question of personal religion. He may have reverence and godly fear, and the love of Christ, and the faith of his Gospel, and never at all give full and frank expression to them. The theory is, that these things ought to be *felt* more than expressed. That is

not the theory of the Bible. "We believe, and therefore speak." "We cannot *but* speak the things which we have seen and heard." "That which we have seen and heard *declare* we unto you." "I said I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in his name; but—his word was as a fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." "Ye shall be witnesses," not *silent* witnesses surely, "unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Such was the original law. Is it changed? When? How? Why? Why is religion to be a thing of reserve? Why are the men who can speak best to speak least? Why are the men who are always writing never to write the thing they consider truest (supposing them to be Christians); never to speak out the things that are holier, dearer, more important than all other things in their esteem? There is no reason. Because some others say too much, must they say too little? Does one extreme not only breed but justify another? Because thoughtless people sometimes talk not wisely and not well on religion, must thoughtful people seal their tongues in silence, and keep all dark till the day of death? Let there be no expression of what is *not* believed, and *not* felt. But, oh! if the scales have fallen! if the light has come! if the spiritual baptism has filled, and purified, and freshened the soul; if there is an open path heavenward, and if hope travels along that path with joy, surely there ought not to be a life-long silence, or even a habit of *stopping suddenly* in the expression of religious truth or emotion. A far nobler habit is that of which we have the example in those who "straightway" preached, wrought, went on their way.

Now, if that be the right principle, then it is applicable all down the scale; not to great men only, but to every man. Each one ought, in his own measure and in his own way, to do the like. For a quiet man to *speak* in conversation, is as much as for a public man to write. To one man a prayer in a house would be more than, to another, a sermon in a pulpit. Or a change of habit and life might be, with some, the most expressive thing they could say or do. Every one who reflects, must see that the question of measure, degree, the question as to the *form* which the duty of the new state shall take, is a question which one can never settle for another. But the principle is this, that there is to every one something to be *done*—by book or speech, by action or habit something to be done for Christ as soon as you believe in Him, and that that something ought to be done promptly and without delay."

"Straightway!" do what thy hand findeth to do! It may be less or more. It may be in public or private. It may be a thing or a course that will be commented on, or passed over in silence by others. No matter! when the light comes it is to be followed. When the sense of duty is produced, it is as sacred to the soul as the Bible itself—the sense of duty *is* the Bible of the soul! it is produced only to be obeyed.

"Straightway!" and your new consciousness will become brighter and clearer than it ever will do by abstinence and repression. Doubts gather over the inactive mind, over the slumbering reluctant will, as mists and exhalations above the stagnant pool. Work in spite of them, work through them on to duty, and they are gone, or only hang about the mind, thin and luminous, like vapours that are vanishing away.

"Straightway!" and the outer difficulties, which gather like the inner doubts, will, like them, be dispersed and you will see them no more; or, better still, seeing them, you will not fear nor regard them. He who begins on the yielding system is very likely, ere long, to give up the whole; strife for these outward difficulties that hinder the soul's *first* alacrity, will hinder it more and more. There are some animals which will not molest you if you face them, but they will follow you if you flee. One might almost suppose that these providential difficulties that beset beginners especially, have a kind of brute instinct in them, to attack the fearful and the wavering; while just as certainly they will dissolve and flee before the face of alacrity and determination. *Be* driven with the wind and tossed, like the helpless wave, and the wind will drive and toss you—the *four* winds will make you their sport. But trim your sails for progress, and hold on your course, by chart and compass, and the winds will blow to help you, and the tides will roll you on to the haven where you would be.

"Straightway!" and you will be giving to your soul one of the first and one of the most indispensable of all the conditions of growth. Children would not grow if they were laid all day on couches—they would sicken and die. A man might be born, organically, a Samson, but if he never *used* his muscles, if he never "went out and shook himself," any Delilah could bind him, any Philistine could lead him away. Work and grow. Struggle and grow strong. "But Saul increased the more in strength."

"Straightway!" and you will have laid the first stones in the great edifice of habit. We are, in a large measure, the creatures of habit. Does that make us less noble? Would it be better if we were all impulse and emotion? Not so well. It is no small part of our greatness that we can build our life into strength as well as beauty by the stones of habit. Every year may be a pillar; every day for even every duty, may be a stone of the living house. A man may thus build up what he himself cannot easily destroy. He may build himself up into safety. He may build himself up to heaven. This is the true tower with the heaven-reaching top, the tower of a man's own life, and on the very first stones of that tower that are laid, you see written, "Immediately."

"Straightway!" and you will have ended no small part of the lesser misery of life. For indeed, not a little of that misery is the result of duty undone. A word unspoken, an action postponed, a visit unmade, a letter unwritten, a sacrifice declined,—how do such things as these shadow our days sometimes! How do they drink up our joys, or hinder them from ever flowing! We never can

have a viewpoint pretty clear, even for a day: there is always something to observe, something to make us thankful—with the thankfulness in her own bosom. But "straightway" will make that misery as little as it well can be. It will put a man in the way of clear, good, happy living. It will fill him, as much as anything else can, with the "joy of the Lord," which is his strength.

"Straightway" and the enemies of our souls—of the gospel of Christ—are taken at advantage, are discomfited, are driven back. All their names are false, all their plans are broken, all their perplexities of evil are set at nought, by the very simple yet sublime plan of going right in without delay to duty and endeavour. Try it to be wise that they in worldly wisdom, more prudent, more cunning—you all know the answer—you will find the Lord before the Philistines or the Syrians, when she had forsaken God. But be simple, true, quick in the duty of the time, and they fall back and away from before you, as though you rode in the chariot of the clouds, with wheels of whirlwind, and axletree of flame.

"Straightway" and gladness, thankfulness, the blessedness of the believing heart, as it were a new inspiration. Spiritual strength to live and grow from day to day. The knowledge of a God to delight in, a Saviour to love, a Spirit to help, a work to accomplish, a life to live—changing our souls with the celestial fire—until they, too, glow and burn with love to Christ. We shall never know how much of spiritual power passes thus from one to another. Sometimes simple presence in a place will communicate the strength that is needed—sometimes in this way, even the strong in Christ Jesus in their hours of weakness, receive strength from the simplest and weakest upon their thoughts. Long after one, after many years of separation, will know the glory to God, a deep presence, and many of the Christian lives, looking for the eternal home, and as most else. The regulation of the true relationship

"When Paul saw them, he thanked God, and took courage." Then how much more would the strong [illegible] the believing the [illegible] When young men, after their conversion, begin to preach the Gospel—as Saul did in Damascus, from a principle of simple and loyal obedience to Christ, and from a very earnest desire to save the souls of men,—we do display, we do become eloquent speakers, with for a livelihood, but for the Saviour and for souls, the effect that may be and is produced is wonderful. I have seen strong men vanquished willingly by the simplest thus. I have seen wise men led by one who, in comparison to themselves, was a little child. I have seen old men looking up with wonder and thankfulness to the young face, yes, and even [illegible] men "almost persuaded to be Christians." But again we say, you do not need to preach in order to possess [illegible]

"Straightway"—do, say, give, suffer, as the work of Christ, and in living consecration to Him, and the [illegible] Then like [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

reach, but to bring those who may have serious thoughts to decide for Christ. In both respects the promoters of these meetings believe that they have been useful, although there may have been not a few cases in which the appearance of emotion for the moment has not been followed by a good and holy life.

Industrial Exhibitions of various kinds—at Birmingham, Wakefield, and Reading—have given some of our public men an opportunity of dwelling on the state of the labouring classes, and the desirableness of welding together the various sections of society in brotherly and Christian sympathy. Lord Lyttelton, in opening the Industrial Exhibition at Birmingham; Lord Houghton, on a similar occasion at Wakefield; and the Bishop of Oxford, in opening an exhibition at Reading, have all more or less directly spoken on this subject. The hopeful tone of all these eminent men, in their anticipations of the future, is striking, and no doubt there are individual instances that seem to justify the belief which most of them express, that much progress has been made in the direction indicated; but those who are most familiar with the state of feeling in the great centres of British industry, are unable to speak in quite so confident a tone. The chief benefit of these Exhibitions seems to be, that by giving to those who show their work in them a special object of interest, apart from their ordinary daily toil, they serve to relieve that terrible monotony of labour which tends to crush all elasticity of body and mind and to excite the craving for sensual excitement. Their influence may not be very great in elevating the vast mass of people whose condition demands improvement, but in union with other agencies of a more powerful kind, they may be productive of a modicum of good.

Considerable attention has been directed to an article written by Lord Amberley, in a recent number of the *Fortnightly Review*, on the relation of the two great political parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives, to the Church of England. The importance attached to this paper may be due as much to its being the production of the son of Lord Russell, as to its contents. The writer is very severe against those who support the Church on any other ground than as a means of good, not merely to its own members, but to the country at large. The paper is a pleading for religious liberty, as Lord Amberley conceives it should be. His own sympathies in theology are seen to be with the most extreme section of the Broad Church; beauty of character seems his chief standard of truth; and where this is to be found, the rejection of what are commonly regarded as the most vital doctrines of the Bible is simply "outgrowing the limits of orthodox theology."

The case of Bishop Colenso is entering on a new phase. The last portion of his book has fallen dead-born, proving that it was not so much the intrinsic ability of the arguments, as the novelty of the writer's position, that drew attention to the earlier volumes. He himself is now on his way to Natal, where the clergy and laity have been holding meetings to consider what course they are to follow. While much perplexed as to the steps they should take in endeavouring to procure another Bishop, and as to the relation in which such a step would place them to the Church of England, they seem to be nearly of one mind in declining the authority of Dr. Colenso. Meetings have been held in the principal towns of the Colony, but so far as we have observed, no voice has been raised in favour of the Bishop.

The progress of the truth in the kingdom of Italy continues to be indicated by the bitter opposition of the priests and their friends to the agents of the evangelical movement. Any open or serious infringement of religious liberty is not of course allowed by law; but this does not prevent the friends of the Gospel from being lampooned in clerical journals; or meetings for worship being disturbed by interruptions; or shopkeepers, who do not shut their shops while a procession is passing, from being maltreated; or colporteurs from having portions of their stock burned before their eyes. The dispute, whether there ought to be a reconciliation between the Italian court and the Roman see, goes on with vigour. The propriety of allowing processions out of church is also a subject of keen discussion. Suspicions are entertained in some quarters that the King of Italy himself is secretly more in favour of reconciliation with Rome than the friends of his country desire. The life he has led, it is whispered, makes him feel uneasy, —leads him to resort to the daily services of religion, and to feel that only the blessings of the Pope can make the head easy that wears the crown. If the rumour has any truth that ascribes to him this state of mind, it bodes as little good to the country generally as to the monarch in particular. He seems to be in that very crisis in which a bright revelation of Christian truth would effect a revolution in his own mind, and lead, perhaps, to the most vital changes in the country.

The *China Mail* of July 6th has brought intelligence of the death of a devoted lady, at the age of thirty-six, Miss Harriet Baxter, who some years ago determined to dedicate her life to missionary labour among the Chinese. Enjoying the comforts of a superior social position, she resolved to forsake all for the sake of the perishing heathen, and solely at her own expense she proceeded to Hong Kong, where she laboured with great zeal and assiduity for five years. On her way to China, she was shipwrecked in Galle Harbour, losing nearly all her personal effects, including a number of valuable presents that had been given her by her friends. This she regarded as a salutary discipline, calling on her to give herself with more simplicity and thoroughness to the work of the Lord. On setting to work in China, she found that the establishment of schools was the most feasible way of promoting her object, and besides a boys' and a girls' school, she established what seems to have been a sort of ragged school for the poorer class of Chinese girls. Many of the pupils were clothed and fed, besides being taught. The funds for this purpose were provided by herself and her friends; but recently the last-named school, where nearly everything had to be provided for the pupils, was handed over to the Church Missionary Society. Her labours among the

wives of the English soldiers were most benevolent and unwearied. Besides this, adds the *China Mail*, "she might often have been seen in the houses of the Chinese in some of the worst parts of Victoria, speaking, in the strange tongue of our Chinese neighbours, of some of the sublime doctrines and holy precepts of the Christian religion, with an earnestness that would only be felt where the heart is concerned." Her health beginning to fail, her friends urged her to return home, but she could not make up her mind to leave, and died at her post.

Writing from Pekin, under date 31st March last, the Rev. Joseph Edkins gives an interesting instance of an application, on the part of natives, for Christian instruction. A countryman living at a town 150 miles distant (Tang-feng-tsun) had come and stated that more than a hundred persons in that neighbourhood were desirous of Christian instruction. They had read the books given away at the Church Mission at Pekin. A schoolmaster was sent to ascertain how matters stood, who returned with the information that he had met with eight persons who might be relied on as sincerely desiring instruction, one of whom accompanied him. They earnestly desired a missionary to go among them, and the matter had been laid before the Rev. W. C. Burns, in the hope that he might be induced to go and instruct them in Christian truth.

Mr. Consul Pakenham, of Madagascar, has published a report to Government, in the course of which he gives a favourable view of the state of the native Christians in the capital of the island. Five thousand profess Christianity in Antananarivo, of whom the greater portion are Protestants ; and should the present Hova Government continue tolerant, there is every prospect of Christianity spreading. Education is making progress among all classes. Besides a large school opened by the Queen for the instruction of the officers of her household, and confided to a native teacher, there are at the capital seven schools belonging to the English Protestant, and three to the French Roman Catholic, missionaries, all well attended.

"The members of the present Hova Government, who, with one or two exceptions, belong to the old heathen Conservative party, are opposed to an extended intercourse with Europeans, and to the spread of Christianity in Madagascar. If left to the bent of their natural inclinations, they would gladly revert to the old system in force during the reign of Queen Ranavalona. The fear of complications with the British and French Governments alone prevents their doing so. The limited views of the majority embrace the present only, without concern for the future ; and to secure that present, as regards their own position and influence, is their aim and ambition. The regenerating effects of civilisation, and the progressive moral advancement attending the spread of Christianity, are consequently not only feared, but sought to be resisted by means of a restrictive policy. Under existing circumstances, therefore, we can scarcely look for the development of the resources of Madagascar, for administrative reforms, improvement in the social condition of her inhabitants, or increase in trade. Such advantages could only be obtained under a Liberal Government in favour of progress."

Remarkable awakenings occur from time to time in mission districts, that seem like the breath of the Spirit on the dry bones of the valley, and lead to more visible change in a few weeks than, it may be, in many years before. As to permanent results, much depends on the wisdom and courage with which such movements are regulated by the missionaries. Such an awakening is reported by Wesleyan missionaries in the district of Colombo, Ceylon. Mr. Spence Hardy, at the Committee of Review of the Wesleyan Conference in Birmingham the other day, after dwelling on the long night of darkness, remarked, "there is now a blessed revival, and perhaps more souls have been saved during the last six months than at any time during our former history." Mr. Nicholson, the missionary at Colombo, gives an animated account of the movement, during successive meetings in the chapel, when, in answer to fervent prayer, a blessing was poured out, and very many seemed to be brought to God.

Of the permanent results of such movements, Mr. Honiss, of Surandei, of the Church Mission in South India, writes, in reference to one that took place in that district in 1860 : "While it must be acknowledged that some things which then took place should not be attributed to a divine origin, yet the catechist's report for the past four years plainly proves that a genuine revival must be dated from that period, and that the work, though marred by man, proceeded from God. Consistency of life has been conspicuous in its subjects ever since. Formerly there were many drunkards ; now they are all sober men. Formerly they were for the most part irregular in their attendance at the services ; now we cannot complain of one. In former years, 50 rupees subscription was considered a large sum ; last year they subscribed and spent on their church 250 rupees, and on the church, since it was commenced, they have spent 600 rupees."

The habit of raising funds for the support of divine ordinances among themselves seems to be making some progress in native congregations. The Rev. I. Welland, of the Church Mission, in a letter dated Kidderpore, Calcutta, May, 1865, mentions that after 1st July the native congregation attached to the Scotch Free Church Mission at Calcutta was to be self-supporting. Sixty-eight members subscribe to its funds, and they hope to raise 125 rupees monthly. The members of this congregation are, however, of a higher class than those of the Church Mission congregations, and better able to contribute for the support of their Church.

Many parts of the East continue to be fearfully scourged by the ravages of cholera. In Constantinople a frightful fire has followed in the footsteps of the pestilence. Part of Palestine has been stripped to the bone, as it were, by a visitation of locusts. The Rev. J. Zelle, of the Church Mission at Nazareth, gives a frightful account of their ravages. Writing in June, he says, "the young breed is spreading over the whole land, destroying everything. Three days ago the first army arrived at

the vineyards south and west of Nazareth. The whole population of the town and villages turned out to protect at least a part of their property. The first day they succeeded, by keeping immense fires all round the vineyards. But the next day arrived the real army, and, in spite of the fires, the land was inundated as by a flood, and in a few hours gardens and vineyards were stripped of every green leaf, and even the prickly pears (cactus hedges) were attacked. The people had to take to flight. . . . *June 14th.*—New swarms of locusts have arrived to-day, and the whole country round is so thickly covered with them, that for the next week no relief from this horrible plague can be expected. To-day they penetrated into my rooms, and are marching over my table whilst I am writing. . . . The winter crops, consisting of wheat, barley, lentils, beans, &c., are greatly damaged, but the summer crops of Indian corn, sesam, cotton, &c., are quite destroyed. The only remaining provisions—corn and meat—are exceedingly dear; milk and oil are scarcely to be got. *June 15th.*—This evening I went over the vineyards of Nazareth. . . . The trees are all barren, as in England in winter, but it looks as if the country had been burned by fire. Every one acknowledges that the curse of the Almighty has struck the land. I met many people sitting in their wasted gardens with tears in their eyes; others carried baskets full of unripe fruit and vegetables, rescued from destruction; some were still engaged in the vain attempt to defend a particularly cherished tree from the attacks of the locusts, with which the ground is swarming. All confess that these are the judgments of the Lord calling us to repent."

Books on the East, of considerable size and pretensions, have been pouring in on us of late with a rapidity that shows the unabated interest of the reading public in the lands of sacred history. Mr. H. B. Tristram has given us, in a thick octavo volume, his "Journal of Travels in Palestine, undertaken with special reference to its physical character." In the years 1863-4, he spent nearly ten months in the examination chiefly of the geology and natural history of the country. His attention was particularly directed to the basin of the Dead Sea, and to the districts east of the Jordan. Comparatively few travellers have explored this latter district, owing, in some measure, to the greater dangers that are encountered in it, in consequence of the multitude and boldness of the Bedouin that haunt it. Speaking of the Ghor,' or valley of the Jordan, Mr. Tristram says, "A few years ago the whole Ghor was in the hands of the Fellâhin, and much of it cultivated for corn. Now the whole of it is in the hands of the Bedouin, who eschew all agriculture, excepting in a few spots cultivated here and there by their slaves; and with the Bedouin come lawlessness, and the uprooting of all Turkish authority. No government is now acknowledged on the east side, and unless the Porte acts with greater firmness and caution than is its wont, it will lose the last vestige of authority on the right bank also, and a wide strip of the most fertile land in all Palestine will be desolated and given up to the Nomads. The same thing is now going on over the plain of Sharon, where, both in the north and south, land is going out of cultivation, and whole villages rapidly disappearing from the face of the earth. Since the year 1838 no less than thirty villages have been thus erased from the map, and the stationary population extirpated. As the Philistines swept the plain in the days of Saul, and 'the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits,' so it is again. Either an European protectorate or union with Egypt seems requisite to save Palestine from gradual dissolution, unless, which seems hopeless, the Arabs can be induced to cultivate the soil."

The conclusion to which Mr. Tristram, as a man of science, comes, with regard to the perfect accuracy of Holy Scripture, is extremely interesting: "The primary object of our journey was the investigation of physical and natural history, not, however, to the exclusion of other objects of interest. We passed through the land with our Bibles in our hands, with, I trust, an unbiassed determination to investigate facts, and their independent bearing on sacred history. While on matters of science the inspired writers speak in the ordinary language of their times (the only language which could have been understood), I can bear testimony to the minute truth of innumerable incidental allusions in Holy Writ to the facts of nature, of climate, of geographical position,—corroborations of Scripture, which, though trifling in themselves, reach to minute details, that prove the writers to have lived when and where they are asserted to have lived; which attest their scrupulous accuracy in recording what they saw and observed around them; and which, therefore, must increase our confidence in their veracity where we cannot have the like means of testing it. I can find no discrepancies between their geographical or physical statements and the evidence of present facts. I can find no stand-point here for the keenest advocate against the full inspiration of the spiritual record. The Holy Land not only elucidates but bears witness to the truth of the Holy Book."

Besides the Holy Land, the state of Arabia and the Arabs has been brought prominently before the public, in the two closely-printed volumes of Mr. W. G. Palgrave, "Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia, in 1862-63." We refer to Mr. Palgrave's volumes chiefly on account of the view they give us of the religious character of the Arab population. It is extremely unfavourable. "Generally speaking," he says, "the Arabs are a believing, but not a religious people. Christian, Jewish, Mahometan, or Pagan creeds and forms—the Arab, when left to himself, does not see why they should not all be equally true, equally estimable; while, at the same time, he does not either see any very cogent reason for following one rather than the other, and thus comes to the happy conclusion of binding himself to none. Not that he entertains the smallest doubt regarding the Divine mission of any of the six hundred prophets from Adam down to Mahomet inclusively, and even El-Mokannaa' himself, as we shall ultimately see in 'Omân, but he is unwilling to give any one of them in particular an adherence

prejudicial to the rights of the rest. Besides, he is fond of ease, and impatient of restraint; stated prayers annoy him, long prayers tire him, ablutions are inconvenient, and fasting, especially in presence of a fat sheep, is quite out of the question, if indeed his ordinary allowance of nutriment might not be called a perpetual fast, and even a severe one.

"It is true that among a very large number this immense latitude of belief has led to an equally or even a more logical consequence, namely, entire scepticism, and a settled resolution to prefer the certain to the uncertain, the present to the future.

'Shall I abandon the pleasures of the pure wine goblet
For all they tell me about milk and honey hereafter?
Life, and death, and resurrection to follow,
—Stuff and nonsense, my dear madam:'

are the too-celebrated lines of a very popular Arabian poet, and I have often heard them quoted in moments of unreserved conversation with unequivocal approval on the part of all present. Not that even thus the Arab exactly disbelieves, but that he has made up his mind not to 'fash his thumb' about the matter."

In the field of Scripture exposition, Old Testament characters have been receiving a considerable share of attention. In his four sermons on "David," delivered before the University of Cambridge, Mr. Kingsley lately made a strenuous endeavour to dispel a delusion which works no small mischief in some young men,—that unguarded and uncontrolled sensual passion is after all but a trivial offence, not greatly impairing a character of much excellence in other respects. The very opposite of this is conceived to be the moral of King David's life; his shattered and helpless condition after his great trespass, and the miserable relations between him and his family, clearly evincing the ruinous results of that one uncontrolled lust under whose power he fell. The force and earnestness with which these and other salutary lessons are urged, make us regret the more what we must take leave to call Mr. Kingsley's defective statement on the subject of Christ's great work.

"Biographies of the Kings of Judah," is the title of a volume of expository sermons by Dr. James Augustus Hessey. The field is an important one, for the kings of Judah were not only remarkable for much variety of personal character, but also for the ways in which they were influenced by the circumstances and the people that surrounded them. Dr. Hessey has sought to indicate the characteristic feature of each life by the designation which he couples with the name of the king. Thus we have—Rehoboam, or the result of an idle word; Asa, or failure at the last; Jehoshaphat, or the dangers of indecision; Joash, or ingratitude; Hezekiah, or the might of prayer; Josiah, or the consistent career. The errors and failings, as well as the excellences of the kings, are clearly brought out, and pressed especially on the attention of the young. The book is not perhaps all that it might be; but the spirit in which it is written may be judged from its concluding words:—"We have been contemplating the temporal kings of Judah. Some of them we have seen to be worthy of disapproval; others, in their several degrees, have been proposed as worthy of imitation. Yet how poor, how lustreless, after all, is the goodness of even the best of them; how unfit to be compared with Him in whom was no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. . . . Contrast this (Josiah), perhaps almost the best of Judah's temporal kings, with the Spiritual King of Judah, with Him who, as on this day, entered Jerusalem in triumph, the children crying Hosannah, likewise early 'cut off, but not for himself.' Through his merits and his alone, those of whom we have been speaking, whosoever of them obtained acceptance, were accepted; through his merits also must any of us hope for heaven. The thrones of earthly kings have been reared and have passed away; his throne endures for ever. The righteousness of earthly kings (which, after all, was not their own) has been personal only, has not finally profited their brethren, except in the way of example, and even that very imperfectly; He is a perfect example of a godly life, and, blessed be his holy name, A SACRIFICE TO REDEEM US FROM SIN."

"Sesame and Lilies," is the enigmatical title of two lectures by Mr. Ruskin, recently delivered in Manchester, the purport or tenor of which is not made a whit more clear by their second titles—"Of King's Treasuries;" "Of Queen's Gardens." The former lecture was meant to give instruction on the reading of books, to show how these "treasuries" may be made to yield the stuff from which men of the kingly order are made and nourished; the other indicates the true function and glory of woman, and summons her, especially in the upper ranks of life, to send forth the blessed fragrance of which the "garden of lilies" is capable. Both lectures are radiant with those wonderful corruscations which sparkle in everything that falls from Mr. Ruskin's pen. Their *scorching* power is marvellous; everything false, mean, or untrue—everything that is not lovely and of good report, no matter by whom practised, is exposed to a withering fire of sarcasm and scorn. Every enthusiast is almost necessarily an exaggerator, and Mr. Ruskin is no exception. He finds in a daily newspaper, for example, a notice of a death by starvation, and he rushes to the conclusion that our Christianity has not in it one spark of true compassion. He greatly under-estimates the actual influence of the earnest religion of the time in the development of true compassion, and other graces, and would almost seem to approach the perilous conclusion, that all that passes for religion among us is mere sham and delusion. It is painful to see a man drifting towards a position of this kind, who is so well fitted, if he would keep within due limits, to expose the errors of society, and urge the cultivated classes to tread the noblest paths.

Drawn by K. Barnes. Engraved by J. Swain.

"AS MY SHADOW DARKENED HIS WORK, HE LIFTED HIS HEAD AND SAW ME."

ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BY THE VICAR.

IV.

On the way back, my thoughts were still occupied with the woman I had seen in the little shop. The old man-of-war's man was probably the nobler being of the two; and if I had had to choose between them, I should no doubt have chosen him. But I had not to choose between them; I had only to think about them; and I thought a great deal more about the one I could not understand than the one I could understand. For old Rogers wanted little help from me; whereas the other was evidently a soul in pain, and therefore belonged to me in peculiar right of my office; while the readiest way in which I could justify to myself the possession of that office was to make it a shepherding of the sheep. So I resolved to find out what I could about her, as one having a right to know, that I might see whether I could not help her. From herself it was evident that her secret, if she had one, was not to be easily gained; but even the common reports of the village would be some enlightenment to the darkness I was in about her.

As I went again through the village, I observed a narrow lane striking off to the left, and resolved to explore in that direction. It led up to one side of the large house of which I have already spoken. As I came near, I smelt what has been to me always a delightful smell—that of fresh deals under the hands of the carpenter. In the scent of those boards of pine is enclosed all the idea the tree could gather of the world of forest where it was reared. It speaks of many wild and bright but chiefly clean and rather cold things. If I were idling, it would draw me to it across many fields.—Turning a corner, I heard the sound of a saw. And this sound drew me yet more. For a carpenter's shop was the delight of my boyhood; and after I began to read the history of our Lord with something of that sense of reality with which we read other histories, and which, I am sorry to think, so much of the well-meant instruction we receive in our youth tends to destroy, my feeling about such a workshop grew stronger and stronger, till at last I never could go near enough to see the shavings lying on the floor of one, without a spiritual sensation such as I have in entering an old church; which sensation, ever since having been admitted on the usual conditions to a Mahometan mosque, urges me to pull off, not only my hat, but my shoes likewise. And the feeling has grown upon me, till now it seems at times as if the only cure in the world for social pride would be to go for five silent minutes into a carpenter's shop. How one can think of himself as above his neighbours, within sight, sound, or smell of one, I fear I am getting almost unable to imagine; and one ought not to get out of sympathy with the wrong. Only as I am growing old now, it does not matter so much, for I dare say my time will not be very long.

So I drew near to the shop, feeling as if the Lord might be at work there at one of the benches. And when I reached the door, there was my pale-faced hearer of the Sunday afternoon, sawing a board for a coffin-lid.

As my shadow fell across and darkened his work, he lifted his head and saw me.

I could not altogether understand the expression of his countenance as he stood upright from his labour and touched his old hat with rather a proud than a courteous gesture. And I could not believe that he was glad to see me, although he laid down his saw and advanced to the door. It was the gentleman in him, not the man, that sought to make me welcome, hardly caring whether I saw through the ceremony or not. True there was a smile on his lips, but the smile of a man who cherishes a secret grudge; of one who does not altogether dislike you, but who has a claim upon you—say, for an apology, of which claim he doubts whether you know the existence. So the smile seemed tightened and stopped just when it got half-way to its width, and was about to become hearty and begin to shine.

"May I come in?" I said.

"Come in, sir," he answered.

"I am glad I have happened to come upon you by accident," I said.

He smiled as if he did not quite believe in the accident, and considered it a part of the play between us that I should pretend it. I hastened to add:

"I was wandering about the place, making some acquaintance with it, and with my friends in it, when I came upon you quite unexpectedly. You know I saw you in church on Sunday afternoon."

"I know you saw me, sir," he answered, with a motion as if to return to his work; "but, to tell the truth, I don't go to church very often."

I did not quite know whether to take this as proceeding from an honest fear of being misunderstood, or from a sense of being in general superior to all that sort of thing. But I felt that it would be of no good to pursue the inquiry directly. I looked therefore for something to say.

"Ah! your work is not always a pleasant one," I said, associating the feelings of which I have already spoken with the facts before me, and looking at the coffin, the lower part of which stood nearly finished upon trestles on the floor.

"Well, there are unpleasant things in all trades," he answered. "But it does not matter," he added, with an increase of bitterness in his smile.

"I didn't mean," I said, "that the work was unpleasant—only sad. It must always be painful to make a coffin."

"A joiner gets used to it, sir, as you do to the funeral service. But for my part, I don't see why it should be considered so unhappy for a man to be buried. This isn't such a good job, after all, this world, sir, you must allow."

"Neither is that coffin," said I, as if by a sudden inspiration.

The man seemed taken aback, as old Rogers might have said. He looked at the coffin and then looked at me.

"Well, sir," he said, after a short pause, which no doubt seemed longer both to him and to me than it would have seemed to any third person, "I don't see anything amiss with the coffin. I don't say it'll last till doomsday, as the gravedigger says to Hamlet, because I don't know so much about doomsday as some people pretend to; but you see, sir, it's not finished yet."

"Thank you," I said; "that's just what I meant. You thought I was hasty in my judgment of your coffin; whereas I only said of it knowingly what you said of the world thoughtlessly. How do you know that the world is finished any more than your coffin? And how dare you then say that it is a bad job?"

The same respectfully scornful smile passed over his face, as much as to say, "Ah! it's your trade to talk that way, so I must not be too hard upon you."

"At any rate, sir," he said, "whoever made it has taken long enough about it, a person would think, to finish anything he ever meant to finish."

"One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day," I said.

"That's supposing," he answered, "that the Lord did make the world. For my part, I am half of a mind that the Lord didn't make it at all."

"I am very glad to hear you say so," I answered.

Hereupon I found that we had changed places a little. He looked up at me. The smile of superiority was no longer there, and a puzzled questioning, which might indicate either "Who would have expected that from you?" or, "What can he mean?" or both at once, had taken its place. I, for my part, knew that on the scale of the man's judgment I had risen nearer to his own level. As he said nothing, however, and I was in danger of being misunderstood, I proceeded at once.

"Of course it seems to me better that you should not believe God had done a thing, than that you should believe He had not done it well?"

"Ah! I see, sir. Then you will allow there is some room for doubting whether He made the world at all?"

"Yes; for I do not think an honest man, as you seem to me to be, would be able to doubt without any room whatever. That would be only for a fool. But it is just possible, as we are not perfectly good ourselves—you'll allow that, won't you?"

"That I will, sir; God knows."

"Well, I say—as we're not quite good ourselves, it's just possible that things may be too good for us to do them the justice of believing in them."

"But there are things, you must allow, so plainly wrong!"

"So much so, both in the world and in myself, that it would be to me torturing despair to believe that God did not make the world; for then, how would it ever be put right? Therefore I prefer the theory that He has not done making it yet."

"But wouldn't you say, sir, that God might have managed it without so many slips in the making as your way would suppose? I should think myself a bad workman if I worked after that fashion."

"I do not believe that there are any slips. You know you are making a coffin; but are you sure you know what God is making of the world?"

"That I can't tell, of course, nor anybody else."

"Then you can't say that what looks like a slip is really a slip, either in the design or in the workmanship. You do not know what end He has in view; and you may find some day that those slips were just the straight line to that very end."

"Ah! maybe. But you can't be sure of it, you see."

"Perhaps not, in the way you mean. But sure enough, for all that, to try it upon life—to order my way by it, and so find that it works well. And I find that it explains everything that comes near it. You know that no engineer would be satisfied with his engine on paper, nor with any proof whatever except seeing how it will go."

He made no reply.

It is a principle of mine never to push anything over the edge. When I am successful in any argument, my one dread is of humiliating my opponent. Indeed I cannot bear it. It humiliates me. And if you want him to think about anything, you must leave him room, and not give him such associations with the question that the very idea of it will be painful and irritating to him. Let him have a hand in the convincing of himself. I have been surprised sometimes to see my own arguments come up fresh and green, when I thought the fowls of the air had devoured them up. When a man reasons for victory and not for the truth in the other soul, he is sure of just one ally, the same that Faust had in fighting Gretchen's brother—that is, the Devil. But God and good men are against him. So I never follow up a victory of that kind, for, as I said, the defeat of the intellect is not the object in fighting with the sword of the Spirit, but the acceptance of the heart. In this case, therefore, I drew back.

"May I ask for whom you are making that coffin?"

"For a sister of my own, sir."

"I'm sorry to hear that."

"There's no occasion. I can't say I'm sorry, though she was one of the best women I ever knew."

"Why are you not sorry, then? Life's a good thing in the main, you will allow."

"Yes, when it's endurable at all. But to have a brute of a husband coming home at any hour of the night or morning, drunk upon the money she had earned by hard work, was enough to take more of the shine out of things than church-going on Sundays could put in again, regular as she was, poor woman! I'm as glad as her brute of a husband, that she's out of his way at last."

"How do you know he's glad of it?"

"He's been drunk every night since she died."

"Then he's the worse for losing her?"

"He may well be. Crying like a hypocrite, too, over his own work!"

"A fool he must be. A hypocrite, perhaps not.

A hypocrite is a terrible name to give. Perhaps her death will do him good."

"He doesn't deserve to be done any good to. I would have made this coffin for him with a world of pleasure."

"I never found that I deserved anything, not even a coffin. The only claim that I could ever lay to anything was that I was very much in want of it."

The old smile returned—as much as to say, "That's your little game in the church." But I resolved to try nothing more with him at present; and indeed was sorry that I had started the new question at all, partly because thus I had again given him occasion to feel that he knew better than I did, which was not good either for him or for me in our relation to each other.

"This has been a fine old room once," I said, looking round the workshop.

"You can see it wasn't a workshop always, sir. Many a grand dinner-party has sat down in this room when it was in its glory. Look at the chimney-piece there."

"I have been looking at it," I said, going nearer.

"It represents the four quarters of the world, you see."

I saw strange figures of men and women, one on a kneeling camel, one on a crawling crocodile, and others differently mounted, with various besides of Nature's bizarre productions creeping and flying in stone-carving over the huge fire-place, in which, in place of a fire, stood several new and therefore brilliantly red cart-wheels. The sun shone through the upper part of a high window, of which many of the panes were broken, right in upon the cart wheels, which, glowing thus in the chimney under the sombre chimney-piece, added to the grotesque look of the whole assemblage of contrasts. The coffin and the carpenter stood in the twilight occasioned by the sharp division of light made by a lofty wing of the house that rose flanking the other window. The room was still wainscotted in panels, which, I presume for the sake of the more light required for handicraft, had been washed all over with white. At the level of labour they were broken in many places. Somehow or other, the whole reminded me of Albert Dürer's *Melencholia*.

Seeing I was interested in looking about his shop, my new friend—for I could not help feeling that we should be friends before all was over, and so began to count him one already—resumed the conversation. He had never taken up the dropped thread of it before.

"Yes, sir," he said; "the owners of the place little thought it would come to this—the deals growing into a coffin there on the spot where the grand dinner was laid for them and their guests! But there is another thing about it that is odder still: my son is the last male——"

Here he stopped suddenly, and his face grew very red. As suddenly he resumed:—

"I'm not a gentleman, sir; but I will tell the truth. Curse it!—I beg your pardon, sir"—and here the old smile—"I don't think I got that from *their* side of the house.—My son's *not* the last male descendant."

Here followed another pause.

As to the imprecation, I knew better than to take any notice of a mere expression of excitement under a sense of some injury with which I was not yet acquainted. If I could get his feelings right in regard to other and more important things, a reform in that matter would soon follow; whereas to make a mountain of a mole-hill would be to put that very mountain between him and me. Nor would I ask him any questions, lest I should just happen to ask him the wrong one; for this parishioner of mine evidently wanted careful handling, if I would do him any good. And it won't do any man good to fling even the Bible in his face. Nay, a roll of bank-notes, which would be more evidently a good to most men, would carry insult with it if presented in that manner. You cannot expect people to accept before they have had a chance of seeing what the offered gift really is.

After a pause, therefore, the carpenter had once more to recommence, or let the conversation lie. I stood in a waiting attitude. And while I looked at him, I was reminded of some one else whom I knew—with whom, too, I had pleasant associations—though I could not in the least determine who that one might be.

"It's very foolish of me to talk so to a stranger," he resumed.

"It is very kind and friendly of you," I said, still careful to make no advances. "And you yourself belong to the old family that once lived in this old house?"

"It would be no boast to tell the truth, sir, even if it were a credit to me, which it is not. That family has been nothing but a curse to ours."

I noted that he spoke of that family as different from his, and yet implied that he belonged to it. The explanation would come in time. But the man was again silent, planing away at half the lid of his sister's coffin. And I could not help thinking that the closed mouth meant to utter nothing more on this occasion.

"I am sure there must be many a story to tell about this old place, if only there were any one to tell them," I said at last, looking round the room once more.—"I think I see the remains of paintings on the ceiling."

"You are sharp-eyed, sir. My father says they were plain enough in his young days."

"Is your father alive, then?"

"That he is, sir, and hearty too, though he seldom goes out of doors now. Will you go upstairs and see him? He's past ninety, sir. He has plenty of stories to tell about the old place—before it began to fall to pieces, like."

"I won't go to-day," I said, partly because I wanted to be at home to receive any one who might call, and partly to secure an excuse for calling again upon the carpenter sooner than I should otherwise have liked to do. "I expect visitors myself, and it is time I were at home. Good morning."

"Good morning, sir."

And away home I went with a new wonder in my brain. The man did not seem unknown to me. I mean the state of his mind woke no feeling of per-

plexity in me. I was certain of understanding it thoroughly when I had learned something of his history; for that such a man must have a history of his own was rendered only the more probable from the fact that he knew something of the history of his forefathers, though indeed there are some men who seem to have no other. It was strange, however, to think of that man working away at a trade in the very house in which such ancestors had eaten and drunk, and married and given in marriage. The house and family had declined together—in outward appearance at least; for it was quite possible both might have risen in the moral and spiritual scale in proportion as they sank in the social one. And if any of my readers are at first inclined to think that this could hardly be, seeing that the man was little if anything better than an infidel, I would just like to hold one minute's conversation with them on that subject. A man may be on the way to the truth just in virtue of his doubting. I will tell you what Lord Bacon says, and of all writers of English I delight in him:—"So it is in contemplation: if a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties." Now I could not tell the kind or character of this man's doubt; but it was evidently real and not affected doubt; and that was much in his favour. And I could see that he was a thinking man; just one of the sort I thought I should get on with in time, because he was honest—notwithstanding that unpleasant smile of his, which did irritate me a little, and partly piqued me into the determination to get the better of the man, if I possibly could, by making friends with him. At all events, here was another strange parishioner. And who could it be that he was like?

V.

When I came near my own gate, I saw that it was open; and when I came in sight of my own door, I found a carriage standing before it, and a footman ringing the bell. It was an old-fashioned carriage, with two white horses in it, yet whiter by age than by nature. They looked as if no coachman could get more than three miles an hour out of them, they were so fat and knuckle-kneed. But my attention could not rest long on the horses, and I reached the door just as my housekeeper was pronouncing me absent. There were two ladies in the carriage, one old and one young.

"Ah, here is Mr. Walton!" said the old lady, in a serene voice, with a clear hardness in its tone; and I held out my hand to aid her descent. She had pulled off her glove to get a card out of her card-case, and so put the tips of two old fingers, worn very smooth, as if polished with feeling what things were like, upon the palm of my hand. I then offered my hand to her companion, a girl apparently about fourteen, who took a hearty hold of it, and jumped down beside her, with a smile. As I followed them into the house, I took their card from the housekeeper's hand, and read *Mrs. Oldcastle and Miss Gladwyn.*

I confess here to my reader, that these are not really the names I read on the card. I made these up this minute. But the names of the persons of humble position in my story, are their real names. And my reason for making the difference will be plain enough. You can never find out my friend old Rogers: you *might* find out the people who called on me in their carriage with the ancient white horses.

When they were seated in the drawing-room, I said to the old lady,

"I remember seeing you in church on Sunday morning. It is very kind of you to call so soon."

"You will always see me in church," she returned with a stiff bow, and an expansion of deadness on her face, which I interpreted into an assertion of dignity, resulting from the implied possibility that I might have passed her over in my congregation, or might have forgotten her after not passing her over.

"Except when you have a headache, grannie," said Miss Gladwyn, with an arch look first at her grandmother and then at me. "Grannie has bad headaches sometimes."

The deadness melted a little from Mrs. Oldcastle's face, as she turned with half a smile to her grandchild, and said:

"Yes, Pet. But you know that cannot be an interesting fact to Mr. Walton."

"I beg your pardon, Mrs. Oldcastle," I said. "A clergyman ought to know something, and the more the better, of the troubles of his flock. Sympathy is one of the first demands he ought to be able to meet. —I know what a headache is."

The former expression, or rather, non-expression, returned; this time unaccompanied by a bow.

"I trust, Mr. Walton, I *trust* I am above any morbid necessity for sympathy. But, as you say, amongst the poor of your flock,—it *is* very desirable that a clergyman should be able to sympathize."

"It's quite true what grannie says, Mr. Walton, though you mightn't think it. When she has a headache, she shuts herself up in her own room, and doesn't even let me come near her—nobody but old Joan; and how she can prefer her to me, I'm sure I don't know."

And here the girl pretended to pout, but with a sparkle in her bright grey eye.

"The subject is not interesting to me, Pet. Pray, Mr. Walton, is it a point of conscience with you to wear the surplice when you preach?"

"Not in the least," I answered. "I think I like it rather better on the whole. But that's not why I wear it."

"Never mind grannie, Mr. Walton. *I* think the surplice is lovely. I'm sure its much liker the way we shall be dressed in heaven, though I don't think I shall ever get there, if I must read the good books grannie reads."

"I don't know that it is necessary to read any good books but *the* good book," I said.

"There, grannie!" exclaimed Miss Gladwyn triumphantly. "I'm so glad I've got Mr. Walton on my side."

"Mr. Walton is not so old as I am, my dear, and has much to learn yet."

I could not help feeling a little annoyed (which was very foolish, I know), and saying to myself, "If it's

to make me like you, I had rather not learn any more ;" but I said nothing aloud, of course.

"Have you got a headache to day, grannie ?"

"No, Pet. Be quiet. I wish to ask Mr. Walton *why* he wears the surplice."

"Simply," I replied, "because I was told the people had been accustomed to it under my predecessor."

"But that can be no good reason for doing what is not right—that people have been accustomed to it."

"But I don't allow that it's not right. I think it is a matter of no consequence whatever. If I find that the people don't like it, I will give it up with pleasure."

"You ought to have principles of your own, Mr. Walton."

"I hope I have. And one of them is, not to make mountains of molehills ; for a molehill is not a mountain. A man ought to have too much to do in obeying his conscience and keeping his soul's garments clean, to mind whether he wears black or white when telling his flock that God loves them, and that they will never be happy till they believe it."

"They may believe that too soon."

"I don't think any one can believe the truth too soon."

A pause followed, during which it became evident to me that Miss Gladwyn saw fun in the whole affair, and was enjoying it thoroughly. Mrs. Oldcastle's face, on the contrary, was illegible. She resumed in a measured still voice, which she meant to be meek, I daresay, but which was really authoritative :

"I am sorry, Mr. Walton, that your principles are so loose and unsettled. You will see my honesty in saying so when you find that, objecting to the surplice, as I do, on Protestant grounds, I yet warn you against making any change because you may discover that your parishioners are against it. You have no idea, Mr. Walton, what inroads Radicalism, as they call it, has been making in this neighbourhood. It is quite dreadful. Everybody, down to the poorest, claiming a right to think for himself, and set his betters right ! There's one worse than any of the rest—but he's no better than an atheist—a carpenter of the name of Weir, always talking to his neighbours against the proprietors and the magistrates, and the clergy too, Mr. Walton, and the game-laws, and what not ? And if you once show them that you are afraid of them by going a step out of your way for *their* opinion about anything, there will be no end to it ; for the beginning of strife is like the letting out of water, as you know. *I* should know nothing about it, but that my daughter's maid—I came to hear of it through her—a decent girl of the name of Rogers, and born of decent parents, but unfortunately attached to the son of one of your churchwardens, who has put him into that mill on the river you can almost see from here."

"Who put him in the mill ?"

"His own father, to whom it belongs."

"Well, it seems to me a very good match for her."

"Yes, indeed, and for him too. But his foolish father thinks the match below him, as if there was any difference between the positions of people in that rank of life ! Every one seems striving to tread on the heels of every one else, instead of being content with the station to which God has called them. I am content with mine. I had nothing to do with putting myself there. Why should they not be content with theirs ? They need to be taught Christian humility and respect for their superiors. That's the virtue most wanted at present. The poor have to look up to the rich——"

"That's right, grannie ! And the rich have to look down on the poor."

"No, my dear. I did not say that. The rich have to be *kind* to the poor."

"But, grannie, why did you marry Mr. Oldcastle ?"

"What does the child mean ?"

"Uncle Stoddart says you refused ever so many offers when you were a girl."

"Uncle Stoddart has no business to be talking about such things to a chit like you," returned the grandmother, smiling however at the charge, which so far certainly contained no reproach.

"And grandpapa was the ugliest and the richest of them all—wasn't he, grannie ? and Colonel Markham the handsomest and the poorest ?"

A flush of anger crimsoned the old lady's pale face. It looked dead no longer.

"Hold your tongue," she said. "You are rude."

And Miss Gladwyn did hold her tongue, but nothing else, for she was laughing all over.

The relation between these two was evidently a very odd one. It was clear that Miss Gladwyn was a spoiled child, though I could not help thinking her very nicely spoiled, as far as I saw ; and that the old lady persisted in regarding her as a cub although her claws had grown quite long enough to be dangerous. Certainly, if things went on thus, it was pretty clear which of them would soon have the upper hand, for grannie was vulnerable, and Pet was not.

It really began to seem as if there were nobody but characters in my parish. I began to think it must be the strangest parish in England, and to wonder that I had never heard of it before. "Surely it must be in some story-book at least !" I said to myself.

But her grand-daughter's tiger-cat-play drove the old lady nearer to me. She rose and held out her hand, saying, with some kindness :

"Take my advice, my dear Mr. Walton, and don't make too much of your poor, or they'll soon be too much for you to manage.—Come, Pet : it's time to go home to lunch.—And for the surplice, take your own way and wear it. I shan't say anything more about it."

"I will do what I can see to be right in the matter," I answered as gently as I could ; for I did not want to quarrel with her, although I thought her both presumptuous and rude.

"I'm on your side, Mr. Walton," said the girl, with a sweet comical smile, as she squeezed my hand once more. I led them to the carriage, and it was with a feeling of relief that I saw it drive off.

The old lady certainly was not pleasant. She had a white smooth face over which the skin was drawn tight, grey hair, and rather lurid hazel eyes. I felt a repugnance to her that was hardly to be accounted for by her arrogance to me, or by her superciliousness to the poor; although either would have accounted for much of it. For I confess that I have not yet learned to bear presumption and rudeness with all the patience and forgiveness with which I ought by this time to be able to meet them. And as to the poor, I am afraid I was always in some danger of being a partizan of theirs against the rich; and that a clergyman ought never to be. And indeed the poor rich have more need of the care of the clergyman than the others, seeing it is hardly that the rich shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, and the poor have all the advantage over them in that respect.

"Still," I said to myself, "there must be some good in the woman—she cannot be altogether so hard as she looks, else how should that child dare to take the liberties of a kitten with her? She doesn't look to *me* like one to make game of! However, I shall know a little more about her when I return her call, and I will do my best to keep on good terms with her."

I took down a volume of Plato to comfort me after the irritation which my nerves had undergone, and sat down in an easy chair beside the open window of my study. And with Plato in my hand, and all that outside my window, I began to feel as if after all a man might be happy, even if a lady had refused him. So there I sat, never opening my favourite vellum-bound volume, but gazing out on the happy world, whence a gentle wind came in as if to bid me welcome with a kiss to all it had to give me. And then I thought of the wind that bloweth where it listeth, which is everywhere, and I forgot to open my Plato, and thanked God for the Life of life whose story and whose words are in that best of books, and who explains everything to us, and makes us love Socrates and David and all such men ten times more; and who follows no law but the law of love, and no fashion but the will of God; for where did ever one read words less like moralizing and more like simple earnestness of truth than all those of Jesus? And I prayed my God that he would make me able to speak good common heavenly sense to my people, and forgive me for feeling so cross and proud towards the unhappy old lady—for I was sure she was not happy—and make me into a rock which swallowed up the waves of wrong in its great caverns, and never threw them back to swell the commotion of the angry sea whence they came. Ah, what it would be actually to annihilate wrong in this way!—to be able to say, it shall not be wrong against me, so utterly do I forgive it! How much sooner, then, would the wrong-doer repent, and get rid of the wrong from his side also! But the painful fact will show itself, not less curious than painful, that it is more difficult to forgive small wrongs than great ones. Perhaps, however, the forgiveness of the great wrongs is not sot rue as it seems. For do we not think it is a fine thing to forgive such wrongs, and so do it rather for our own sakes than for the sake of the wrong-doer? It is dreadful not to be good, and to have bad ways inside one.

Such thoughts passed through my mind. And once more the great light went up on me with regard to my office, namely, that just because I was parson to the parish, I must not be *the person* to myself. And I prayed God to keep me from feeling *stung* and proud, however anyone might behave to me; for all my value lay in being a sacrifice to Him and the people.

So when Mrs. Pearson knocked at the door, and told me that a lady and gentleman had called, I shut my book which I had just opened, and kept down as well as I could the rising grumble of the inhospitable Englishman, who is apt to be forgetful to entertain strangers, at least in the parlour of his heart. And I cannot count it perfect hospitality to be friendly and plentiful towards those whom you have invited to your house—what thank has a man in that?—while you are cold and forbidding to those who have not that claim on your attention. That is not to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect. By all means tell people when you are busy about something that must be done, that you cannot spare the time for them except they want you upon something of yet more pressing necessity; but *tell* them, and do not get rid of them by the use of the instrument commonly called *the cold shoulder*. It is a wicked instrument that, and ought to have fallen out of use by this time.

I went and received Mr. and Miss Boulderstone, and was at least thus far rewarded—that the *eerie* feeling, as the Scotch would call it, which I had about my parish, as containing none but *characters*, and therefore not being *canny*, was entirely removed. At least there was a wholesome leaven in it of honest stupidity. Please, kind reader, do not fancy I am sneering. I declare to you I think a sneer the worst thing God has not made. A curse is nothing in wickedness to it, it seems to me. I do mean that honest stupidity I respect heartily, and do assert my conviction that I do not know how England at least would get on without it. But I do not mean the stupidity that sets up for teaching itself to its neighbour, thinking itself wisdom all the time. That I do not respect.

Mr. and Miss Boulderstone left me a little fatigued, but in no way sore or grumbling. They only sent me back with additional zest to my Plato, of whom I enjoyed a hearty page or two before any one else arrived. The only other visitors I had that day were an old surgeon in the Navy who since his retirement had practised for many years in the neighbourhood, and was still at the call of any one who did not think him too old-fashioned; for even here the fashions, though decidedly elderly young ladies by the time they arrived, held their sway none the less imperiously; and Mr. Brownrigg, the churchwarden. More of Dr. Duncan by and by.

Except Mr. and Miss Boulderstone, I had not yet seen any common people. They were all decidedly uncommon, and, as regarded most of them, I could not think I should have any difficulty in preaching

to them. For, whatever place a man may give to preaching in the ritual of the church—indeed it does not properly belong to the ritual at all—it is yet the part of the so-called *service* with which his personality has most to do. To the influences of the other parts he has to submit himself, ever turning the openings of his soul towards them, that he may not be a mere praying machine; but with the sermon it is otherwise. That he produces. For that he is responsible. And therefore, I say, it was a great comfort to me to find myself amongst a people from which my spirit neither shrunk in the act of preaching, nor with regard to which it was likely to feel that it was beating itself against a stone wall. There was some good in preaching to a man like Weir or old Rogers. Whether there was any good in preaching to a woman like Mrs. Oldcastle I did not know.

The evening I thought I might give to my books, and thus end my first Monday in my parish; but, as I said, Mr. Brownrigg, the churchwarden, called and stayed a whole weary hour, talking about matters quite uninteresting to any who may hereafter peruse what I am now writing. Indeed he was not an interesting man: short, broad, stout, red-faced, with an immense amount of mental inertia, discharging itself in constant lingual activity about little nothings. Indeed, when there was no new nothing to be had, the old nothing would do over again to make a fresh fuss about. But if you attempted to convey a thought into his mind which involved the moving round half a degree from where he stood, and looking at the matter from a point even so far new, you found him utterly, totally impenetrable, as pachydermatous as any rhinoceros or behemoth. One other corporeal fact I could not help observing, was, that his cheeks rose at once from the collar of his green coat, his neck being invisible, from the hollow between it and the jaw being filled up to a level. The conformation was just what he himself delighted to contemplate in his pigs, to which his resemblance was greatly increased by unwearied endeavours to keep himself close shaved.—I could not help feeling anxious about his son and Jane Rogers.—He gave a quantity of gossip about various people, evidently anxious that I should regard them as he regarded them; but in all he said concerning them I could scarcely detect one point of significance as to character or history. I was very glad indeed when the waddling of hands—for it was the perfect imbecility of hand-shaking—was over, and he was safely out of the gate. He had kept me standing on the steps for full five minutes, and I did not feel safe from him till I was once more in my study with the door shut.

I am not going to try my reader's patience with anything of a more detailed account of my introduction to my various parishioners. I shall mention them only as they come up in the course of my story. Before many days had passed I had found out my poor, who I thought must be somewhere, seeing the Lord had said we should have them with us always. There was a workhouse in the village, but there were not a great many in it; for the poor were kindly enough handled who belonged to the place, and were not too severely compelled to go into the house: though I believe in this house they would have been more comfortable than they were in their own houses.

I cannot imagine a greater misfortune for a man, perhaps still more for a clergyman, than not to know, or knowing, not to minister to any of the poor. And I did not feel that I knew in the least where I was until I had found out and conversed with almost the whole of mine.

After I had done so, I began to think it better to return Mrs. Oldcastle's visit, though I felt greatly disinclined to encounter that tight-skinned nose again, and that mouth whose smile had no light in it, except when it responded to some nonsense of her grand-daughter's.

VI.

About noon, on a lovely autumn day, I set out for Oldcastle Hall. The keenness of the air had melted away with the heat of the sun, yet still the air was fresh and invigorating. Can any one tell me why it is that when the earth is renewing her youth in the spring, man should feel feeble and low-spirited, and gaze with bowed head, though pleased heart, on the crocuses; whereas on the contrary in the autumn, when nature is dying for the winter, he feels strong and hopeful, holds his head erect, and walks with a vigorous step, though the flaunting dahlias discourage him greatly? I do not ask for the physical causes: those I might be able to find out for myself; but I ask, where is the rightness and fitness in the thing? Should not man and nature go together in this world which was made for man—not for science, but for man? Perhaps I have some glimmerings of where the answer lies. Perhaps I see a cherub aloft that sees it. And in many of our questions we have to be content with such an approximation to an answer as this. And for my part I am content with this. With less, I am not content.

Whatever that answer may be, I walked over the old Gothic bridge with a heart strong enough to meet Mrs. Oldcastle without flinching. I might have to quarrel with her—I could not tell: she certainly was neither safe nor wholesome. But this I was sure of, that I would not quarrel with her without being quite certain that I ought. I wish it were *never* one's duty to quarrel with anybody: I do so hate it. But not to do it sometimes is to smile in the Devil's face, and that no one ought to do. However, I had not to quarrel this time.

The woods on the other side of the river from my house, towards which I was now walking, were of the most sombre rich colours—sombre and rich, like a life that has laid up treasure in heaven, locked in a casket of sorrow. I came nearer and nearer to them through the village, and approached the great iron gate with the antediluvian monsters on the top of its stone pillars. And awful monsters they were—are still! I see the tail of one of them at this very moment. But they let me through very quietly, notwithstanding their evil looks; and I thought they were saying to each other across the top of the gate, "Never mind; he'll catch it soon enough." But, as I said, I did not catch it that day; and I could not have caught it that day; it was too lovely a day to catch any

hurt even from that most hurtful of all beings under the sun, an unwomanly woman.

I wandered up the long winding road, through the woods which I had remarked flanking the meadow on my first walk up the river. These woods smelt so sweetly —their dead and dying leaves departing in sweet odours—that they quite made up for the absence of the flowers. And the wind—no, there was no wind —there was only a memory of wind that woke now and then in the bosom of the wood, shook down a few leaves, like the thoughts that flutter away in sighs, and then was still again.

I am getting old, as I told you, my friends. (See there, you seem my friends already. Do not despise an old man because he cannot help loving people he never saw or even heard of.) I say I am getting old—(is it *but* or *therefore?* I do not know which)—but, therefore, I shall never forget that one autumn day in those grandly fading woods.

Up the slope of the hillside they rose like one great rainbow billow of foliage—bright yellow, red rusty and bright, fading green, all kinds and shades of brown and purple. Multitudes of leaves lay on the sides of the path, so many that I betook myself to my old childish amusement of walking in them without lifting my feet, driving whole armies of them with ocean-like rustling before me. I did not do so as I came back. I walked in the middle of the way then, and I remember stepping over many single leaves, in a kind of mechanico-merciful way, as if they had been living creatures—as indeed who can tell but they are, only they must be pretty nearly dead when they are on the ground.

At length the road brought me up to the house. It did not look such a large house as I have since found it to be. And it certainly was not an interesting house from the outside, though its surroundings of green grass and trees would make any whole beautiful. Indeed the house itself tried hard to look ugly not quite succeding only because of the kind foiling of its efforts by the Virginia creepers and ivy, which, as if ashamed of its staring countenance, did all they could to spread their hands over it and hide it. But there was one charming group of old chimneys, belonging to some portion behind, which indicated a very different, namely a very much older, face upon the house once—a face that had passed away to give place to this. Once inside, I found there were more remains of the olden time than I had expected. I was led up one of those grand square oak staircases, which look like a portion of the house to be dwelt in, and not like a ladder for getting from one part of the habitable regions to another. On the top was a fine expanse of landing, another hall in fact, from which I was led towards the back of the house by a narrow passage, and shown into a small dark drawing-room with a deep stone-mullioned window, wainscotted in oak simply carved into panels. Several doors around indicated communication with other parts of the house. Here I found Mrs. Oldcastle, reading what I judged to be one of the cheap and gaudy religious books of the present day. She rose and *received* me, and having motioned me to a seat, began to talk about the parish. You would have perceived at once from her tone that she recognized no other bond of connection between us but the parish.

"I hear you have been most kind in visiting the poor, Mr. Walton. You must take care that they don't take advantage of your kindness, though. I assure you, you will find some of them very grasping indeed. And you need not expect that they will give you the least credit for good intentions."

"I have seen nothing yet to make me uneasy on that score. But certainly my testimony is of no weight yet."

"Mine is. I have proved them. The poor of this neighbourhood are very deficient in gratitude."

"Yes, grannie,——"

I started. But there was no interruption, such as I have made to indicate my surprise; although, when I looked half round in the direction whence the voice came, the words that followed were all rippled with a sweet laugh of amusement.

"Yes, grannie, you are right. You remember how old dame Hope wouldn't take the money you offered her, and dropped such a disdainful courtesy. It was *so* greedy of her, wasn't it?"

"I am sorry to hear of any disdainful reception of kindness," I said.

"Yes, and she had the coolness, within a fortnight, to send up to me and ask if I would be kind enough to lend her half-a-crown for a few weeks."

"And then it was your turn, grannie! You sent her five shillings, didn't you?—Oh, no; I'm wrong. That was the other woman."

"Indeed, I did not send her anything but a rebuke. I told her that it would be a very wrong thing in me to contribute to the support of such an evil spirit of unthankfulness as she indulged in. When she came to see her conduct in its true light, and confessed that she had behaved very abominably, I would see what I could do for her."

"And meantime she was served out, wasn't she? With her sick boy at home, and nothing to give him?"

"She made her own bed, and had to lie on it."

"Don't you think a little kindness might have had more effect in bringing her to see that she was wrong."

"Grannie doesn't believe in kindness, except to me—dear old grannie! She spoils me. I'm sure I shall be ungrateful some day; and then she'll begin to read me long lectures, and prick me with all manner of headless pins. But I won't stand it, I can tell you, grannie! I'm too much spoiled for that."

Mrs. Oldcastle was silent—why, I could not tell, except it was that she knew she had no chance of quieting the girl in any other way.

I may mention here, lest I should have no opportunity afterwards, that I inquired of dame Hope as to her version of the story, and found that there had been a great misunderstanding, as I had suspected. She was really in no want at the time, and did not feel that it would be quite honourable to take the money when she did not need it—(some poor people *are* capable of such reasoning), and so had refused it, not without a feeling at the same time that it was more pleasant to refuse than to accept from such a giver;

some stray sparkle of which feeling, discovered by the keen eye of Miss Gladwyn, may have given that appearance of disdain to her courtesy to which the girl alluded. When, however, her boy in service was brought home ill, she had sent to ask for what she now required, on the very ground that it had been offered to her before. The misunderstanding had arisen from the total incapacity of Mrs. Oldcastle to enter sympathetically into the feelings of one as superior to herself in character as she was inferior in worldly condition.

But to return to Oldcastle Hall.

I wished to change the subject, knowing that blind defence is of no use. One must have definite points for defence, if one has not a thorough understanding of the character in question; and I had neither.

"This is a beautiful old house," I said. "There must be strange places about it."

Mrs. Oldcastle had not time to reply, or at least did not reply, before Miss Gladwyn said,

"Oh, Mr. Walton, have you looked out of the window yet? You don't know what a lovely place this is, if you haven't."

And as she spoke she emerged from a recess in the room, a kind of dark alcove, where she had been amusing herself with what I took to be some sort of puzzle, but which I found afterwards to be the bit and curb-chain of her pony's bridle which she was polishing up to her own bright mind, because the stable-boy had not pleased her in the matter, and she wanted both to get them brilliant and to shame the lad for the future. I followed her to the window, where I was indeed as much surprised and pleased as she could have wished.

"There!" she said, holding back one of the dingy heavy curtains with her small childish hand.

And there indeed I saw an astonishment. It did not lie in the lovely sweeps of hill and hollow stretching away to the horizon, richly wooded, and—though I saw none of them—sprinkled, certainly, with sweet villages full of human thoughts, loves, and hopes; the astonishment did not lie in this—though all this was really much more beautiful to the higher imagination—but in the fact that, at the first glance, I had a vision properly belonging to a rugged or mountainous country. For I had approached the house by a gentle slope, which certainly was long and winding, but had occasioned no feeling in my mind that I had reached any considerable height. And I had come up that one beautiful staircase; no more; and yet now, when I looked from this window, I found myself on the edge of a precipice—not a very deep one, certainly, yet with all the effect of many a deeper. For below the house on this side lay a great hollow, with steep sides, up which, as far as they could reach, the trees were climbing. The sides were not all so steep as the one on which the house stood, but they were all rocky and steep, with here and there slopes of green grass. And down in the bottom, in the centre of the hollow, lay a pool of water. I knew it only by its slaty shimmer through the fading green of the tree-tops between me and it.

"There!" again exclaimed Miss Gladwyn; "isn't that beautiful? But you haven't seen the most beautiful thing yet. Grannie, where's—ah! there she is! There's auntie! Don't you see her down there, by the side of the pond? That pond is a hundred feet deep. If auntie were to fall in she would be drowned before you could jump down to get her out. Can you swim?"

Before I had time to answer, she was off again.

"Don't you see auntie down there?"

"No, I don't see her. I have been trying very hard, but I can't."

"Well, I daresay you can't. Nobody, I think, has got eyes but myself. Do you see a big stone by the edge of the pond, with another stone on the top of it, like a big potato with a little one growing out of it?"

"No."

"Well, auntie is under the trees on the opposite side from that stone. Do you see her yet?"

"No."

"Then you must come down with me, and I will introduce you to her. She's much the prettiest thing here. Much prettier than grannie."

Here she looked over her shoulder at grannie, who, instead of being angry, as, from what I had seen on our former interview, I feared she would be, only said, without even looking up from the little blue-boarded book she was again reading—

"You are a saucy child."

Whereupon Miss Gladwyn laughed merrily.

"Come along," she said, and, seizing me by the hand, led me out of the room, down a back-staircase, across a piece of grass, and then down a stair in the face of the rock, towards the pond below. The stair went in zigzags, and, although rough, was protected by an iron balustrade, without which, indeed, it would have been very dangerous.

"Isn't your grandmamma afraid to let you run up and down here, Miss Gladwyn?" I said.

"Me!" she exclaimed, apparently in the utmost surprise. "That *would* be fun! For, you know, if she tried to hinder me—but she knows it's no use; I taught her that long ago—let me see how long: oh! I don't know—I should think it must be ten years at least. I ran away, and they thought I had drowned myself in the pond. And I saw them, all the time, poking with a long stick in the pond, which, if I had been drowned there, never could have brought me up, for it is a hundred feet deep, I am sure. How I hurt my sides trying to keep from screaming with laughter! I fancied I heard one say to the other, 'We must wait till she swells and floats!'"

"Dear me! what a peculiar child!" I said to myself.

And yet somehow, whatever she said,—even when she was most rude to her grandmother—she was never offensive. No one could have helped feeling all the time that she was a little lady.—I thought I would venture a little with her. I stood still at a turn of the zigzag, and looked down into the hollow, still a good way below us, where I could now distinguish the form, on the opposite side of the pond, of a woman

seated at the foot of a tree and stooping forward over a book.

"May I ask you a question, Miss Gladwyn?"

"Yes, twenty if you like; but I won't answer one of them till you give up calling me Miss Gladwyn. We can't be friends, you know, so long as you do that."

"What am I to call you, then? I never heard you called by any other name than Pet, and that would hardly do, would it?"

"Oh, just fancy if you called me Pet before grannie! That's grannie's name for me, and nobody dares to use it but grannie—not even auntie; for, between you and me, auntie is afraid of grannie; I can't think why. I never was afraid of anybody—except—yes, a little afraid of old Sarah. She used to be my nurse, you know; and grandmamma and everybody is afraid of her, and that's just why I never do one thing she wants me to do. It would never do to give in to being afraid of her, you know.—There's auntie, you see, down there, just where I told you before."

"Oh, yes, I see her now.—What does your aunt call you, then?"

"Why, what you must call me—my own name, of course."

"What is that?"

"Judy."

She said it in a tone which seemed to indicate surprise that I should not know her name—perhaps read it off her face, as one ought to know a flower's name by looking at it. But she added instantly, glancing up in my face most comically,

"I wish yours was Punch."

"Why, Judy?"

"It would be such fun, you know."

"Well, it would be odd, I must confess. What is your aunt's name?"

"Oh, such a funny name!—much funnier than Judy: Ethelwyn. It sounds as if it ought to mean something, doesn't it?"

"Yes. It is an Anglo-Saxon word, without doubt."

"What does it mean?"

"I'm not sure about that. I will try to find out when I go home—if you would like to know."

"Yes, that I should. I should like to know everything about Auntie Ethelwyn. Isn't it pretty?"

"So pretty that I should like to know something more about Aunt Ethelwyn. What is her other name?"

"Why, Ethelwyn Oldcastle, to be sure. What else could it be?"

"Why, you know, for anything I knew, Judy, it might have been Gladwyn. She might have been your father's sister."

"Might she? I never thought of that. Oh, I suppose that is because I never think about my father. And now I do think of it, I wonder why nobody ever mentions him to me, or my mother either. But I often think auntie must be thinking about my mother. Something in her eyes, when they are sadder than usual, seems to remind me of my mother."

"You remember your mother then?"

"No, I don't think I ever saw her. But I've answered plenty of questions, haven't I? I assure you, if you want to get me on to the Catechism, I don't know a word of it. Come along."

I laughed.

"What!" she said, pulling me by the hand, "you a clergyman, and laugh at the Catechism! I didn't know that."

"I'm not laughing at the Catechism, Judy. I'm only laughing at the idea of putting Catechism-questions to you."

"You *know* I didn't mean it," she said, with some indignation.

"I know now," I answered. "But you haven't let me put the only question I wanted to put."

"What is it?"

"How old are you?"

"Twelve. Come along."

And away we went down the rest of the stair.

When we reached the bottom, a winding path led us through the trees to the side of the pond, along which we passed to get to the other side.

And then all at once the thought struck me—why was it that I had never seen this auntie, with the lovely name, at church? Was she going to turn out another strange parishioner?

There she sat, intent on her book. As we drew near she looked up and rose, but did not come forward.

"Aunt Winnie, here's Mr. Walton," said Judy.

I lifted my hat and held out my hand. Before our hands met, however, a tremendous splash reached my ears from the pond. I started round. Judy had vanished. I had my coat half off, and was rushing to the pool, when Miss Oldcastle stopped me, her face unmoved, except by a smile, saying, "It's only one of that frolicsome child's tricks, Mr. Walton. It is well for you that I was here, though. Nothing would have delighted her more than to have you in the water too."

"But," I said, bewildered, and not half comprehending, "where is she?"

"There," returned Miss Oldcastle, pointing to the pool, in the middle of which arose a heaving and bubbling, presently yielding passage to the laughing face of Judy.

"Why don't you help me out, Mr. Walton? You said you could swim."

"No, I did not," I answered coolly. "You talked so fast, you did not give me time to say so."

"It's very cold," she returned.

"Come out, Judy dear," said her aunt. "Run home and change your clothes. There's a dear."

Judy swam to the opposite side, scrambled out, and was off like a spaniel through the trees and up the stairs, dripping and raining as she went.

"You must be very much astonished at the little creature, Mr. Walton."

"I find her very interesting. Quite a study."

"There never was a child so spoiled, and never a child on whom it took less effect for evil. I suppose such things do happen sometimes. She is really a good girl; though mamma, who has done all the spoiling, will not allow me to say she is good."

Here followed a pause, for, Judy disposed of, what should I say next? And the moment her mind turned from Judy, I saw a certain stillness—not a cloud, but the shadow of a cloud—come over Miss Oldcastle's face, as if she, too, found herself uncomfortable, and did not know what to say next. I tried to get a glance at the book in her hand, for I should know something about her at once if I could only see what she was reading. She never came to church, and I wanted to arrive at some notion of the source of her spiritual life; for that she had such, a single glance at her face was enough to convince me. This, I mean, made me even anxious to see what the book was. But I could only discover that it was an old book in very shabby binding, not in the least like the books that young ladies generally have in their hands.

And now my readers will possibly be thinking it odd that I have never yet said a word about what either Judy or Miss Oldcastle was like. If there is one thing I feel more inadequate to than another, in taking upon me to relate—it is to describe a lady. But I will try the girl first.

Judy was rosy, grey-eyed, auburn-haired, sweet-mouthed. She had confidence in her chin, assertion in her nose, defiance in her eyebrows, honesty and friendliness over all her face. No one, evidently, could have a warmer friend; and to an enemy she would be dangerous no longer than a fit of passion might last. There was nothing acrid in her; and the reason, I presume, was, that she had never yet hurt her conscience. That is a very different thing from saying she had never done wrong, you know. She was not tall, even for her age, and just a little too plump for the immediate suggestion of grace. Yet every motion of the child would have been graceful, except for the fact that impulse was always predominant, giving a certain jerkiness, like the hopping of a bird, instead of the gliding of one motion into another, such as you might see in the same bird on the wing.

There is one of the ladies.

But the other—how shall I attempt to describe her?

The first thing I felt was, that she was a lady-woman. And to feel that is almost to fall in love at first sight. And out of this whole, the first thing you distinguished would be the grace over all. She was rather slender, rather tall, rather dark-haired, and quite blue-eyed. But I assure you it was not upon that occasion that I found out the colour of her eyes. I was so taken with her whole that I knew nothing about her parts. Yet she was blue-eyed, indicating northern extraction—some centuries back perhaps. That blue was the blue of the sea that had sunk through the eyes of some sea-rover's wife and settled in those of her child, to be born when the voyage was over. It had been dyed so deep *in-grayne*, as Spenser would say, that it had never been worn from the souls of the race since, and so was every now and then shining like heaven out at some of its eyes. Her features were what is called regular. They were delicate and brave.—After the grace, the dignity was the next thing you came to discover. And the only thing you would not have liked, you would have discovered last. For when the shine of the courtesy with which she received me had faded away, a certain look of negative haughtiness, of withdrawal, if not of repulsion, took its place, a look of consciousness of her own high breeding—a pride, not of life, but of circumstance of life, which disappointed me in the midst of so much that was very lovely. Her voice was sweet, and I could have fancied a tinge of sadness in it, to which impression her slowness of speech, without any drawl in it, contributed. But I am not doing well as an artist in describing her so fully before my reader has become in the least degree interested in her. I was seeing her, and no words can make him see her.

Fearing lest some such fancy as had possessed Judy should be moving in her mind, namely, that I was, if not exactly going to put her through her Catechism, yet going in some way or other to act the clergyman, I hastened to speak.

"This is a most romantic spot, Miss Oldcastle," I said; "and as surprising as it is romantic. I could hardly believe my eyes when I looked out of the window and saw it first."

"Your surprise was the more natural that the place itself is not properly natural, as you must have discovered."

This was rather a remarkable speech for a young lady to make. I answered:

"I only know that such a chasm is the last thing I should have expected to find in this gently undulating country. That it is artificial I was no more prepared to hear than I was to see the place itself."

"It looks pretty, but it has not a very poetic origin," she returned. "It is nothing but the quarry out of which the old house at the top of it was built."

"I must venture to differ from you entirely in the aspect such an origin assumes to me," I said. "It seems to me a more poetic origin than any convulsion of Nature whatever would have been; for, look you," I said—being as a young man too much inclined to the didactic, "for, look you," I said—and she did look at me—"from that buried mass of rock has arisen this living house with its histories of ages and generations; and——"

Here I saw a change pass upon her face: it grew almost pallid. But her large blue eyes were still fixed on mine.

"And it seems to me," I went on, "that such a chasm made by the uplifting of a house therefrom, is therefore in itself more poetic than if it were even the mouth of an extinct volcano. For, grand as the motions and deeds of Nature are, terrible as is the idea of the fiery heart of the earth breaking out in convulsions, yet here is something greater; for human will, human thought, human hands in human labour and effort, have all been employed to build this house, making not only the house beautiful, but the place whence it came beautiful too. It stands on the edge of what Shelley would call its 'antenatal tomb'—now beautiful enough to be its mother—filled from generation to generation—"

Her face had grown still paler, and her lips moved as if she would speak; but no sound came from them.

I had gone on, thinking it best to take no notice of her paleness; but now I could not help expressing concern.

"I am afraid you feel ill, Miss Oldcastle."

"Not at all," she answered, more quickly than she had yet spoken.

"This place must be damp," I said. "I fear you have taken cold."

She drew herself up a little haughtily, thinking no doubt that after her denial I was improperly pressing the point. So I drew back to the subject of our conversation.

"But I can hardly think," I said, "that all this mass of stone could be required to build the house, large as it is. A house is not solid, you know."

"No," she answered. "The original building was more of a castle, with walls and battlements. I can show you the foundations of them still; and the picture, too, of what the place used to be. We are not what we were then. Many a cottage, too, has been built out of this old quarry. Not a stone has been taken from it for the last fifty years, though. Just let me show you one thing, Mr. Walton, and then I must leave you."

"Don't let me detain you a moment. I will go at once," I said; "though, if you would allow me, I should be more at ease if I might see you safe at the top of the stair first."

She smiled.

"Indeed, I am not ill," she answered; "but I have duties to attend to. Just let me show you this, and then you shall go with me back to mamma."

She led the way to the edge of the pond and looked into it. I followed, and gazed down into its depths, till my sight was lost in them. I could see no bottom to the rocky shaft."

"There is a strong spring down there," she said. "Is it not a dreadful place? Such a depth!"

"Yes," I answered; "but it has not the horror of dirty water; it is as clear as crystal. How does the surplus escape?"

"On the opposite side of the hill you came up, there is a well with a strong stream from it into the river."

"I almost wonder at your choosing such a place to read in. I should hardly like to be so near this pond," said I, laughing.

"Judy has taken all that away. Nothing in nature, and everything out of it, is strange to Judy, poor child! But just look down a little way into the water on this side. Do you see anything?"

"Nothing," I answered.

"Look again, against the wall of the pond," she said.

"I see a kind of arch or opening in the side," I answered.

"That is what I wanted you to see. Now, do you see a little barred window there, in the face of the rock, through the trees?"

"I cannot say I do," I replied.

"No. Except you know where it is—and even then—it is not so easy to find it. I find it by certain trees."

"What is it?"

"It is the window of a little room in the rock, from which a stair leads down through the rock to a sloping passage. That is the end of it you see under the water."

"Provided, no doubt," I said, "in case of siege, to procure water."

"Most likely; but not, therefore, confined to that purpose. There are more dreadful stories than I can bear to think of——"

Here she paused abruptly, and began anew.

"——As if that house had brought death and doom out of the earth with it. There was an old burial-ground here before the Hall was built."

"Have you ever been down the stair you speak of?" I said.

"Only part of the way," she answered. "But Judy knows every step of it. If it were not that the door at the top is locked, she would have dived through that archway now, and been in her own room in half the time. The child does not know what fear means."

We now moved away from the pond, towards the side of the quarry and the open-air staircase, which I thought must be considerably more pleasant than the other. I confess I longed to see the gleam of that water at the bottom of the dark sloping passage, though.

Miss Oldcastle accompanied me to the room where I had left her mother, and took her leave with merely a bow of farewell. I saw the old lady glance sharply from her to me as if she were jealous of what we might have been talking about.

"Grannie, are you afraid Mr. Walton has been saying pretty things to Aunt Winnie? I assure you he is not of that sort. He doesn't understand that kind of thing. But he would have jumped into the pond after me and got his death of cold if auntie would have let him. It *was* cold. I think I see you dripping now, Mr. Walton."

There she was in her dark corner, coiled up on a couch, and laughing heartily; but all as if she had done nothing extraordinary. And, indeed, estimated either by her own notions or practices, what she had done was not in the least extraordinary.

Disinclined to stay any longer, I shook hands with the grandmother, with a certain invincible sense of slime, and with the grandchild with a feeling of mischievous health, as if the girl might soon corrupt the clergyman into a partnership in pranks as well as in friendship. She followed me out of the room, and danced before me down the oak staircase, clearing the portion from the first landing at a bound. Then she turned and waited for me, who came very deliberately, feeling the unsure contact of sole and wax. As soon as I reached her, she said, in a half-whisper, reaching up towards me on tiptoe,—

"Isn't she a beauty?"

"Who? your grandmamma?" I returned.

She gave me a little push, her face glowing with fun. But I did not expect she would take her revenge as she did.

"Yes, of course," she answered, quite gravely. "Isn't she a beauty?"

And then, seeing that she had put me *hors de combat*, she burst into loud laughter, and, opening the hall-door for me, let me go without another word.

I went home very quietly, and, as I said, stepping with curious care—of which, of course, I did not think at the time—over the yellow and brown leaves that lay in the middle of the road.

(To be continued.)

OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS; OR, METHODS TO DO GOOD.

BY THE EDITOR.

I.—OUR MODEL.

The alarm, A child lost!—like the cry, A man overboard!—is one that goes to all hearts. I have known it stop the business, and engross all the interests of a rural neighbourhood. Leaving the shuttle on the loom, their cattle in the field, and ploughs standing idle in the furrow, while women wept and hoped and feared and prayed, men,—some on horseback and some on foot,—scoured the country; nor ceased at nightfall, but, with shouts and gleaming torches, pursued their search through trackless moor and forest. Even in cities, where there is less community of feeling, like a rock that, lifting up its head mid-river, and disturbing its even flow, stays for a moment the rush of waters, a lost child sobbing, crying in the street arrests the stream of passengers, and moves all to pity,—even those who have but time to ask, What is it? as, casting a kind glance on the distracted creature, they hurry on. There is a sight more touching than a child crying for its mother. It is a mother, flying through the streets with dishevelled hair and panting bosom, pallor on her cheek and terror in her eye, who cries for her child; while fancy, conjuring up all manner of horrid evils, with pictures of its dead form or unpitied sufferings, wrings her heart and almost shakes her reason.

Such a sight, when the crowds who had gathered from all parts of the country, and of the world indeed, taking their departure, had left Jerusalem to comparative repose, awakened the kind interest of many there. People had met such a woman at the dead of night; and had seen her by day going up and down the city addressing eager inquiries both to acquaintances and strangers,—looking more haggard and feeling more hopeless as the weary hours wore on, that gladdened her with neither sight nor tidings of her son. That woman was Mary, our Lord's mother. Three days has she sought Jesus; and nothing now remains to do but turn to God. All other, all earthly hope has failed her. Wan and weary, supported by the kind man and husband who had shared her sorrows, she turns her faltering steps to the house of God. She will cast her burden on the Lord, and commit her lost one to the care of his heavenly and only Father. And a mother who had more than any other a right to do so, and betake herself to that refuge in the hour of trouble, we seem to hear saying,

> I to the hills will lift mine eyes,
> From whence doth come mine aid;
> My safety cometh from the Lord,
> Who heaven and earth hath made.

Staggering beneath her burden, as much perhaps as Abraham when, to his amazement and consternation and horror, God addressed the patriarch, saying, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him for a burnt-offering on a mountain that I will tell thee of," Mary enters the Temple with faith and foot faltering. What a revulsion of feeling at the sight which meets her astonished eyes! Ready to sink to the ground under the sudden emotion, she can hardly believe them. Is it a vision? Does she dream? No. 'Tis he—the very form, face, and voice of Jesus, her own lost and long-sought son. The centre of all eyes, of a crowd that hushed to silence regard him with gaping wonder,—wiser than the wisest, more subtle than the subtlest, he sits there among grey-haired elders, asking and answering questions.

Happy mother! whom we expect to see, regardless of all forms and of any presence, rush forward under the impulses of affection to throw her arms around her child, and cover him with impassioned kisses. But what strangely constituted creatures we are? We swing of a sudden, like a pendulum, from one state of feeling to another, and that perhaps the very opposite; as I once happened to see illustrated by a mother who had dared, and done a noble deed. Our horses, suddenly turning a corner, were going down at full gallop on a child that sat, heedless of danger, right in their path. To rein them in was impossible. Its death seemed inevitable; and we sat transfixed with horror to see it trodden beneath their hoofs, crushed below the wheels. At that fearful moment, a woman, stooping like a hawk on its prey, darted from a doorway across the road, and with the hot breath of our horses on her pallid cheek, plucked her infant from among their feet. It was bravely done. But what a strange revulsion of feeling succeeded her mortal fright? She did not, as we expected, clasp the child to her beating bosom; cover it with kisses; or drop on her knees to give thanks to God for her own and its hairbreadth escape. The feeling of terror suddenly gave place to a violent burst of anger; and, resenting the alarm the child had given her, she gave it a sound, sharp beating.

In this incident we found a key to explain what had always seemed the strange conduct of Jesus' mother on finding her son; and, also, what we have ever since regarded as one of the many indirect evidences, but of all the most satisfactory, of the truth of Scripture. In the hands of a novelist, for example, the part Mary acted would have assumed a quite different character. What a pathetic scene we should have

had?—the mother in transports of gratitude throwing herself on her knees, and rising in transports of joy to throw herself on the neck of her child, and cry as she clasped him to her beating bosom: "My son that was dead is alive again, that was lost is found!" Far more true to nature—as I saw her on her trial—the evangelist shows us Mary acting another part; displaying no such dramatic pathos. In her, as in that other mother, anger, or a feeling akin to it, seems to have suddenly succeeded to terror; and going up to Jesus, not to fall on his neck and kiss him, but to complain of the fright he has given her, with, I cannot help fancying, displeasure in her look, and harshness in her tones, she addresses him, saying, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." A sharp question this. In reply Jesus, with mingled looks of love and dignity, turns to Mary, and, fixing on her those eyes which penetrated others' thoughts, but had often strange, deep, mysterious meanings of their own, he gently remonstrates, saying, "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about *my Father's business?*" Though not intended on her son's part, Mary may possibly have felt in this reply the sharp edge of a rebuke. No wonder at least that on receiving such an answer from the lips of such a child, for Jesus was then but twelve years old, that she was struck with it, pondered it, tried to sound its depths, and waiting for further light on its mysterious meanings, kept it in her heart. So may we keep it in ours; not, however, as a mystery, but a truth; signally illustrated and fully explained by the consecration of Christ's labours, and life, and death to the glory of God and the salvation of men. This was his Father's business. And in dedicating his life to such lofty purposes, Jesus supplies us with a model on which to fashion our own.

This is of the highest importance; what concerns the end and manner of our life being of far more consequence than anything that belongs to the nature and circumstances of our death. It is natural I admit, to take a lively interest in the scenes of the dying chamber, the expressions and experience of departing saints; yet so little countenance does this feeling receive from Scripture that the Bible, which contains a pretty full account of the lives of many saints, is, in almost every instance, silent on the subject of their deaths. One after another, they appear on the stage to play their different parts. But the curtain usually drops as the last act begins; and the saint vanishes from sight with some such brief, simple record as this: "he died," or "he was gathered to his fathers," or "angels carried him to Abraham's bosom." In regard to this, one cannot but be struck with the marked difference between God's lives of the saints and those which man writes—in fact, most of our biographies. And may not the manner in which the Bible drops a veil over the last scene be intended to warn us against attaching much importance to dying frames—to teach us this great lesson, that, in all but a very few exceptional cases, our destiny in eternity turns on the way we pass our life, not on the way we close it? Who lives by faith, who lives to Christ, however he dies, shall find death to be gain. He who takes care of the nature of his life need feel no anxiety whatever about the character or issues of his death—the great question we should ask respecting others, and which shall one day be asked respecting us, being, not How did he die, but How did he live?

The close of the seasons often supplies a criterion of their character; stubble-fields where the sheaves stand thick and tall, farm-yards swollen with the fruits of a lavish harvest, speak of an early spring and a genial summer, long days bright with sunshine and soft with showers. The close of a voyage also often reveals its character. From the pier-head where I have watched a homeward-bound ship enter the harbour, I could tell from her condition the weather she had encountered on distant seas—sails blown to tatters, bulwarks gone by the board, the stump of a mast rising ragged from her deck told the story of the voyage, and how the weather-beaten crew, who now congratulate each other as she floats into the dock, had battled with giant waves and well-nigh perished in the roaring tempest. But the close of man's life affords no such means of judging of its character. I have indeed seen death-beds, not a few, to which I could point, saying, "Mark thou the perfect man and behold the upright, for the latter end of that man is peace;" where the chamber of death seemed the vestibule of heaven; and after reading how Lazarus was borne by angels to Abraham's bosom, one almost expected to see their celestial forms and hear the rustling of their wings. How bright his sunset, for example, what a blessed peace his, who said to the friend that watched by his side, "If I am able to hear when the last moment approaches, be sure to tell me of it. I should like so well to know that a few breaths more, a short struggle more, and I am in glory with my Lord and Saviour."

But so to die, to go up to Mount Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, to travel the dark valley singing, with the shout and step of a conqueror, trampling the last enemy beneath our feet, to expire with Christ's dear name trembling on our lips—that name our last word on earth, as it shall be the first we raise our hands to speak in heaven—is not granted to all who close at death a life of true love to God and saving faith in his Son. Some saints have died raving mad; others in dark despair; not a few in deep despondency—their cry an echo of the cross, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?—their faith finding in the disease of which they were dying what the sun finds in the cloud-bank behind which he sinks, a veil to obscure his light and conceal his glorious form. On the other hand, death is often preceded by an apathy, a listlessness, an obtuseness of feeling which renders the mind incapable of anxiety or alarm; and passes with many thoughtless ones for the peace of God. Thus the wicked have sometimes "no bands in their death;" nay, sometimes under delirium and a fevered brain, impenitent sinners die amid visions of glory, and with expressions of divinest rapture on their lips. In fact, the frame in which people die depends so much on the nature of their disease, so much on constitutional tendencies, so much on many accidental circumstances, that it forms no

safe standard whereby to judge either what was their character in this world, or what is their condition in the next. By its fruit the tree is known. According to the deeds done in the body, whether they were good or evil, is the last award. The judgment at God's bar turns not on the character of men's deaths, but of their lives; and therefore the question which determines whether heaven or hell shall be our portion is not, how we died, but how we lived?

In these circumstances it is a great advantage to possess in God's Word not only full instructions how to live, but in his Son, what is more valuable than volumes of instuctions, a model, a perfect model, after which to shape our lives. One of the dangerous tendencies of these times is to thrust Calvary and its cross into the background—to modify, and by modifying to emasculate, Paul's grand saying, "I am determined not to know anything among you, but Jesus Christ and him crucified." Jesus Christ they know, but not him crucified—not Him as a sacrifice for sin and the substitute of sinners, as fulfilling in our stead the demands of the divine law, satisfying the claims of justice, and reconciling the offender to an offended God. This is a vital, a cardinal doctrine. Who holds it fast will find the gates of hell shall not prevail against him. Plainly announcing it long ages ago, Isaiah said, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed;" and believing it, thousands since then have gone through the river to find the flood of Jordan part before the feet of the Priest. But as many others have been, the present error may be a reaction from an opposite but also an erroneous position; the tendency of our minds being, under the law of action and reaction, to swing from one extreme to another. What if God, by permitting an error which disparages fundamental doctrines and rings senseless changes on a personal Christ, to disturb the Church, and lead some astray, may be rebuking men for having dwelt, not too much on Christ as a Propitiation, but too little on Christ as a Pattern. Valiant for the truth, and holding it fast, let us resent a heresy which, making light of the infinite evil of sin and the infinite holiness of God's law, must end in making light of the Saviour it professes to honour. At the same time, like wise men, we may extract the honey while we reject the sting; and learn from these errors, not to look at Christ's death less, but at his life more: not to trust in him less as a Mediator, but to copy him more as a Model.

A sense of the hopelessness of such an attempt may hinder it being made. People say, Who can succeed in modelling their life on Christ's—making their lives a fair and graceful copy of his? To rise to such thoughts as his seems as impossible for us as for a bird of humble roost to follow the eagle when, springing from her rocky nest, she soars aloft, cleaving the sky till her lessening form is lost in its azure depths. We are required to make our light shine before men: but to shine with the light of such works as Christ's seems as impossible for us as for a taper that burns its little hour to blaze like the sun, when, rising each morning with unabated and unabating splendour, he bathes air, and earth, and ocean in one flood of light. To live like Christ!—ah, who is sufficient for these things? For fallen man to attempt it seems presumption—Scripture, and our own sad experience teaching us that we are not able of ourselves to think even one good thought?

Nevertheless the motto of a Christian is *Nil desperandum*—I despair of nothing. With resources to draw on of which the world knows nothing, if our faith is in any degree commensurate with God's faithfulness, we may address ourselves to duties the most difficult, saying, "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain." In this the believer is no fanatic, or fool; no builder of castles in the air. He knows in whom he has believed; and what in others were the highest presumption, is in him a solid, well-founded trust. With God nothing is impossible; nor impossible with one who, responding to a divine call, holds God's Word in his hand, and feels God himself at his back. It may be held an axiom of the Christian faith, that everything commanded is come-at-able—"I can do all things," says Paul, "through Christ, who strengtheneth me."

To attempt to live like Christ is no doubt a high, as it is a holy, object. To sing like Milton, to make discoveries like Newton, to climb the lofty solitude of the Macedonian who achieved the conquest of the world, are mean in comparison with it. Since Christ united the divine to our human nature, who takes him for a model aims, if I may say so, at being a God in miniature,—at presenting in the beneficence of his life, in a pure heart and a holy nature, such an image of the Godhead as we see of the sun in the lake that shines in his light, and reflects his dazzling form on its placid bosom. Scripture calls us to take prophets and martyrs, apostles and saints, for models—to walk in the footsteps of the flock; and reading the lives of the great and the good, we are to catch their spirit, and inflame our piety at their fires. But, without despising or disparaging these, we are to look higher still. Though his back is bent with toil, and his manners are rustic, and he has no home but a cot, and knows little of books beyond his Bible, the most ambitious of men, and yet the humblest, the believer, is inspired with the loftiest aims. His aim is not to be holy, as Paul, or Peter, or John, or saints in glory, or even the angels before the throne. It is as God is holy that he seeks to be holy,—perfect as his Father in heaven is perfect—in nature, though not in measure; just as in nature, though not in measure, the tiniest cup that is filled to the lip is as full as the great sea at flood-tide.

But there is a view of Christ as our model which makes the imitation of him appear less impracticable; for, as the great circle of the heavens seems to bend towards, and touch, and embrace the earth at the horizon, so the Son of the Most High, though exalted apparently above all approach in his divinity, appears near to us in his humanity. In that nature he presents us with a model we may more hopefully attempt to imitate. How should it encourage us to attempt it, and, not disheartened by successive failures, to try it again and again, to remember that

Jesus, though without sin, was made in all points like his brethren,—bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; with a heart strung in every respect like our own? Animated by the breath of God, the dust of Palestine, like that of Paradise, could have produced, in the second Adam, a man with every faculty mature. But Jesus sprang into being like one of us. He despised not the Virgin's womb; and passed through all the common phases of human life—his condition and connections in the world in no apparent manner differing from ours. A babe, he was rocked in a cradle and fed at the breast like others. A child, he had the feelings, and entered into the common joys of childhood; he might have been seen in his night-dress lisping prayers at his mother's knee; nor was he made in all points like as we are if he stood apart from the innocent sports of the boys and girls of Nazareth. A man, he went to church on Sabbath; and on other days, the sun lighting its Maker to his daily toil, he wrought at a bench, and ate his bread in the sweat of his brow. He was bound to others by the ordinary ties of humanity—this man was a cousin; these were his brethren and sisters; and, among the women who followed him to Calvary, and wept by his cross, she on whose form, as it sinks fainting into John's arms, his last earthly look is fixed, is his mother. Indeed, so like was he in all things to his brethren that, until the last three years of his life, his townsmen never seem to have suspected who or what Jesus was,—that he was any thing more than Joseph's son. They never so much as fancied that the God of their worship was present in the synagogue; that the Messiah, of whose glorious coming the preacher discoursed in glowing colours, was there—in the meek, modest, gentle, unassuming man who sat by Mary, listening to the sermon.

And for what purpose did the Son of God thus identify himself with our humanity? In tasting every common cup—the obedience of childhood and labours of manhood, the pleasures of friendship and the sharp arrows of ingratitude, the kindness of affection and the cold neglects of selfishness, the joy of feasts and the grief of funerals, all they suffer who toil for daily bread, or, animated with philanthropy, toil in the cause of others—our Lord not only thereby became a High Priest to sympathise with and succour us, as one touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but, leaving his footprints on the sands of time, he became an Example that we should follow his steps. Would any one know how to live, let him turn to Christ's history and read it there. See how he lived devoted to the glory of God and the good of men; how he made it his meat and drink to do his Father's will, and also reverenced and obeyed his parents; how he honoured the Sabbath Day, and kept the whole law of God; how, neither envious of the rich, nor ambitious to rise above his circumstances, he submitted to a humble lot, and patiently endured its trials; how he bore a life-long humiliation with contentment, and his few brief honours with humility; how he cherished his friends, and forgave his bitterest enemies; how, gently rebuking the bad, and kindly raising the fallen, instructing the ignorant, helping the weak, shielding the oppressed, pitying all that sorrowed, relieving all that suffered, loving all that lived, he lived for others, not for himself. In these things he set us an example. And, as I have seen a weaver on his loom working the beautiful flowers of a pattern into his web, let us by God's gracious help try to weave a copy of Christ's life into the body of our own. Men of God, for you no better shield against temptation, or stouter buckler in a battle-day, no better curb to pull us up on the edge of sin, nor sharper spur to urge us onward in the path of duty, than a constant imitation of Christ; the habit of bringing all our conduct to this holy test—Had Christ been in my circumstances, how would he have acted?—Would he have felt, would he have spoken, would he have acted as I am doing? The Spirit helping us, we shall thus become living epistles of Jesus Christ, seen and read of all men; true followers of him whose history is summed up in this brief but weighty sentence, "He went about doing good." With aims no less lofty, let his holy, beautiful beneficent life be the model of ours; and its motto—nobler than any ever blazoned on banners of silk, in letters of gold, and borne before the greatest kings—its motto this: TO ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST, AND TO DIE IS GAIN.

TO-MORROW.

How sweet to the heart is the thought of to-morrow,
When Hope's lovely pictures bright colours display!
How sweet, when we can from futurity borrow
A balm for the griefs that afflict us to-day!

When wearisome sickness has made us to languish
For health, and the comforts it bears on its wing,
We can trust that our Saviour will lessen the anguish,—
That to-morrow new proofs of his mercy shall bring.

When trav'ling alone, quite forlorn, unbefriended,
Sweet the hope that to-morrow our wand'rings will cease;
That at home then, with care sympathetic attended,
We may rest unmolested, and slumber in peace.

Or when from the friends of our heart long divided,
The fond expectation with joy how replete!
That from far distant regions, by Providence guided,
To-morrow shall see us most happily meet.

When six days of labour, each other succeeding,
With hurry and toil have our spirits opprest,
What pleasure to think, as the last is receding,
To-morrow shall be a sweet Sabbath of rest!

And when the vain shadows of Time are retiring,
When life is fast fleeting, and death is in sight,
The Christian, believing, exulting, expiring,
Beholds a to-morrow of endless delight.

W. G.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

Very few people seem to have noticed how much there is in the Bible about "Weights and Measures." When the Tabernacle was erected, all the parts of the building and all its sacred furniture were constructed according to "specifications" curiously exact and minute. We are told the precise length of the wings of the cherubim in Solomon's Temple, and how much water the "molten sea" would hold. What is more remarkable still, we know the "length" and the "breadth" and the "height" of "the house of the forest of Lebanon," and the shape of its windows and doors, and the number of its cedar pillars.

It is probable that standard weights and standard measures were deposited by Moses in the Tabernacle itself, and were transferred by Solomon to the Temple. In doing this the Jews would only follow the example of other ancient nations. In the old world, the sanctity of religion was added to the authority of public law, to check dishonesty, and to prevent, as far as possible, any accidental changes in the authorised measures of length, weight, and capacity. The care with which this part of the duty of the State was attended to in Egypt, may perhaps soon receive a new and most remarkable illustration; investigations are being carried on which many think will result in proving that the great Pyramid—the wonder and the riddle of so many centuries—was built to contain the standard weights and measures.

Very many of the readers of the Sunday Magazine are engaged in trade; it may be well that they should see, for once, some of the things which the Bible says about things which they are handling every day in the week all the year round.

In Leviticus xix. 36, God says, "Just balances, just weights . . . . shall ye have: I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt."

In Deuteronomy xxv. 13, the Jew is told "Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small [*great, that is, to purchase with, and small to sell by*]. But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have: that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the Lord thy God."

In the book of Proverbs there are such sayings as this:—"A false balance is an abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight" (ch. xi. 1).

In the writings of the Prophets, too, we find very much on this unromantic and commonplace and unspiritual subject. Those inspired men were not always speaking of the coming of Christ, or forecasting the dark destiny of great Pagan empires; they were in the habit of denouncing very resolutely dishonesty in the matter of weights and measures. Ezekiel says, "Ye shall have just balances" (ch. xlv. 10). Hosea says of Ephraim, "He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand: he loveth to oppress" (ch. xii. 7). Micah asks, "Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable? Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?" (ch. vi. 10, 11). Amos exclaims, "Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the *ephah* small"—the ephah was the measure they sold the corn by,—"and the *shekel* great"—the shekel was the weight by which they weighed the money of those that bought it; so that they cheated both ways, giving short measure and taking too much money in return.

Of course, the plain lesson these texts are meant to teach is, that all cheating in weights and measures is hateful to God. Those who are guilty of it commit an injustice against man, and they provoke God's anger. We have got into a bad habit of being amused by the dishonest tricks to which many tradesmen resort in their haste to get rich. These texts teach that every trick of this kind is observed by God's eye, is recorded in God's book, and will be punished by God's hand.

I fear that there is not a solitary trade in which these dishonesties are not largely practised. Scales are tampered with; measures have false bottoms. Boxes of nails are sent to every part of the world

"warranted to contain a thousand," and containing only seven hundred and fifty. Bottles have gradually degenerated in size, until nobody now expects a quart bottle to hold a quart, or a pint bottle to hold a pint. Reels of cotton marked "120 yards" measure only eighty. The four-pound loaf is said to weigh less than four pounds—eleven ounces less, sometimes—if delivered at the house instead of being sold over the counter. You can have your meat full weight if you carry your basket on your arm to the butcher's; but it is said to be often very much under weight when sent to customers whose accounts are booked. I have heard of several yards more trimming being found in a dress-maker's bill than could possibly have been used in the lady's dress. I have heard of a master painter, who charged his customers according to his men's time, telling a man who was working at the decoration of a drawing-room that he was going on a great deal too fast; and the work that would have been done in four or five days was made to stretch over ten or twelve, the man spending three or four hours every day in reading quietly by the fire.

All these things are neither more nor less than an "abomination to the Lord;" they are not to be laughed at; they are not to be tolerated; they are to be sternly condemned.

For some of these dishonest practices the excuse is often made, that the seller himself has been cheated in buying, and that in self-protection he has a right to cheat in selling; he got short measure himself, so he gives it to his customer,—"which excuse," to use the language of Dr. Paley, in reference to passing bad money, "is much the same as if one who had been robbed upon the highway, should allege that he had a right to reimburse himself out of the pocket of the first traveller he met; *the justice of which reasoning the traveller may not comprehend.*"

There is another form of dishonesty very near akin to giving bad measure and short weight, which Paley has also exposed with his usual clearness and felicity. I mean putting an unfair price on what is sold. He says, "Whoever opens a shop, or in any manner exposes goods to public sale, virtually engages to deal with his customers at a market price; because it is upon the faith and opinion of such an engagement, that any one comes within his shop-doors or offers to treat with him. This is expected by the buyer, is known to be expected by the seller." And so Paley argues, that when more than the market price is charged, there is a breach of an implied contract, and therefore an act of dishonesty. I know that there may be some difficulty in always determining how this principle is to be applied, but the principle itself s obviously just. You cannot reduce a moral law to the form of an equation.

Men sometimes ask how they are to make their business a part of their religion. This is one way —to remember that "a false balance is an abomination to the Lord," and to set it right if you have one; to remember that "a just weight is his delight," and to find satisfaction and joy in thinking that God himself is pleased when you sell as good an article as your customer has a right to expect, give full measure, and charge a fair price. There is a very remarkable sentence in the Book of Proverbs—"A just weight and balance are the *Lord's;* and the weights of the bag are *his* work." It is equally true that an unjust balance is the devil's, and that if the weights are not true, they bear the devil's stamp and name.

Some persons may think, perhaps, that this is a very unspiritual article; but then the Bible is a very "unspiritual" book. God forbid that I should depreciate those lofty acts of the soul in which it holds communion with the invisible God, meditates on the infinite love of Christ, strives to penetrate more deeply into the mysterious glory of his atonement for sin, and lays open every channel through which those streams of spiritual life and power can flow which have their springs in the living God. Let those who are content with morality and uprightness of conduct, and are indifferent to religious duty, be assured that there is an unearthly peace, a heavenly joy, a blessedness like that of the angels, for every one who has learnt the happy secret of dwelling in the light of the Divine presence. When the heart glows with devout affection, and the spirit sinks in prostrate worship, and the eye gazes on the glory of Christ, Heaven comes down to earth, and the promises of immortal bliss begins to be fulfilled.

But I repeat, that in the sense in which some good people use the word "spiritual," the Bible is in many parts extremely unspiritual. They say themselves that they must "spiritualise" many passages in the Old Testament, and some in the New, to find any such instruction and profit as they are always asking for. They forget that the words of inspired men were not written to be read only on Sundays; that they were not written for persons who have nothing to do but to pray. The first lesson that Holy Scripture teaches is unlearnt, if we have not discovered that God is interested in all the affairs of our daily life, and judges us not merely by our prayers and religious affections but by our works.

There is no occupation in which man can be lawfully engaged, in which he may not see God. The tens of thousands of rough fellows who are working underground in South Staffordshire, are getting out of the earth the iron God himself put there. The tens of thousands of men, women, and children in the workshops of Birmingham are melting, moulding, hammering, and stamping the metals God himself made. It was God who created the cotton-plant out of which the Lancashire people manufacture their calicoes. It was God who created the silk-worm that spins the cocoon for all workers in silk. The first part of the process in every form of manufacturing industry is done by God. He always finds the material; and that material has been produced by most complicated methods, and by methods which in many cases have taken thousands of years to complete and perfect their results. It is plain that He meant us to employ our hands in honest labour, as well as our lips in thankful praise; that He meant our brains to be active in planning, inventing, and scheming, in relation to this world, as well as our hearts in longing and hoping for the next. He made our bodies of

the dust which belongs to the earth, though He breathed into us a higher life, which unites us to Himself. And so the Bible has very much in it about common work, as well as about religious duty. In the "book of remembrance," there are pages not only for our Sundays, but for every day in the week besides. "The prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord;" "a false balance" is an abomination to Him too. That religion is worthless which has to do only with books of devotion, and not with day-books and ledgers; with pews and churches, and not with counting-houses and workshops; with prayers and sermons, and not with "weights and measures."

In the Ten Commandments there are only four which refer to duties we owe directly to God; there are six which refer to duties we owe to our fellow men. All through the Bible we are repeatedly reminded that God has his eye upon us at all times; and that to please Him we must "do justly," as well as "love mercy, and walk humbly with our God."

There are some persons who plead, in excuse for their own irreligion, that in secular affairs religious men are no better than other people. If they are not, they ought to be. I believe that, as a rule, they are. If not, how is it that when a religious banker has been guilty of using securities entrusted to his keeping, the whole country rings with his crime, and there is so much sneering and triumph at the expense of religion itself? *We* do not make such a stir when a man who makes no profession of faith in Christ is guilty of the same thing. We do not put articles in our religious newspapers, headed in large capitals, "Doings of an irreligious banker." How is it that if a minister is betrayed into grievous sin, the scandal of his fall is kept alive for years? If another man commits the same offence it is soon forgotten.

There have been many bank failures during the last twenty years; but the failure of Sir John Dean Paul is likely to be remembered after all the rest are forgotten. There were hundreds of men hung for forgery in the last century; I doubt whether ten readers of the SUNDAY MAGAZINE could tell me the name of any one of them except Dr. Dodd. Of the people that fill our gaols, that are sent to our penal colonies, that are brought up before the magistrates for drunkenness and disorder, I wonder whether one in a thousand is a communicant in any Christian church.

However this may be, it is plain that if people who profess to be Christians give short weight and bad measure it is not the fault of the Bible. If a shopman who robs the till on Saturday night goes to church on Sunday morning, he hears nothing at church to make him think that his crime against man is no sin against God. If a father who professes to be religious, gives way to a bad temper and "provokes his children to wrath," it is not from the Bible he learns to do it; if he read his Bible properly he would know better. If a master professes to be a Christian, and is guilty of using harsh and violent language to the people he employs, do not blame his Christian faith: *that* teaches him to "forbear threatening," reminds him that he has "a Master in heaven," and that "there is no respect of persons with Him."

It is the shallowest and weakest reasoning in the world to argue against religion because some religious people do wrong; their religion condemns their wrongdoing as heavily as human censure can condemn it. If they are earnestly religious, they will gradually become better.

I cannot close this paper without recalling the solemn truth, that God's laws for our conduct to each other are a revelation of his own character, and are in strict analogy to the laws which determine his own action towards his creatures. The time is coming when He will judge every man; and He will use no false balance, He will put into the scales no light weights. He is merciful as well as just; but *now* is the time for mercy. When He judges He will judge righteously. He will "weigh" the reasons and motives which led men to neglect public worship and private prayer. He will "weigh" the temptations which betray us into sin against the considerations which should have led us to do right. He will "weigh" our love for Himself, and our obedience to his law against his infinite grace; our trust in his goodness and submission to his hand in times of trouble, against his "exceeding great and precious promises;" our religious earnestness, our loyalty to Christ, our triumphs over sin, against the sanctifying power of Christian truth and the grace of the Holy Ghost. We might well tremble in the anticipation of the hour when, one by one, we shall wait for the divine sentence on our deeds; but our rest and hope are fixed in this, that the critical act of the soul, in God's judgment, is its acceptance or rejection of the mercy of the Lord Jesus; and that if we trust in Him we shall not only be justified by faith in this world, but shall be so strengthened for all good works that God himself, when He looks at our deeds, will be able to say, "Well done, good and faithful servants; enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

R. W. DALE.

IN THE LIFE OF OUR LORD.

THE TWO HEALINGS—THE LEPER AND THE PARALYTIC.

Matt. viii. 2—4; Mark i. 40—45, ii. 1—12; Luke v. 12—26.

In describing our Lord's first circuit through Galilee, the Evangelist tells us that "they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them" (Matt. iv. 24). How many and how varied were the cures effected within the course of this first itinerary of our Lord can only be conceived aright by remembering how numerous the towns and villages were through which He passed, and how large the population with which, one way or other, He was thrown into contact. Remembering this, we may believe that within a week or two after his first departure from Capernaum more healings were effected than the whole put together, of which any specific record has been preserved in the Four Gospels.

There was one form of disease, however, which is not noticed in St. Matthew's compendious description—a disease peculiar enough in its own character, but to which an additional peculiarity was attached by the manner in which it was dealt with under the Mosaic law. However infectious, however deadly, however incurable, no disease but one was held to render the victim of it ceremonially unclean. Such uncleanliness was stamped by the law upon the leper alone. This strange creeping, spreading, loathsome, fatal disease appears to have been selected as the one form of bodily affliction to stand, in the legal impurity attached to it, and in the penalties visited on that impurity, the type of the deep, inward, pervading, corrupting, destroying malady of sin.

Among the Jews the leper was excommunicated. Cut off from the congregation of the people, he had to live apart, enjoying only such society as those afflicted with the same disease could offer. He had to bear about with him on his person the emblems of sorrow and of death; had to wear the rent garments which those wore who were weeping for the dead; to shave his head and keep it bare as those had to do who had touched the dead—himself the living dead, for whom those emblems of mourning were to be assumed. His face half covered, he had to go about crying out, "Unclean, unclean," to warn all others off lest they should come too near to him.

From what we know of the prevalence of this disease, it may be believed that there were many lepers in Galilee when our Lord made his first journey through it—gathered here and there into small and miserable communities. Even among these the tidings of the wonderful cures that were being effected could circulate (for the segregation was not so complete as to prevent all intercourse); and when these poor exiles from their fellows heard of many visited with complaints as much beyond all human remedy as theirs being healed, the hope might spring up in their hearts that the Great Healer's powers might extend even to their case. But which of them had faith enough to make the trial—to break through the legal fences imposed, and go into any of the cities in which Jesus was, and throw himself upon his sympathy for succour? One such there was—the first of those so afflicted—who ventured to approach the Lord: his case, on that account, selected for special record by all the three Evangelists. He came to Jesus "when he was in a certain city."* He had never seen the Lord before, or seen Him but at a distance, among a crowd. He could have known or heard but little more about Him than what the voice of the general rumour proclaimed. Yet so soon as he recognises Him, see with what reverence he kneels and worships and falls on his face before Him (Luke v. 12), and hear how he salutes and pleads, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Perhaps Jesus never before saw a man prostrate himself in his presence as this man does. Certainly, Jesus was never before addressed in words so few and simple, yet so full of reverence, earnestness, faith, submission. He calls Jesus Lord. Was this the first time that Jesus had been so addressed? Sir, Rabbi, Master—these were the terms in which Andrew, and Nathanael, and Nicodemus, and the woman of Samaria, and the nobleman of Capernaum, had addressed Him. None of them had spoken to Him as this leper does. If, indeed, the miraculous draught of fishes by which Peter had been finally summoned away from his old occupation had already occurred, then it would be from his lips that this title was first heard coming, when he fell down at Jesus' feet exclaiming, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." That, however, is uncertain; but though it had been true, how much had Simon had to elevate his conception of Christ's character,—how little this leper! One wonders, indeed, how far on he had got in his idea of who this Jesus—this healer of diseases—was. All that we can know is that he chose the highest title that he knew of, and bestowed it on him. "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst." No hesitation as to the power; no presumption or dictation as to the will. Upon that firm will, upon that almighty power, he casts himself. "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Jesus instantly went forward—went close to him—put forth his hand and touched him. His disciples hold back; a strange shuddering sensation passes through the hearts of the onlookers, for, by the law of Moses, it was forbidden to touch a leper. He who touched a leper became himself unclean. Yet at once, without hesitation at the time—without acting afterwards as if he had contracted any defilement or required any purification—Jesus lays his hand upon

* Had the name of that city been given it might have helped to track the course that Jesus was taking, but here, as in many other instances, the means of identification are denied.

one who was "full of leprosy," and he says to him, "I will, be thou clean." We lose a little of the power and majesty of our Saviour's answer in our tongue. Two words were spoken (Θέλω, καθαρίσθητι), the answer, the echo to the prayer; two of the very words the man had used taken up and employed by Jesus in framing his prompt and gracious reply. No petition that was ever presented to Jesus met with a quicker, more complete, more satisfactory response. If our Lord's conduct in this instance was regulated by the principle which we know so often guided it in the treatment He gave to those who came to Him to be cured, great must have been the faith which was met in such a way. The readiness, indeed, which Jesus had displayed to exert his power may partly have been due to this being the first case of a leper's application to Him, and to his desire to show that no legal barrier would be allowed by Him to stand in the way of his stretching forth his hand to heal all that were diseased. Yet, the manner and the speech of the leper himself attest that he approached with no ordinary reverence, and petitioned with no ordinary faith. And, according to his faith, it was done unto him immediately. As soon as the words, "I will, be thou clean," had come from the Saviour's lips, "the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed."

Did any further colloquy take place between the healed and the Healer? When, quick as lightning, through the frame the sensation passed of an entirely recovered health—when he stood up before the Lord, not a sign or symptom of the banished leprosy on his person—did no thanks burst from his grateful lips? or did our Lord say nothing to him about another healing which He was both willing and able to effect? We are not to infer that nothing of the kind occurred because nothing is recorded. The Evangelists have preserved alone the fact that, whatever words may have passed between them, Jesus was in haste to send the leper away, and in doing so gave him strict command to tell no man, but to go instantly and show himself to the priest, and offer the gifts that Moses commanded—the live birds and the cedar wood, and the scarlet and hyssop,—the means and instruments by which the purification of one declared free of leprosy was to be effected, and, relieved from the ban that had been laid upon him, he was to be reinstated in the possession of all the common privileges of society and citizenship. It is quite possible that, knowing the opposition which was already kindling against Him, of which we shall presently see traces, Jesus may have desired that, without throwing out any hint of what had occurred which might precede him by the way and prejudice the judge, this man should repair as quickly as possible to the priest upon whom it devolved judicially to declare that he so recently a man full of leprosy was now entirely free of the complaint. It would be a testimony they could not well gainsay, if the fact of the departure of the leprosy were attested by the acceptance of the offerer's gifts and his re-admission into the congregation of Israel. To prevent any possibility of this ratification of the reality of the cure being refused, Jesus might have enjoined silence and as speedy a resort as possible to the priest: the silence in such circumstances and with such a view prescribed to last only till the desired end was gained. It would seem, however, from the result, that a more immediate object of the Saviour in laying this injunction upon the leper was to prevent the influx of a still greater crowd than that which was already oppressing Him—the hampering thus of his movements and the absorption of too much of his time in the mere work of healing. For straightway, though charged to keep silence, the man when he went away from Jesus could not restrain himself, but "began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that great multitudes came to be healed of their infirmities, and Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places, and withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed" (Mark i. 45, Luke v. 15, 16). Again, a second time, as it was after that busy Sabbath in Capernaum, and before his first journey through Galilee, so now, at the close of this circuit and under the pressure of the multitude that beset his path, Jesus is driven forth from the city's crowded haunts to seek his solitary place, where for some hours at least he may enjoy unbroken communion with Heaven. To watch how and when it was that He took refuge thus in prayer, mingling devotion with activity, the days of bustle with the hours of quiet, intercourse with man with fellowship with God, let this be one of our cherished employments to follow the earthly footsteps of our Lord: for nothing more than his example is fitted to impress upon us the lesson how needful, how serviceable it is, if we would walk and work rightly among or for others around us, that we be often alone with our Father which is in heaven. A life all action will be as bad for the soul itself as a life all prayer would be profitless for others. It is the right and happy blending, each in its due proportion, of stillness and of action, of work and prayer, which promotes true spiritual health and growth; and so much weaker as we are—so much more easily at once distracted and absorbed by much bustling activity—so much more of reflection, retirement, and devotion is needed to temper our spirit right, and to keep it in anything like harmony with that of our Lord and Master.

It is as little possible to tell how long a time it took to make the first round of the Galilean towns and villages, as it is to define the line or circle along which Jesus moved. One high authority concludes that it must have occupied between two and three months (Greswell). Another that it did not occupy more than four or five days (Ellicott). A period of intermediate length would probably be nearer the truth than either. On completing the circuit He returned to Capernaum, to take up his abode again in Peter's house. No rest was given Him. The news of his return passed rapidly through the town, and straightway so many were gathered together "that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door." We must remember here, in order to understand what followed, what the form of a Jewish house was, and what the materials of which its roof was ordinarily composed. There is not now, and there never seems to have been, much variety in the shape of a Syrian dwelling-house. Externally they

all present the one dull uniform appearance of so many separate cubes or squares, seldom more than one storey high—the outer walls showing no windows or any opening on the level of the ground, except the door. On entering you pass through a lesser court, into which alone strangers are admitted, and then into the inner uncovered square into which the different apartments of the building open. In one corner, either of the outer or inner court—generally in the latter—there is a flight of steps conducting to the roof, a place of frequent resort at all times, which in the hotter months of summer is turned into the sleeping-place of the household. The larger houses, in which the wealthier inhabitants reside, are all separate from one another. The lesser are often without any open court-yard, and built close together, so that you could pace readily from roof to roof. These roofs, always flat, are made of bricks or tiles, or more generally of a compost of mud and straw, which a day's such rain as we often have would entirely demolish. Whatever the size of the houses be, or however they be situated relatively to each other, in one way or other, either by a staircase within the court—open, of course, only to the family to which the house belongs—or by a flight of steps without—which, when the houses are contiguous, may serve many households as a common means of access to all—the roof of each dwelling is easily reached. We do not need to settle what size of dwelling the one was in Capernaum where Jesus took up his abode ; we have only to imagine it to be of the usual and invariable Syrian type, to render the narrative intelligible.

A crowd assembles and fills the room of the house in which Jesus sits and teaches. At first this crowd is not so dense but that a single individual may pass through it, and in this way one and another of the diseased did press through, and the power of the Lord was there to heal them. But it grew and it thickened, it overflowed the room, it filled the street before the door, till every spot within reach of Christ's voice was occupied, and still there were new comers pressing in to try and catch a word ; for to the work of healing them within an effectual stop seems now to have been put. At this stage four men appear, bearing a sick man on a litter. They reach the crowd, they try to enter, they entreat, they expostulate ; the thing is hopeless, for four men with such a burden ever to get through. Is the project to be given up, the great chance lost ? The bearers consult the man they carry. He is paralytic, cannot move a limb, can do nothing for himself. But he is in full possession of his faculties, the spirit is entire within. It was his eagerness to be healed, still more than their readiness to help him, that had led these four men to lift him and carry him so far, and they are ready still to do anything—anything they can. Some one suggests—who so likely as the paralytic himself?—that they might get upon the roof, lift up so much of it as was required, and let the bed on which the patient lay down before Christ ; a singular, an extreme step to take, yet one to which men who were resolved to do anything rather than forfeit the opportunity, might not refuse to have recourse.

They all were strong in the belief that if only they could get at Jesus the cure would be effected, but the paralytic himself had an eager craving to get into the Saviour's presence, deeper than that springing from the desire to have his bodily ailment removed. The stroke that had taken the strength out of his body had quickened conscience. He had recognised it as coming from the hand of God—it had awakened within a sense of his great and manifold bygone transgressions. His sins had taken hold of him, and the burden was too heavy for him to bear. He hears Jesus that He had announced himself as the Healer of the broken-hearted ; that there is a Gospel, some good tidings that he proclaims to the poor in spirit. If ever a heart needed healing, a spirit needed comforting, it is his. And now, shall he be so near to Him whom he has been so anxious to see, and yet have to go away disappointed, unrelieved ? He either himself suggests, or, when suggested, he warmly approves, the project of trying to let him down through the roof. His bearers second his desires. They make the effort—they succeed : noiselessly they lift the tiles—gently they let down the bed, and before Jesus, as He is speaking, the bed and its burden lie.

But now, before noticing how Jesus met this interruption of his discourse, and dealt with the man who was so curiously obtruded on his notice, let us look around a moment on the strangely constituted audience which Christ at this moment is addressing. Close beside Him are his disciples—around Him are many simple-minded, simple-hearted men, drinking in with wonder the words that they scarce half understand. But they are not all friendly listeners who are there, for there are "Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by," some from Galilee, some from Judæa, some even from Jerusalem. The last—what has brought them here ? They come as spies—they come as emissaries from the men who had challenged Jesus at Jerusalem for his healing of another paralytic at the pool of Bethesda, on the Sabbath day, and who sought Him to slay Him, "because he had not only broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." Already these Pharisees counted Jesus a blasphemer, whose life they were seeking but the fit ground and occasion to cut off. And here are some of their numbers wearing the mask, waiting and watching, little knowing all the while that an eye is on them which follows every turn of their thoughts, and sees into all the secret places of their hearts. It is as one who thus thoroughly knew them, and would with his own hand throw a fresh stone of stumbling before their feet—as one who thoroughly knew him too, the poor, helpless, palsied penitent, who lies on the bed before him, that Jesus now speaks and acts. Meeting those pleading eyes that are fixed so importunately upon Him, without making any inquiries or waiting to have any petition presented, "Son," he says to the sick of the palsy, "be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." He would not have addressed him thus had he not known how greatly he needed to be cheered, how gladly he would welcome the pardon, in what a suitable condition he was to have that pardon bestowed. Let us believe then that, spoken with nicest adaptation to the man's state and wants, Christ's words were with power—that as quickly and as thoroughly as the

words, "I will, be thou clean," banished the leprosy from the one man's body, as quickly and as thoroughly these words banished the gloom and despondency from this man's soul. Thus spoken to by one in whom he had full confidence, he was of good cheer, and did assuredly believe that his sins had been forgiven him. If it was so—if his faith in Jesus as his soul's deliverer were as simple and as strong as, from the way in which Christ spoke, we presume it was—then too happy would he be at the moment when the blessedness of him whose sins are forgiven, whose iniquity is covered, filled his heart, to think of anything beside. He is silent at least, he is satisfied, he makes no remonstrance, he proffers no request. There is nothing going on within his breast that Jesus needs to drag forth to light, to detect and to rebuke. Not so with the Scribes and Pharisees, upon whom those words of Jesus have had a quite startling effect. They, too, are silent; nor, beyond the glances of wonder, horror, hate, that they hastily and furtively exchange, do they give any outward sign of what is passing in their hearts. But Jesus knows it all. They had been saying within themselves "this man blasphemeth;" they had been reasoning in their hearts, to their own entire satisfaction and to Christ's utter condemnation, saying, "Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only." Notwithstanding all their self-assurance, they must have been a little startled when, the thoughts of their hearts revealed, Jesus said to them, "Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?" He does not ask which was easier, to forgive sins or to cure a palsy, but which was easier, to say the one or to say the other, for He knew that they had been secretly thinking how easy it was for any man to say to another, Thy sins be forgiven thee, but how impossible it was for him to make good such a saying. "But that ye may know," he added, "that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house." The man arose and departed to his own house—healed in body, healed in spirit—glorifying God. The people saw it, and were amazed, and were filled with awe; and they said to one another, "We never saw it in this fashion—we have seen strange things to-day." And "they glorified God which had given such power to men." The Scribes and Pharisees saw it, and had palpable evidence of the superhuman knowledge and superhuman power of Christ given to them—had a miracle wrought before their eyes in proof of Christ's possession of a prerogative which they were right in thinking belonged to God only, but they would not let anything convince them that the Son of Man had power on earth to forgive sins; and it was not long, as we shall see, ere new stumbling-blocks were thrown in their way, over which they fell.

Our Saviour, in bodily presence, has now passed away from us. He can touch us no more with his living finger; He banishes no more our bodily diseases with a word; but the leprosy of the heart—the spreading, pervading taints of ungodliness, selfishness, malignity, impurity—these it is his office still to cure; these it is our duty still to carry to Him to have removed; and if it be in the spirit of him who said, Lord if thou wilt thou canst make me clean, we go, the cleansing virtue will not be withheld.

The Son of Man had power on earth to forgive sins: He exercised that power; He absolved at once the penitent of Capernaum from all his sins; He caused that man to taste the joy of an immediate, gracious, free, and full forgiveness. What is to hinder our receiving the same benefit—enjoying the same blessing? Has the Son of Man lost any of his power to forgive sins by his being no more upon this earth, his having passed into the heavens? Is pardon a boon that He no longer dispenses, that He holds now suspended over our heads—a thing to be hoped for but never to be had? No, let us believe that his mission on earth has not so failed in its great object; that He is as willing as He is able to say and do for each of us what He said and did for the palsied man in Peter's house at Capernaum; that He waits but to see us penitent and broken-hearted, looking to and trusting in Him, to say in turn to each of us, "Son—Daughter—be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee."

WILLIAM HANNA.

SENSATIONAL AND SCRIPTURAL APPEALS.

AT the close of the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, a principle is laid down which does not at first sight command universal assent: "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Most of us would be disposed to hold with the Rich Man rather than with Abraham—to believe that one rising from the dead would make a deeper impression than Moses and the Prophets on the minds of the living. When we see men yawning over Moses and the Prophets, without any sign of either mind or soul being roused by what they read, we are tempted to ask whether the book has not become old and worn out, whether it has not lost whatever power it may once have had to stir men's spirits and impress their hearts. On the other hand, when we fancy even the most indifferent and careless man on earth brought suddenly into contact with a messenger from the eternal world—when we fancy a ghost or spirit flitting before him, whether "with airs from heaven or with blasts from hell"—when we fancy the man held, spell-bound, by his ghostly visitor, listening to warnings and counsels poured out by one who claims to speak with authority on these subjects, we seem to have before us one of the most impressive scenes that can be conceived, and we fancy that every word the departed spirit may utter must be riveted on the attention of his hearer for ever. This certainly would be the first impres-

sion of most men ; and it is a proof that, with all its simplicity in form, our Lord's teaching is very profound, that He here gives forth so decisively a statement whose truth appears only after mature reflection. It is no common-place assertion our Lord makes when He affirms that men who are unmoved by Moses and the Prophets would not be persuaded though one rose from the dead. It is a position that carries a lesson to us of deep and awful solemnity. For what does it imply ? We all have Moses and the Prophets, and, more than that, we have Christ and the Apostles in addition, with all their clearer light, and more direct appeals ; all of us, therefore, are under an agency more fitted, in Christ's judgment, to impress us, than one risen from the dead ; and if you would pronounce a man inexcusable who should lend a deaf ear to a departed brother come from hell to warn him, or from heaven to charm him ; on the principle of the text you must hold every one still more inexcusable who reads his Bible or hears it preached, yet never asks in earnest, "What must I do to be saved ?"

Let us try to commend the words, which our blessed Lord puts into the mouth of Abraham, to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Let us direct careful attention to the two modes of influence which are brought into comparison, endeavouring to find the true value and force of each in a more accurate way than by a hasty impression. It is evidently implied in the judgment of our blessed Lord, first, that a visit of one rising from the dead would carry less weight than we should at first suppose ; and secondly, that in Moses and the Prophets there is far more of that power of persuasion which men need, than many are disposed to give them credit for.

I. Obviously a chief element of the power which a visit of one rising from the dead would possess, would lie in the unusual, the unprecedented nature of the occurrence. But then, like other things of the same kind, it would lose all this element of influence as soon as it should become common. We all know how many occurrences of a similar kind there are ;—the first time one encounters them, they make an extraordinary impression ; but use, habit, frequent occurrence, take away all their charm. The remark is especially true of occurrences that make a great impression on our nervous system,—that give one a shock or a fright. Who does not remember his sensations the first time he looked on a dead body ? If you were very young, you were seized with a nervous horror,—a sense of awe crept over your frame,—your blood ran chill,—your heart turned sick. Yet what is more certain than that this feeling of awe wears off entirely from those who look often upon death, and that, as a whole, there is no class less impressed by death and its solemnities than those who are constantly surrounded by them. The remark holds equally good of the ravages of war. The sight of a man lying in a field with a shattered limb, wallowing in his blood, and writhing in agony, would sicken an ordinary man ; but amid the ravages of war, men get used to such scenes, and can look on them with little more emotion than you look on a beggar by the wayside. The first walk through a military hospital after a bloody battle would probably make most men faint away ; but after a little experience one gets at home, even in such a scene of horrors, and can move about and do one's work with the same composure with which a housekeeper perambulates the rooms of a house. Thus we see how scenes that at first give a frightful shock, not only lose their power when frequently repeated, but harden and deaden the very feelings which at first they roused into such wild activity. And thus, too, it would be if men were to be frequently visited by messengers from the dead. A single visit —the first visit—would give a great shock ; but the frequent repetition of such visits would deprive them of their power, and probably leave the most of men more careless and hardened than ever. Visits from the spirits of the dead would come to be scarcely more thought of than visits from the living ; and men would be little more affected by their statements than they are by the inscriptions on the tombstones of a churchyard. They would soon become as familiar with the spectacle as a sexton with the skulls and skeletons, and other mementoes of the tomb ; and, spoiled by frequent sensational applications, their hearts would become like a rock to the wholesome influences of the truth, they would not listen to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely.

But, you say, this reasoning is not quite appropriate to the case in hand. It is conclusive enough as to any proposal to turn visits from the dead into an ordinary or a frequent mode of influence. But that was not what the Rich Man asked ; that was not what Abraham declined. It was but one such visit to his brethren the rich man pled for ; and it was of that single visit that Abraham affirmed so strongly that it would be in vain. But then let it be observed particularly what is the nature of the effect which Abraham denied that the visit would have. Weigh well the force of the word "persuaded," for the saying hinges upon that. It is not said that they would not be startled. It is not said that they would not be very profoundly impressed in some ways. Most certainly they would. What is said is, that they would not be *persuaded.* Persuaded to what ? Persuaded to live a different life from what their brother had lived, and they were living ; persuaded to keep the eternal world in view ; persuaded to live under the sense of responsibility to God ; persuaded to abandon a life of self-indulgent ease, and devote themselves to a career of godliness and charity ; persuaded to live as pilgrims and strangers here, and to look for a city that hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. It is one thing to be startled, to be solemnized, to be convinced : it is another thing to be persuaded. It is comparatively easy to compass the one effect ; it is infinitely difficult to reach the other. But till this great result is reached, till men are persuaded, how little is done ! How little is got beyond a goodness that is as the morning cloud or the early dew ! How little beyond the impression of the man beholding his natural face in a glass, and going away, and forgetting what manner of man he was !

We are almost in a position to test this argument by facts. What is modern Spiritualism but a professed carrying out of the Rich Man's desire—bringing the souls of the dead into communication with

the living? What have been the results of this system, in the case of those who profess to believe in it? Startled, amazed, distracted, driven to madness, many of them have been; but how little has there been that you could put under the head of "persuaded!" It must strike every one as remarkable that the advocates of spiritualism have got such a meagre account of spiritual results to present to the world. Earnest Christianity has never failed to gather round itself a wonderful array of men and women that have been persuaded—persuaded to come to Christ, to abandon sin, to conquer the world, to live for eternity, and who, in their changed and holy lives, have given evidence of the reality of their change. But what has spiritualism to show of this sort? What have they who have thrown off Moses and the Prophets as "Hebrew old-clothes," as they were once profanely called, and adopted as their creed the vagaries of spiritualism—what have they to boast of, in the region of moral and spiritual elevation? or how can they prevent us from regarding their case as an additional evidence of the truth of Christ's statement, that if men hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead?

II. Perhaps enough has been said in the way of testing the strength of one of the modes of influence adverted to in this passage. Let us, then, direct attention to the other. The result of the examination in this case will be precisely the opposite to that in the former. The more we consider the power of apparitions, the slighter does it appear; but the more we weigh the influence of Moses and the Prophets, the more overwhelming, the more fitted to persuade, the more entirely adapted to the great end in view, shall we find it to be.

Let us consider, in the first place, that it is GOD who speaks through Moses and the Prophets, and that we hardly ever find even a chapter where we are not reminded of this. "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken; I have nourished and brought up children, but they have rebelled against me." How different the impression of *that* voice from a mere human voice, even on the inanimate and irrational creation! The very stones and mountains are moved by it, and the only chord in nature that will not respond to it is the heart of man. "The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved; he uttered his voice, the earth melted." "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters, the God of glory thundereth, the Lord is on many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful, the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars, yea the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire." It is this sublime voice that addresses itself to men through Moses and the Prophets, and the sin of disregarding what they proclaim is no other than the sin of disregarding the voice of the Almighty. "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." One risen from the dead could only claim the personal respect and reverence due to a creature; every appeal in the Word of God comes to us with the respect due to the Creator. No one of us could venture to slight the audible voice of the Living God, sounding in our ears from the throne of his majesty; it is substantially the same crime we commit when we set aside Moses and the Prophets, proclaiming, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts!"

Again, let it be considered that the *perfect knowledge* God has of the subjects on which He addresses us through Moses and the Prophets, entitles them to far deeper attention and reverence from us than would be due even to one rising from the dead. What is so reasonable as that we should give most attention to those whose knowledge of any subject is most complete? When we desire information respecting a distant country, we pay more regard to the man who has been there than the man who has not; and far more to the man who has spent his life in it than the man who has but paid it a flying visit. The eternal world is to us an unseen and unexplored country, no one has ever come back to tell us anything about it, and that is one reason why, at the first a for and time, one risen from the dead would be so eagerly listened to. But, after all, what can one who has been a few weeks or even years in the eternal world know of it, compared to God? Like the Rich Man he may have endured for a time the agonies of the lost, or like Abraham he may have witnessed them from the heights of bliss; but can it be supposed that either the one or the other could have the deep and all-comprehensive acquaintance with the subject possessed by the infinite God? Can it be thought that a creature, in any circumstances, should impart knowledge regarding it that should be more impressive than God has imparted through His word? You may say, But God has thrown a veil over it, He has spoken of it in figures; we should like to know more of it, we have a thousand questions we should like to put respecting it; and we are sure that if these were resolved, we should be far more under the power of it than we are. "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh." Does God not know best how much it is right and fitting that we should know? Does the Lord of All not know best when it is needful to spread a veil over scenes with which we might wish to become familiar? He that has so delicately adjusted the human eye to the strength of the sunlight that falls on our planet, do you suppose He has shown no skill in proportioning the degree of light He has given in his word on these subjects of awful interest, to the power of the human soul to bear it? Very possibly one rising from the dead might pour on us a measure of light that would destroy the organ of vision,—he might drive us to despair by his fearful descriptions. The very fact that God has kept back so much ought to give us the more confidence in what He has been pleased to reveal. It should make us thankful that what we have got is not a vast encyclopædia, containing everything, through whose massive volumes we have to search for what is applicable to ourselves: but a carefully selected manual, in which, out of the stores of his infinite knowledge, God has placed everything that can best contribute to the great end,—that can

best serve to make us wise unto salvation, through faith that is in Christ Jesus.

This suggests another remark. God has infinitely better knowledge of man's heart, and of what is adapted to turn it to Himself, and so to become a real blessing to it, than one rising from the dead could have.

Men of large knowledge and great power often fail in impressing their views on others, from want of knowledge of their hearts, and consideration of their infirmities. It is not mere force or power that is needed to move the heart. No amount of physical force could draw out the leaflets that are folded in the rosebud; to effect this needs the gentle influences of air, and light, and heat. So with the human heart. "Thy gentleness," said David, "hath made me great." One rising from the dead, coming to us straight from the lake of fire and brimstone, would probably try to affect us by the mere vehemence of his description; he would describe in tones that would thrill the very heart of stone the awful horrors of that prison, and appeal to our strongest instincts of terror, to escape to a place of safety. But would such an appeal be the most effectual?—or rather, would it do best as the *usual* method? In the Word of God, things are finely tempered. There is no exclusive appeal to a single order of faculties, or a single class of feelings—all are appealed to together. Our horror of pain is appealed to occasionally; but then this is not a very elevated feeling, and those who are most moved by dread of pain are not men of a very high order; therefore in the Bible this appeal is not very prominent. Our understanding is appealed to, our conscience, our sense of justice, our sense of gratitude, our imagination, our half-smothered aspirations after goodness and purity, our love of the peaceful and the beautiful,—whatever, indeed, in us can give any response to infinite love, and grace, and condescension, and fatherly yearnings, and conjugal doatings; the heart is pressed at every point—the citadel is approached by every avenue—all the considerations are urged that are likely to make any impression; and can it reasonably be thought that the heart that holds out against all forms of heavenly artillery, would yield to a single piece of human ordnance?—that the citadel that resists all the appliances of divine engineering would fall before a mere earthly battery? Nay, verily; if they hear not Moses and the Prophets neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.

Not only are these things so, but it should be considered, further, that it is by a direct action of the Spirit of God on the heart that the heart is turned to God; and that action of the Spirit must be looked for in connection with the means of grace that God's wisdom approves, not those thatman's wisdom mi ght prefer. Some are ready enough to say, Oh, if only some one would come from the other world, and convince us of the reality of hell and of heaven, we should then become serious, we should break off our sins, we should seek the Saviour. They forget that, to effect this result, the Divine Spirit must change their will—turn it from earth to heaven—make it obedient to the magnet that draws upwards instead of the magnet that draws downwards. But is it likely that the Spirit will own, for this end, the means that man might desiderate, rather than what He himself has ordained? It is not through visits from the departed but through the remonstrances, the appeals, the entreaties, which He employed the sacred writers to compose, that He must be expected to carry on his work. To fancy that the life-giving power has migrated from the once lively oracles, and can only be found amid the appliances of sensationalism, is a crime and a blunder in one—it is to dishonour the Spirit of Revelation, and it is to seek the living among the dead.

And, after all, what is there about Moses and the Prophets that can justify the notion that, for any purposes of high persuasion, they are worn out and useless? As we look back along the vista of the ages, what figures rise with such solemn and majestic dignity before us as those of Moses and the Prophets? What forms are so clothed with the highest attainments of grace and godliness? What human teachers ever so impressively echoed their testimony by their lives? Who ever showed more clearly what it is to conquer the baser propensities of our nature, to rise above the world both as a master and as a portion, and to dwell in the higher regions of faith and trust, and reverence and love? When we fancy ourselves in the presence of these holy men of God, do we not feel ashamed of our earthiness, our low motives of life, our distance from God, our hearts so out of tune to his words, and so out of harmony with his will? Even though they had formally taught us nothing—even though their writings had served merely to perpetuate the lessons of their lives, it would hardly be possible to over-estimate the influence, in all future generations, of that venerable band of pilgrims that we see in the earliest age of the world going up from earth to heaven, and that never cease to call on all who come after to be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

And if it be thus clear that those who have Moses and the Prophets are without excuse if they neglect the great salvation, and that they cannot be expected to yield to any more exciting instrumentality if they hear not them, what shall be said of those who, besides Moses and the Prophets, have Christ and the Evangelists too? What shall be said of us? Not that the teaching of Christ and the Apostles is essentially different from that of Moses and the Prophets. It is the same teaching, but with how much greater clearness and tenderness and power! How have life and immortality been brought to light in the Gospel! What views have we got now of the sinfulness of sin, and the love of God, and the way of life, and the grace that bringeth salvation, and the great travail of soul through which the Son of God prevailed to open the gate of glory, and fling over the wide earth the invitation, Come up hither? What an insult were it to the Son of God to fancy that any one returning from the unseen world could give us more effectual lessons than those which come to us from the life and the lips and the death of the Redeemer? Could they tell us the doom of sin more forcibly than his bleeding body and stricken soul, and the touching pathos of his

question, "If these things be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Or what higher lesson can we have respecting the glory of heaven than when He went about spreading heaven around Him, verifying by anticipation the vision of the heavenly city—"the city hath no need of the sun nor of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof"? Are we all impressed as we should be with the deep responsibility of the position in which these things place us? Do we all feel what cause the Vine-dresser has to say of us—"What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" Do we realise the unutterable solemnity of the alternative, How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

Among the many minor lessons which this subject suggests, let us select a single one for a concluding observation. We are reminded of the small extent to which the mere *sensational* element is to be found in the Word of God. The Bible deals but very sparingly in the startling, the terrifying, the horrible. It does not exclude this element: in the very parable before us it has a place; but its place is carefully limited, and other elements abound on every side of it. And this may show us that, neither in preaching, nor in religious literature, nor in common literature, is it wholesome or desirable that this element should often predominate. That is one lesson as to wholesome and useful literature that the Word of God may supply. But it is not the only lesson. The great breadth and variety of the Word of God, and pre-eminently of the Old Testament, yield another. The Bible is not one sort of reading only. It is not simply didactic, nor devotional, nor poetical, nor historical, nor proverbial, nor parabolical, nor biographical, it is all combined. Why should any be jealous of a literature—of a religious literature—that, like the Bible, has a like variety? All honour to those who cultivate with pre-eminent success and benefit any single department of Christian literature! All honour to those who cultivate the more experimental or spiritual department! Well may we bless God for them, and for the work they do, and rejoice that He sends among us, both through the pulpit and the press, sons of thunder to startle sleepers, and sons of consolation to guide, and soothe, and comfort earnest and exercised souls. But not the less should we bless God for all that varied Christian literature which eighteen centuries have gathered round the Scriptures—which has done so much permanently to illustrate the Divine message, as well as to bring it into contact with the characteristic modes of thought and feeling of every successive age. Some there are who think there is little call for the encouragement of any literature, except what presents the great vital truths of the Gospel in a direct and simple form. They would help to circulate tracts and books of the highest spiritual tone; but every other kind of publication they deem inferior, and almost incapable of receiving God's blessing or of doing real good.

But whoever really believes in the whole Bible of the Old and New Testaments as the Word of God, will see the value of that whole circle of Christian literature that revolves round the great central source of Light—nay, will be persuaded, that in the long run a varied Christian literature of this sort will do more good than one consisting merely of the most concentrated essences. It is not honouring the Bible—it is not showing confidence in it as the deliberate product of the Divine wisdom—to act as if only certain parts of it were fit nourishment for the soul, or worthy to be made our models, whether in our periodical, or in our permanent Christian literature. It is plain that God has made man capable of being more powerfully acted on by a variety of instrumentalities, than by any single appliance, however startling or impressive. The Bible is not such as man would have made it, but when we thoughtfully consider its structure, we see cause to acknowledge that the foolishness of God is wiser than men. Our tendency to onesidedness is wonderfully corrected by its wide and comprehensive fulness. The reaction that is ever caused by too constant pressure in one direction, is prevented by its firm and equable pressure on every faculty of our nature. The final results are infinitely more for God's glory and for man's highest and fullest good.

W. G. Blaikie.

A FRENCH QUAKER'S LABOUR OF LOVE.

When Etienne de Grellet du Mabillier was born in 1773, at Limoges, in what is now the department of Haute Vienne, in France, his family seemed as near the summit of worldly prosperity as could have been desired. His father was wealthy, and resided on his patrimonial estate. The owner of extensive porcelain works, he had greatly improved the manufacture, and for that, and other services to his country, he had received a title of honour from the king. At one time Comptroller of the Mint, he had been a member of the household of Louis XVI., and, as his intimate friend and councillor, had been accustomed to attend service with him in his private chapel. Though Etienne was his fifth child, he could have had little difficulty in finding for him some lucrative and honourable position. During his boyhood, nothing seemed more likely than that his life should be spent amid such pursuits as were held fitting for a member of the French noblesse, but characterised by a higher moral tone and a nobler purpose to be useful to his generation than unhappily prevailed in his class. His education was designed simply "to make him accomplished in the eyes of the world," and direct religious instruction and training formed no part of it. But he was marked by a singular religious susceptibility, and at times was filled for a little with the liveliest spiritual emotions. If these should become so strong as to give a direction to his life, he might follow the example of several of his female relations, who had renounced the world, and chosen the life of the *réligieuse*. Even in his

boyhood the thought of their privations would sometimes haunt him, and when he thought of them "rising three times in the night for prayer in the church, from the hard boards which formed their couch, even the luxury of a straw pallet being denied them," the thoughtlessness and carelessness of his own life seemed to him inexcusable, and filled him with shame and sorrow.

But ere his boyhood had passed away, the French Revolution brought a change o'er the spirit of his dream. As his father was a member of the odious nobility, his estates were confiscated, and both he and his wife were afterwards thrown into prison. For himself, after various stirring incidents, he joined the army of the French princes, along with his brothers, and became a member of the corps of the King's Horse Guards, which consisted mostly of the nobility. Though often in the midst of battle, it so fell out that he never drew a sword or fired a gun his corps being a reserve one—a circumstance to which in after life, when, as a Quaker, he came to regard all war as sinful, and all shedding of blood as unlawful, he used to revert with peculiar thankfulness. It was not long ere the army of the princes was obliged to retire from France, and was disbanded. After being at one time made prisoners of war, and ordered to be shot, he and his brothers found an opportunity of escaping, and reached Amsterdam. Soon after Etienne and his brother Joseph resolved to emigrate to America. Demerara was their first place of abode on American soil. While there, the sufferings of the wretched slaves made such an impression on him, that in after years the sound of a whip in the streets would chill his blood, from remembrance of the agony of the slaves; and he felt convinced that there was no excess of malice or wickedness which a slaveholder or driver might not be guilty of. A rumour reaching Demerara, that a French fleet was coming to take possession of the colony, he and his brother removed in 1795 to New York. From that time he may be regarded as a citizen of the United States, and was usually known under the Anglicised and plainer name of Stephen Grellet.

A number of remarkable proofs of religious susceptibility have been preserved of his early years. At the age of five or six, he had been almost driven to despair by a long Latin exercise; looking out of his window, the thought flashed on him that God had made all the wonders of nature, and could not the same God give him memory too? He knelt down at the foot of his bed, poured out his heart to God, rose with fresh hope and energy, and mastered his lesson by a single additional effort. At another time, when at Lyons, he fancied he saw a number of persons, or rather purified spirits, in one of those floating vessels on the Rhone which are used by washerwomen. They were washing linen. He wondered to see what beating and pounding was going on, but how beautifully white it came out of their hands. He was told he could not enter God's kingdom till he underwent such an operation. For weeks he was absorbed in the consideration of the subject—wondering greatly how such a regeneration should be needed by one who had been both baptised and confirmed. After he had gone to America, he was walking one evening in the fields alone, when he was suddenly arrested by what seemed an awful voice proclaiming the words "Eternity! Eternity! Eternity!" It reached his very soul, his whole frame shook, and it brought him, like Saul, to the ground. For weeks he continued in prayer, beseeching the Lord to have mercy on him. Falling in with a book of William Penn's, "No Cross, no Crown," he read it with great interest, with the aid of a dictionary. The English Bible also became his study, for he had none in French. In this state of mind, he heard of a Friends' meeting, which was to be addressed by two Englishwomen, on a religious visit to the States. He understood very little of what they said, but a gush of happy feeling filled his heart. The Lord whom he sought suddenly came to His temple. He felt like a new man, his heart was full of peace, and glowed with love to all. Of course, he became a Quaker. His experience seemed a divine verification of the Quaker doctrine of the inward light.

Baptised into Quakerism under circumstances so spirit-stirring, his loyalty to its tenets became unbounded. Constitutionally of a Catholic spirit, he was nevertheless out-and-out a Quaker. Hardly any man ever combined such fervent loyalty to his sect, with such open-hearted charity, and such readiness to recognise good wherever it might be found. We do not, of course, agree with him and his friends in the pre-eminent place assigned by them to that inner light from which his peace seemed to spring. We hold that it is not inwards to his own heart, but outwards to the Cross, the sinner is to look who seeks for peace. But when the light from the Cross, with all its blessed concomitants, is felt in a sinner's heart, making a kind of heaven there, the sensation is such, that we do not wonder at some persons fancying that if any would have peace, they must just wait till it is flashed in an instant by the Spirit into their hearts. Of Grellet, it must be said, that he did all his life most devoutly and earnestly revere Jesus Christ as the sole author of redemption, and the Holy Ghost as the only life-giving power in the heart of man. His attitude was ever one of humble, waiting expectancy, as the eyes of a servant are upon the hand of his master, or as the eyes of a maiden are upon the hand of her mistress. This goes far to explain his remarkable success as an evangelist; for very remarkable it was; although we believe at the same time that much of the emotion which his addresses occasioned was little more than the natural effect of one very susceptible temperament acting upon other temperaments of a similar kind.

It must be confessed that, as a whole, his autobiography is a tedious book. Its Quaker-slang one might get reconciled to, but its chief defect is its sameness and monotony. He seems to have felt bound to chronicle every meeting he ever held, no matter how like it may have been to a thousand others, and to do it in a style as plain, unpicturesque, and unattractive as that of the coat he wore, or the house he lived in. Yet very few books are so full of interesting passages. His experience of life was rich and wonderful, the kinds of people he came among embraced all classes,

from convicts and slaves up to emperors and empresses. He had a marvellous *entrée* to all kinds of society, an "open sesame" that admitted him alike to cloistered cell and royal closet. An ultra-Protestant, he held religious meetings in nunneries, and preached the Gospel even in Catholic sanctuaries. He was the intimate acquaintance of Romish bishops and of Greek patriarchs. Though he could never be induced to uncover his head in the presence of royalty, he obtained friendly interviews with nearly all the crowned heads of Europe. With the Emperor Alexander of Russia, and several members of his family and court, he was on the most intimate footing. He obtained on one occasion a private interview with old Pope Pius VII., the Pope whom Napoleon imprisoned; but we suspect the interview was rather uncomfortable, not because the Pope was his interlocutor, but because one of the papal attendants had whipped off his hat, and compelled him to sit uncovered. Traversing Europe with the view of discovering, cherishing, and propagating vital religion, he was constantly meeting with interesting and prominent Christian men, such as Lavater, Zeller, Gessner, Tholuck, Martin Boos, and the family of Oberlin. His notices of these men and of their labours are remarkably interesting. The facility with which he got access to all kinds of society was partly due to the fact of his being a Frenchman and at the same time a Quaker; for a French Quaker seemed as extraordinary a combination as a Mermaid or a Minotaur. The charm of his manner, and the persuasive tenderness of his addresses greatly deepened the interest he excited. As years passed over him he became known as a privileged person, in whose case the standing-orders of society might be suspended, because no one else could take advantage of the precedent. His life is one of the most remarkable instances in modern times of apostolic devotion, industry, and self-denial. At what he believed to be the call of his Lord, he never hesitated to leave business, family, and country for years together, and to go wherever he felt that he was summoned, to call men to repentance and salvation.

It was not long before he felt called to become a minister in the Quaker communion; but, following the rule in that body, he laboured without remuneration, so that he continued in business, making such arrangements as he could for absences which, though short at first, sometimes extended over two or more years. First, the United States, then Canada, became the scene of his labours; then, crossing the Atlantic, he visited Europe, spending six or eight months in his native country; a longer visit to Europe occupied him from 1811 to 1814; a third and a fourth visit followed at later periods, and between them he paid a visit to Hayti, and traversed large sections of the United States. The European visits embraced, though not always at the same time, Great Britain and Ireland, France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Holland, Scandinavia, Russia, Turkey, Greece, Austria, and Spain. Through the French language, Mr. Grellet was able to talk to a very large circle; but sometimes, of course, he had to make use of an interpreter. His manner, like that of St. Paul, was to search out his own brethren, when there were any, wherever he went, and radiate outwards from them over a wider area. Religious meetings, conducted on the Quaker model, were held, often with comparatively few at first, but larger numbers came to successive meetings, until often the crowd was extremely great. He became a recognised centre, so to speak, of earnest Christian labourers, and his arrival at any place was a signal for those to gather round him, who, in those cold times, desired encouragement and counsel in their difficult work. What proportion of those who were "contrited" or "tendered" under his warm appeals on the subject of Christ's love, continued stedfast in his doctrine and fellowship, it is impossible to tell; but whatever may have been the value of his labours in that direction, there can be little doubt that, in animating the members of the little flock, scattered over Europe, who were holding fast the truth, and earnestly trying to do their Lord's work, he rendered important service, for which his name deserves to be had in grateful remembrance.

A few samples of his labours, especially of his interviews and intercourse with remarkable characters will give the reader a better notion of the man and his work than any general description.

In early life he lived in the same village with Thomas Paine, the notorious infidel. Floating rumours of Paine's death have long been in circulation, but as doubts are apt to arise as to the authenticity of such accounts, it is well to have them authenticated by a respectable name. "On hearing that he was ill and in a very destitute condition," Mr. Grellet says, in 1809, "I went to see him, and found him in a wretched state, for he had been so neglected and forsaken by his pretended friends, that the common attentions to a sick man had been withheld from him. The skin of his body was in some places worn off, which greatly increased his sufferings." Mr. Grellet was obliged to leave home, but he procured a nurse for Paine, and a variety of comforts, and got a young Quaker lady, who had been staying with him, to visit him from time to time. Once when she was in his room some of his infidel associates came to him, and in a loud, heartless manner said: "Tom Paine, it is said you are turning Christian, but we hope you will die as you have lived," and then went away. Turning to Miss Roscoe, Paine said: "You see what miserable comforters they are." Once he asked her if she had read any of his writings; she told him she had begun the "Age of Reason," but it made her so miserable that she flung it into the fire. "I wish all had done as you did," he said, "for if the Devil ever had any agency in any work, he had it in my writing that book." When going to carry him any refreshment, she repeatedly heard him uttering the language, "O Lord! Lord God!" or "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me!" It was observed that during his illness he wrote a great deal, but as nothing was ever heard of these writings, it was presumed that his infidel associates had destroyed them, finding them not in keeping with his former views.

It is an interesting fact that it was Mr. Grellet who first introduced Elizabeth Fry to prison visiting. He had paid a visit to the female department of

Newgate prison under very affecting circumstances. The jailer had tried to dissuade him, telling him, among other things, that the prisoners were such a pack of termagants that if they did not tear him in pieces, they would at least tear his clothes from his back. But it was quite otherwise. The women were greatly pleased at his coming to see them, and hastily rolled up their hammocks and arranged their sleeping room, so that he might address them together. The smell of the air was fearful, and everything base and depraved was so strongly depicted on the faces of the women who stood before him, with looks of boldness and wantonness that appalled him, that it seemed for a while as if he could not go on. But the more he beheld the awful consequences of sin, the more did he feel moved to speak of the love of Him who had come to seek and to save that which was lost. As he spoke of the love of Christ their countenances began to alter, they hung down their heads, their haughtiness and proud looks were brought low, and the tears flowed down over unaccustomed channels. On going to the hospital to visit the sick, his astonishment at the woe and misery he beheld was overwhelming. He found many very sick lying on the bare floor or on some old straw, with very scanty clothing, though the weather was cold ; and there were several children among them, almost naked, who had been born in the prison.

Here was a case for female succour : he went straight to Mildred's Court, the residence of the Frys, and appealed to Mrs. Fry. Touched with the terrible tale, she immediately sent for flannel and Friends, whose nimble fingers prepared a bundle of garments before next day, with which Mrs. Fry went to the prison for the naked children. When she saw the wretchedness prevailing in the prison she was induced to devise the plan, to which she devoted her life, for improving the condition of female prisoners, reforming their morals, and gaining them to Christ.

We have referred to the singular manner in which Mr. Grellet got access to continental nunneries. Writing of a nunnery at the place where his mother resided (Brives, in France), he says, "I visited the nuns of the hospital, with whom I had such precious seasons of the Lord's favour six years ago. Their aged and venerable superior continued in the greenness of the divine life, manifesting Christian meekness and humility. . . . On returning (from the hospital) to the aged superior, I found that, Cornelius-like, she wished that her household should share with her in the consolations she expected from my visit ; she therefore had all the nuns collected . . . My heart was enlarged among them in the love of Christ, who was preached to them as the only Saviour, and the bread of life." Next day, a nun from another religious order, accompanied him to the hospital, and entreated the prisoners to attend to the message of salvation thus brought to them. "There was something," says Mr. Grellet, "particularly pleasing to my mind in having a nun as my fellow-worker directing sinners to Christ, as the only hope of salvation." Many more of the nuns of the place were of a similar spirit ; he was convinced that they were not far from the Kingdom of God, and that but for the ascendency the priests had obtained over them, they might have become bright and shining ornaments of the Church of God. Unhappily the priests did not share their emotions, but lifted up their hands in token of their joy, when they heard that Mr. Grellet had left the place.

On another occasion, when at Naples, Mr. Grellet was fearfully distressed at the amount and depth of the depravity he found among the inmates of the criminal prisons. Many of the prisoners, male and female, and even children, had committed atrocious crimes. Fifteen in one cell were condemned to death. Some boys, not above eleven years of age, had committed *several* murders. Every effort of Mr. Grellet to awaken a right feeling in any of them was utterly in vain. Next day he went to the Foundling Hospital. Passing the door of the chapel, about 400 girls were seen engaged in devotions to the Virgin. Mr. Grellet was asked by the priests and nuns who accompanied him to go in and see them at their devotions ; he consented, on condition that if he felt moved by the Spirit to speak to the assembled girls, the chief priest would interpret for him. He agreed. After they had sung a hymn, he pointed out to them the idolatrous and unprofitable character of their worship, which could never be acceptable to Him who must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. Then he spoke of Jesus Christ, as the only Saviour of sinners, the only hope of salvation, the way, the truth, the life ; without whom no man can come to God the Father. The priest interpreted faithfully into Italian, as Grellet could perceive. The nuns and other priests said, several times, This is the truth. The countenances of the girls showed emotion.

"Thus," says Mr. Grellet, "did my blessed Master enable his poor servant, in a Popish church, assisted by priests, to bear testimony to his blessed truth, and against the superstitious worship that those poor girls were offering to a piece of carved wood. After we came out, some more of the nuns collected about us, and in answering some of their questions, I further expounded to them wherein acceptable worship consists, and also what is the only hope of salvation. After opportunities of this sort, I sometimes marvel that they do not lay their hands on me ; but here, on the contrary, they parted from me in tenderness, and with expressions of their satisfaction with my visit. Surely, this is the Lord's doing !"

His interview with the Pope, in 1819, was more curious than impressive. The Pope, a spare old man, of a mild and serious countenance, wished to be agreeable to his Quaker visitor, who had done much good work in his prisons, and had suggested to him many useful reforms, especially the abolition of the Inquisition. But, as in the case of Pio Nono, when pressed pretty hard to make the reforms, the reply was virtually, "*Non possumus.*" Proceeding to more vital topics, Grellet began to describe the character and duties of a minister of Christ, a priest of God—to all of which the Pope gave an amiable assent.

"Finally," says Grellet, "as I felt the love of Christ flowing in my heart towards him, I particularly addressed him. I alluded to the various sufferings he underwent from the hands of Napoleon ; the deliver-

ance granted him by the Lord; and queried whether his days were not lengthened out to enable him to glorify God, and exalt the name of Jesus Christ, as the only Head of the Church, the only Saviour, to whom alone every knee is to bow, and every tongue is to confess; that such a confession from him in his old age would do more towards the advancement of Christ's kingdom, and the promotion of his glory, than the authority of all the popes his predecessors was ever able to do; moreover, that thereby his sun, now near setting, would go down with brightness, and his portion in eternity would be with the sanctified One, in the joys of his salvation. The Pope, while I thus addressed him, kept his head inclined, and appeared tender; then rising from his seat in a kind and respectful manner, he expressed a desire 'that the Lord would bless and protect me wherever I went.' On which I left him."

The singularly sanguine nature of Grellet was never more apparent; even an inclined head and tender look were encouraging tokens for good.

A much more congenial listener was found in the Emperor Alexander of Russia: several of Alexander's courtiers were also persons of decided piety. Mr. Grellet was thoroughly assured of the reality of the Emperor's profession. He himself gave him an account of his conversion. Trained up in the Greek Church, he had been taught to repeat prayers without praying; and yet often, when he lay down, his convictions of sin were so strong that he had to rise from his bed, and with tears entreat the Lord's forgiveness, and strength to act with greater watchfulness. In 1812, he had been recommended by a pious man, Prince Alexander Galitzin, to read the Bible, which he had not seen till this nobleman presented him with a copy. He devoured it with eagerness, and through the teaching of the Holy Spirit its truths were firmly fastened on his heart. It was a practice of the Princess Metchersky and the Emperor to read the Bible at the same time, one chapter of the Old Testament in the morning, and another of the New Testament in the evening. As they corresponded, and the Emperor in his letters often alluded to the religious impressions made on his mind by the chapter of the day, she knew that he continued the practice. His mind was full of schemes for the benefit of his subjects, and it is one of the mysteries of Providence that one so full of Christian views and aims should have been removed so early from the important post he had been called to occupy.

We have left ourselves hardly a line to note some of Grellet's visits to those excellent champions of Divine truth and love who were working, often alone and unsuccoured, in various parts of Europe. Speaking, in 1832, of Dr. Tholuck of Halle, and of the persecutions endured by his pious students, he says: "He has an arduous path to tread, but the Lord supports him amidst his numerous difficulties; his enemies, like those of Daniel formerly, can find no occasion against him, except concerning the law of his God. He has two or three hundred young men, steady attenders of his lectures at the University. He has the consolation to hope that every year from thirty to forty of these young men go from the University to various parts of Germany, thoroughly established in sound Christian truths, giving evidence also that they love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

One other notice in this department must suffice. We select the visit to Zeller, because in last month's part of the SUNDAY MAGAZINE an account appeared of his interesting and important labours. "Accompanied by two friends, we went to Bueggen on the Rhine, to see an interesting establishment for eighty poor orphans of both sexes, and for twenty-four young men, who are educated for schoolmasters, in institutions where the pupils support themselves by manual labour of various sorts. Zeller and his wife, who are the superintendents of it, are persons of rare piety; it is from an apprehension of religious duty that they occupy their stations; Christian love and kindness are very conspicuously appearing in their hearts, by those they govern. The same love seems to flow back from the young people towards them. . . . . I could but compare this house to that of Obededom, on which the Lord's blessing rested. The wife of Zeller devoted herself in very early life to the Lord, and to this day she appears to be faithful in endeavouring to perform her solemn vow. When about five years of age she was playing on some of the rocky hills of the country; one of their large eagles saw her, and darted down upon her head; a man with a gun not far distant, watched the motions of the eagle but did not see the child; he fired and killed the bird, at the very moment of its darting on the child's head; great was his surprise on coming to the spot to find the dead eagle by the side of the child. The deep wounds made by his talons on her head show what a narrow escape she had from the voracious bird, and from being wounded or killed by the gun. This dear woman considers that her life, thus spared, is to be wholly devoted to the service of God."

As years multiplied on the head of Stephen Grellet, he of course had to contract the sphere of his activity. But till his death, in 1855, at the age of 82, he continued more or less engaged in the labour of love. His later years were clouded by a schism in the Quaker body, and by the spread of views which he deemed destructive of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, views which he did all in his power to check and overthrow. But the inward peace gladdened his heart to the close. His life, like that of the patriarch Joseph, is a singular proof how good may be brought out of evil. Had no French Revolution and no Reign of Terror ever been known, Etienne de Grellet du Mabillier would, of course, never have become Stephen Grellet. He might have carried on the porcelain business at Limoges, and become rich and powerful; but, so far as we can know, he would never have reached that higher sphere which entitles him to have for his motto: "They that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

THINK ON THE POOR.

THOUGH you sit in warm mansions, secure from the tempest,
Nor feel the keen storm, as it drifts on the moor,
Yet shut not your door 'gainst the wandering stranger,
But learn from your blessings to pity the poor.

When the cold northern wind blows chilly and rudely,
And the rain patters hard at your windows and door—
When you hear the blast howl, look around on your comforts,
And plan some good thing for the indigent poor.

Oft lift up the latch of chill poverty's dwelling,
Explore the sad chamber where care sits obscure,
When you see tears of want wash the withering bosom,
Then think of your Saviour, and give to the poor.

Cold Winter presents a foreboding dark aspect,
In clusters the icicles hang at the door:
Red berries may grace the brown thorn for the songster,
But you must relieve the hard lot of the poor.

Remember that soon we must go to that dwelling
Where riches no sort of distinction procure:
For that leveller, Death, and the grave, our last mansion,
Shall mingle our dust with the dust of the poor.

ABOUT RICHARD BAXTER.

PART SECOND.

WHEN the nation, in a tumult of enthusiastic loyalty, hastened to throw itself at the feet of the returning monarch, Baxter was not slow to commend and participate in the common joy. With him loyalty was a Christian duty as well as a deep-seated emotion; and though he had submitted peaceably to the rule of Cromwell, and had thankfully availed himself of the freedom to pursue his work which Cromwell's policy secured to him, he had never got over a certain feeling of personal dislike to the man, and had no[illegible] throne. This [illegible]n for assuming the rein[illegible]taken no pains to conceal. [illegible]ly seating him[illegible]hat upon one occasion he got [illegible]e and [illegible]able by the vehemence of his language [illegible]d [illegible]e usurper." The course, however, which [illegible]narily pursued was, while protesting against he regarded as sin on the part of the ruling [illegible]er, to submit peaceably to the existing authority, [illegible] give Cromwell credit for all the good he did and the good intentions he displayed, to avail himself of whatever advantages were to be enjoyed under his rule, and to leave the issue with God. At a later period, and after some rather instructive experiences, he began "to be in great doubts how far he did well or ill in his oppositions to Cromwell and his army at last." But no such doubts disturbed him while Cromwell's power lasted. He thought his "duty was clear to disown the usurper's sin, what good soever he might do;" and it seemed to him there was but one course for sincere and true men to follow. "We are bound," said he, "by the covenant to the King that last was, and by the oath of allegiance to his heirs. All the changes since have been made unlawfully by rebellious sectaries. Therefore we ought as loyal subjects to restore the King, and for the issue let God do what He will."

Charles II. had sought to smooth the way for his restoration by declarations fitted to remove [illegible]ay fears [illegible] and Presbyterians as to the consequences to themselves of his being invested with the royal prerogatives and power. In his famous Declaration from Breda he promised "a liberty to tender consciences, and that no one should be disquieted for differences of opinion in matters of religion which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom." At first it seemed as if his Majesty, when in possession of the throne, meant to keep his word with his Nonconformist subjects in this matter; and in justice to Charles it must be said that he showed himself more concerned to act honourably towards them than were those who had drawn up the Declaration for him, and were now the administrators of his authority. The Earl of Manchester, as Lord Chamberlain, was authorised to appoint some of the leading Presbyterian divines to the office of Chaplain to the King; of these Baxter was one, and he had the honour of preaching once before the King, as had also Reynolds, Calamy, and Spurstowe. His Majesty even went so far as to grant an interview to certain of the Presby-

Drawn by C. J. Pilwell. Engraved by Dalziel Brothers.

Oft lift up the latch of chill Poverty's dwelling,
Explore the sad chamber where Care sits obscure;
When you see tears of want wash the withering bosom,
Then think of your Saviour, and give to the poor.

terian ministers for the purpose of considering the proposals which they had to make as to the best method of settling the affairs of the Church, so as to unite in one communion both the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians. At this Baxter was the chief speaker on the Presbyterian side; and the substance of what he urged upon the King was summed up in three points:—"Not to make any unnecessary thing a term of communion; not to allow the discipline of the Church to become so lax as to be tolerant of sin; and not to suffer the faithful pastors who must exercise such discipline, if it be exercised, to be removed, and unworthy men to be obtruded in their place." The King professed himself pleased by what he had heard; promised to do his utmost to bring both parties together; and intimated his conviction that this could be accomplished only by "abating somewhat on both sides and meeting in the midway." Charles probably meant no more by this than to wind up the conference in a manner that, without pledging himself to anything special, would be agreeable to those who had waited on him; for, with all his faults, "the merry monarch" had the courtesy that became his station, and possessed largely that nameless charm of manner which was the heritage of his race, and had given such dangerous influence to his father and great-grandmother. The worthy divines were overwhelmed with delight at his Majesty's graciousness; and "old Mr. Ash burst out into tears with joy, and could not forbear expressing what gladness this promise of his Majesty had put into his heart."

In all probability Charles would have willingly accepted any arrangement that would have pleased all parties, and left him to enjoy in peace the good things in which he delighted. But this case was not one which could be very easily managed; and as those who had now obtained the ascendancy in the state were for the most part men strongly opposed to such concessions as the Nonconformists demanded, it must have been manifest to all that that "midway" on which his Majesty suggested they must meet would be one exceedingly difficult to reach. The King foresaw that the great difficulty would be about Church government. On this point the Nonconformists were willing to make concessions, so far as to accept Archbishop Usher's scheme of a reduced episcopacy; but that admitted so large an infusion of the Presbyterian element that to adopt it would have been in effect to abolish Episcopacy as it had previously existed in the English Church. To this one does not see how the Episcopal party could be expected to assent. The only course by which peace could have been preserved was, in accordance with the King's declaration from Breda, to give full "liberty to tender consciences" by allowing the Nonconformists to retain their place in the Church without exacting from them concurrence in what they conscientiously disapproved. Whether such a course was practicable may be questioned; but it was one of which the dominant party had no inclination to make trial.

Conferences and debates ensued, petitions were presented to the King, declarations and counter-declarations were issued; the terms proposed by the one party were canvassed and criticised by the other; and, as is usual in such cases, the contest waxed hotter, the longer it was continued. Into this turmoil, in which Baxter bore a principal share, it is not necessary that we should enter minutely here. It may suffice to say that whilst the Nonconformists demanded a reduced episcopacy, a revised liturgy, and exemption from certain usages in worship which had previously prevailed, the opposite party insisted on the restoration of everything to the state in which it had been before the great Rebellion. Once during the storm there were appearances which seemed to hold out a promise of returning peace. The King issued a declaration in which he adopted so many of the proposals of the ministers, that Baxter thought, if his Majesty's scheme became law, no man who had taken the Covenant would scruple to accept it. Proposals were at the same time made to confer three vacant bishoprics on Presbyterian divines, those selected being Reynolds, Calamy, and Baxter. Of this last proposal Baxter warmly approved, only he begged for himself to decline the honour intended for him; not because he judged the thing unlawful in itself as described in the King's declaration, but because he knew it would take him off his studies. All that he would accept was the vicarage of Kidderminster, if the incumbent could be provided for by being placed in some sinecure post; if not, he was content to remain as he was.

The hopes excited by these proceedings proved delusive. After much time had been spent in fruitless discussions between the bishops and the Presbyterians, Parliament interfered; and the prelatic party being in the ascendant, a bill was passed restoring the bishops to their former seats in the House of Lords and their former jurisdiction, and a committee was appointed "to view the several laws for confirming the liturgy of the Church of England . . . . to bring in a compendious bill to supply any defect in the former laws; and to provide for an effectual conformity to the liturgy of the Church for the time to come." This was a preliminary to the passing of the "Act for the uniformity of Public Prayers and Administration of the Sacraments," which was read a third time in the Commons on the 9th of July, 1661, and after sundry amendments, received the royal assent and became law on the 19th of May, 1662.

During the two years that preceded this event Baxter resided chiefly in London, and was constantly occupied in the discussions and conferences which took place. He was hopeful of a better issue for a long time; but there were many things which filled him with anxiety and excited his fears. Not the least disturbing was the readiness with which the government gave ear to all rumours which tended to implicate the Nonconformists in the charge of disloyalty, and the extreme severity with which they punished any against whom their numerous spies could succeed in producing any appearance of having been engaged in treasonable plots. His own path was beset by these mischievous emissaries. He hardly ever preached a sermon, he tells us, without receiving reports from Westminster that he had given offence by his preaching. Because in a discourse on the words "And he was speechless," he had said that "wicked men and the refusers of grace, however

they may now have many things to say to excuse their sin, will at last be speechless, and not dare stand to their wickedness before God," he was reported to the bishop of London as having preached seditiously. His efforts to resume his labours at Kidderminster were baffled, though he offered to preach there for nothing; and he was even refused the satisfaction of once more administering the sacrament to the people, and preaching a farewell sermon. He had even reason to believe that soldiers were in readiness to prevent his preaching anywhere near the sphere of his former labours had he persisted in making the attempt. So far did his enemies go in their endeavours to injure him, that a letter was forged for the purpose of implicating him in a plot to overthrow the government. Happily the insinuation was too vague and groundless to be formed into an accusation, and the charge fell to the ground.

These things were but "the beginning of sorrows." The Act of Uniformity, passed in May, prescribed the 24th of August following as the day when every clergyman of the Church of England must, after the reading of the morning and evening prayer as prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer, "openly and publicly, before the congregation there assembled, declare his unfeigned assent and consent to the use of all things in the said book." To refuse or neglect to do this was *ipso facto* to incur deprivation of "all spiritual promotions;" in other words, to be cast out of whatever office the party so acting held in the Church. To the Nonconformists such an act was virtually an act of expulsion; for, as a matter of course, they could not with any decency, to say nothing of conscience, express their "unfeigned assent and consent" to everything contained in a book to which they had for years been urging many and serious objections. The result was, that on the day prescribed, nearly 2000 of the best and most godly of the ministers of the Church of England took farewell of their sorrowing flocks, and went forth to face poverty, contumely, and persecution, rather than do violence to conscience, or betray the cause which they believed to be the cause of truth and of God. A grand deed, surely, whether they were right or wrong in the opinions for which they suffered! a deed of which Englishmen may well be proud for all time!

The Act of Uniformity had excluded the Nonconformists from the ministry of the English Church. But though ejected from their livings they were not silenced, and as they retained the confidence and affection of their flocks, they still continued to exercise influence over them by their preaching. To put a stop to this, the Conventicle Act was passed in 1664. By this the meeting of more than four persons for religious exercises in other manner than as allowed by the liturgy and practice of the Church of England, was forbidden under a penalty of a fine of £5, or three months' imprisonment for each person for the first offence; a fine of £10 or six months' imprisonment for the second; and a fine of £100, or transportation for seven years to some one of his Majesty's plantations, for the third. The ministers were thus precluded from preaching to, or holding meetings, except of the most limited extent, with their former flocks. Still they might be among them, and in various ways might exercise influence over them. This, therefore, must also be prevented; and accordingly the Five Mile Act became law, by which Nonconformist ministers were prohibited from coming or being within five miles of any city or town corporate, or any borough sending burgesses to parliament, or any place, however rural, where they had at any time exercised their ministry. This was a sentence of banishment into the most lonely and unpeopled parts of the country, and as they were prohibited from occupying themselves in any way in the work of education in the place of their banishment, it was virtually a dooming to hard labour of men whose education and training unfitted them for such pursuits, but who, destitute of worldly means, must either betake themselves to such labour or starve.

It is necessary to remind the reader of these historical facts, for out of them arose much of what has now to be narrated of the life of Richard Baxter.

Shortly after the Act of Uniformity took effect, Baxter entered into the marriage relation with Margaret Charlton, a young lady to whom his preaching had proved useful. Though there was considerable disparity of age between them, and though Baxter's infirmities and peculiarities might be supposed not to promise much for domestic felicity, the marriage turned out an exceedingly happy one. "We lived," says he, "in inviolated love and mutual complacency, sensible of the benefit of mutual help, nearly nineteen years. I know not that ever we had any breach in point of love, or point of interest, save only that she somewhat grudged that I had persuaded her, for my quietness, to surrender so much of her estate, to the disabling her from helping others so much as she earnestly desired." He refers here to his having stipulated before their marriage that she should relinquish of her small fortune whatever might involve them in lawsuits. It was characteristic of the man that he also stipulated that he "should have nothing that before the marriage was hers." They were married on the 10th of September, 1662.

After residing some time in London, Baxter took up his abode in the small village of Acton. Here he devoted himself to his favourite occupation of writing books; and to the period between his leaving Kidderminster, in 1661, and 1665, belong several of his most important works; among the rest his "Reasons for the Christian Religion," 4to, his "Divine Life," 4to, and his "Christian Directory; or Sum of Practical Divinity," folio. The last of these is a treatise on Christian Ethics and Casuistry, intended to be the companion of another work which he was writing in Latin, and in which he purposed to set forth the theoretic side of the Christian theology. The author apologises for the deficiencies of the book, especially the small number of cases of conscience which he has considered, on the ground that it was written when he had been "long separated from his library, and from all books saving an inconsiderable parcel which wandered with him where he went." He naïvely adds, "But perhaps there will be enough for those I intend them for." Most readers of the present day will probably think that a few of them might have been spared.

At Acton, Baxter was beyond the reach of the Five Mile Act, but he was still within that of the Conventicle Act, and in consequence of this, was brought into trouble. Though he complied with it so far as to abstain from publicly preaching, he was in the habit of conducting a religious service with his own family, and as several of the neighbours of their own accord came to this, and he could not reconcile it with his conscience or with right feeling either to send them away when they thus came, or to forbid them to come, he soon placed himself in circumstances in which he might be brought under the penalties of the Act. But no action of this kind was taken against him for a long time. Whether this arose from supineness in the matter on the part of the magistrates, or from unwillingness on the part of the people to lodge information against him; or whether it was due to his intimacy with Chief-Justice Hale, who resided near Acton, and often sought his society; or whether the calamities of the metropolis—for it was the time of the Plague and the Great Fire in London—gave the authorities something else to think about than persecuting the Nonconformists, the happy result to Baxter was, that he was permitted not only to pursue his studies in peace, but also to minister of God's truth to many who were hungering for the bread of life. It could not be expected, however, that with such an Act in force this state of peace could always last. Though he never conducted his service during church hours, and made a point of going with his hearers to the parish church when his own service was over, he gave offence to the clergyman of the parish, partly by holding these meetings, partly by refusing to come to the sacrament in his church. In consequence of this, a warrant was issued to bring Baxter before the justices at Brentford, and they, by their mittimus, sent him to Clerkenwell Prison for holding a conventicle. An informality in their proceeding led to his being discharged when the case was brought, by his demanding his *habeas corpus*, into the Court of Common Pleas; somewhat, apparently, to Baxter's disappointment, who was thus deprived of the opportunity of arguing the question fully on its merits. The magistrates made another attempt to seize him, and this time they thought to lodge him in Newgate; "which was," says he, "since the fire which burnt down all the better rooms, the most noisome place that I have heard of, of any prison in the land, except the Tower dungeon." His enemies, however, were not as yet so far to prevail against him.

Baxter did not return to Acton, but on his liberation, went to live at Totteridge. Here he spent three years (1670—73) "of great peace, among quiet neighbours." He suffered much, however, at this time from ill health, was "seldom free from much anguish," and was "in deaths oft." Nevertheless, he held on his course of work with unabated ardour; preparing for the press volume after volume, and toiling at his huge "Methodus Theologiæ," the greater part of which was written at this time. To this period also belongs that noble work, "The Life of Faith."

The reputation which Baxter had acquired as a theologian, led to his friendship being sought by several continental divines of eminence; and at one time he seems even to have contemplated the possibility of seeking refuge from the distractions of his own country in a foreign residence. Whilst he was at Totteridge a proposal of a still more extraordinary kind was made to him. It came from the Court, through the Earl of Lauderdale. When this nobleman was on his way to Scotland to carry out the schemes of the Court for the settling of the ecclesiastical affairs of that country, he sent for Baxter to meet him at Barnet, and there in the King's name offered him, if he would go to Scotland, a church, or a bishopric, or the management of one of the colleges. It is not easy to conceive why such a proposal was made to Baxter, as it was one not at all likely to be accepted by him. He treated it, however, as meant in good faith and in kindness to himself; and in declining it did so with the utmost courtesy, assigning as reasons of his declinature, his infirm health, his desire to complete the books on which he was engaged, and the inconvenience of moving his family and books so far. In the letter to Lauderdale, however, in which he communicates these reasons, he takes occasion to hint that if he was thought worthy of having liberty to preach in Scotland, where there were already enough for the work who were likely to do it better than he, it was strange and unreasonable that he should, in his own country, be liable, for doing the very same thing, to be sent to Newgate among thieves and robbers; and he concludes by earnestly entreating Lauderdale to use his influence that he might be permitted to reside in London where he could oversee the press and collect around him his books, which he had left at Kidderminster and had not seen for ten years, and that he might have liberty occasionally to preach the Gospel there gratuitously; "for," he adds, "it is not maintenance that I expect." Whether Lauderdale conveyed his desire to the King does not appear; certain it is that no favour was ever again shown to him by the Court.

Whilst Baxter was residing at Totteridge the attempt was made by Charles to suspend the operation of the Acts against Nonconformists by his own royal authority, a step to which, it is believed, he was moved by a desire to favour the Romanist clergy. Of the inexpediency and unlawfulness of such procedure the leading men among the evangelical Nonconformists were in no doubt; but they did not on that account feel that they were precluded from availing themselves of the opportunity which was thus opened to them of worshipping God according to the dictates of their consciences. Accordingly, many of the silenced ministers in and around London began to preach where they could find a place suited for the purpose; and at length, having obtained licence from the King, they aimed at ministering to regular congregations. Baxter was among the number of those who took this course; and he made use of his licence to preach every Tuesday at Mr. Turner's Church, New Street, Fetter Lane. This service, which he rendered gratuitously, he commenced on the 24th of January, $167\frac{2}{3}$; and in this was the origin of the Tuesday Lecture, which still, we believe, continues to be delivered, though not now in the same place.

Shortly after this he removed his residence to London, where he took a house in Bloomsbury.

The Parliament having constrained the King to resile from his unconstitutional attempt to suspend laws by his own sovereign will, the Act of Uniformity again came into force. The common danger, however, arising from the aggressions of Popery, served for a season to throw the Church of England party and the evangelical Nonconformists more upon each other for mutual support; and this prevented interference for the time with the liberties of the latter. Attempts were even made to renew negotiations, with a view to the healing of the breach which had been made between them. But these came to nothing; and the passing of the Test Act, while it tended to abate the anxieties of the Church party as to the influence of Popery, imposed on the Nonconformists new disabilities, and excited new animosities.

At this time Baxter was struggling with severe bodily ailments, which often brought him very low. Writing under date of April, 1674, he says, "At this time God so much increased my languishing, and laid me so low . . . . that I had reason to think that my time on earth would not be long. And oh!" he adds, "how good hath the will of God proved hitherto to me; and will it not be the best at last? Experience causeth me to say to his praise, 'Great peace have they that love his law, and nothing shall offend them; and though my flesh and heart do fail, God is the rock of my heart, and my portion for ever.'"

These illnesses considerably interfered with his public work; and he was obliged to give up some services he had begun in London. He had a room over St. James's Market-place, where he preached once a week; and this service he managed to keep up. One day as he was preaching, a main beam on which the floor of the room rested gave way, and the whole audience might have been precipitated to the street, but for the presence of mind of Mrs. Baxter. Hearing the crack, she went down-stairs, and accosting the first person she met, she asked what was his occupation. On being told in reply that he was a carpenter, she got him to fetch a prop from his yard which was at hand, and place it under the cracked beam, so that it bore the weight under which it was beginning to sink. The congregation were alarmed, but the preacher succeeded in preventing a panic, so that none were injured. Though considerably pestered by the assiduity of informers, who were constantly lodging accusations against him, Baxter continued his preaching at St. James's Market, with no small encouragement. The alarm of insecurity in the building having driven away most of the wealthier sort, especially the women, his audience consisted chiefly of young men, and persons drawn from the immediate neighbourhood, mostly persons of degraded condition and habits. His labours among them were signally blessed of God. "Many," he says, "that had not come to church for years received so much, and manifested so great a change (some Papists, and divers others returning public thanks to God for their conversion), as made all my charge and trouble easy to me." One would have thought that labours such as those, so useful, and so disinterested, might at least have been suffered to go on without interruption. But when the flames of persecution have been kindled, they are apt to burn with indiscriminate fury; and oftentimes it is those who have deserved best of the community who suffer most in consequence. Baxter found it so. After several attempts to punish him had failed, his enemies at last succeeded in having warrants issued against him, and he was fined in the sum of 50*l.* upon two judgments, for preaching a lecture in New Street. "Some Conformists," he quietly remarks in recording this, "are paid to the value of 20*l.* a sermon for their preaching, and I must pay 20*l.*, and 40*l.* a sermon for preaching for nothing!"

Baxter, however, was not without friends even among the nobility, and by their means he sometimes escaped the blows that were aimed at him. He was even encouraged, though somewhat reluctantly, to consent to the building of a suitable place of worship in lieu of the insecure place at St. James's Market, and to this several persons of rank largely subscribed. By the exertions of Mrs. Baxter a place was also erected at Bloomsbury, where her husband engaged occasionally to preach. But his persecutors still continued to harass him. Wearied of keeping his doors shut on those who came to distrain on his goods for preaching, he resolved at length to give up housekeeping, to sell his goods, and first to hide his library and then to sell it. "The prelates," says he, "to hinder me from preaching deprived me also of these private comforts, but God saw that they were my snare. We brought nothing into this world, and we must carry nothing out. The loss is very tolerable."

Having now no goods to be distrained, Baxter's persecutors sought to silence him by seizing his person. He had only preached once in his new chapel, when he escaped being sent to jail by taking refuge with a friend in the country. Having whilst there acceded to the wish of the parish minister to preach in his church, he aroused the wrath of his enemies to exasperation, and they resolved to leave no means untried to lodge him in prison. The state of his health, however, compelling him to live in great quiet, and death having removed most of those who, as informers or justices, were most ready to serve their designs against him, it was a considerable time before they could get him into their power. After a year's silence he resumed preaching in London, though not in his own chapel, which was closed against him. He preached principally in a chapel in Swallow Street.

Trials of another kind now began to cast their shadows over his path. Death was fast taking away from him those friends with whom he delighted to hold converse, and many of whom had been partakers with him in his conflicts and his sufferings for the cause of truth and liberty. He had followed some of the dearest of them to the tomb, when the heaviest stroke of all fell upon him in the death of his wife, an event which took place on the 14th of June, 1681. To him such a loss was irreparable. For many years she had been his cherished companion, able to sympathise with him in his labours, ever ready to soothe and

cheer him amid his troubles. And now in his old age, with infirmity growing upon him, with evil tongues busy around, and with clouds gathering ominously over his own prospects and those of his country, he was left to struggle on as he best could, without the solace of her society, or the strength of her sympathy. It was a sore and heavy trial that had come upon him. But the good man saw God's hand in it, and he humbly bowed his head to the stroke. He had learned to say with Job: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Amid all these troubles and sorrows his pen never rested. Volume after volume of every size, from the huge folio down to the single sermon, came forth from his prolific brain and unwearying hand. Between 1673, when he left Totteridge, and 1682, shortly after his wife died, he published no fewer than forty works, some of them of great length and elaboration, many of them controversial, and all of them the result of study and thought. Among these was "A Breviate of the Life of Mrs. Margaret Baxter," with the writing of which he consoled the first months of his widowhood; and his "Poetical Fragments," in which, in strains somewhat rugged, often prosaic, but always pious, and occasionally rising into true poetry, he gives vent to his feelings and aspirations concerning Divine things.

If ever a man had by toil and suffering earned a right to spend the evening of his life in peace, it was Richard Baxter. But this boon was not to be his. Rather were his latter days to be among the most troubled of his troubled life. When he returned from the country, whither he had retreated for a season after his wife's death, bonds and imprisonment awaited him. The Apostle's fight with the wild beasts at Ephesus could hardly have been much sorer than that which Baxter had to endure in London.

Exhausted by ill-health, he had relinquished the pulpit, and retired to live in quiet. Why should he, then, be harassed by informers and dragged before tribunals? Old and infirm, he might have been allowed, in that "living death" as he calls it to which he was now consigned, to drag out his few remaining days in peace. But his enemies would not suffer it to be so. Though silent, he had presumed to dwell in a corporate town, and therefore under the Five Mile Act was liable to prosecution; and as he had dared to preach, though a Nonconformist, he was still liable to be called to account for that. Warrants were accordingly issued to seize his person, and distrain for 190*l.* for five sermons. He was saved from going to prison through the interposition of Dr. Cox, who took oath before the justices that to send him to prison was to imperil his life. "Let him die in his bed," said Charles, when the matter was referred to him, and so for the present his persecutors were forced to content themselves with distraining his goods, which they did, even to the bed that he lay sick on, and sold them all. But they did not stop here. "When they had taken and sold all," he says, "and I had borrowed some bedding and necessaries of the buyer, I was never the quieter; for they threatened to come upon me again, and take all as mine, whosesoever it was, which they found in my possession." Thus in pain, in sickness, and in poverty he was driven forth to seek shelter "in secret lodgings at a distance;" and, but for the liberality of his friends, he must have perished. As if this was not enough, he was sought out, again apprehended, and whilst under such suffering that he could scarcely stand, forced to appear at the quarter sessions, and become bound in four hundred pounds to his good behaviour. "I told them," he says, "I had rather they would send me to jail, than put me to wrong others by being bound with me in bonds that I was likely to break to-morrow; for if there did but five persons come in when I was praying, they would take it for a breach of good behaviour."

At this crisis Charles II. died, and his sullen, bigoted, and priest-ridden brother reigned in his stead. His accession brought no immediate mitigation of the sufferings of the Nonconformists. Baxter had been long a mark for the fury of the persecutor, and at length the full vials of his wrath were poured on the innocent and dying old man. Unable to find anything else to lay to his charge, they pounced upon an expression or two in a work he had just published, his "Paraphrase on the New Testament," in which he had let drop some censures on persecuting prelates, and had condemned the silencing of godly ministers who sought to preach in Christ's name. Though expressed in the most general terms, these passages were considered as designed to bring into contempt the King and the bishops of the Church of England, and Baxter was accordingly brought before the notorious Judge Jefferies on a charge of sedition. Jefferies behaved at the trial with his usual coarseness and brutality. He broke out upon Baxter with the most violent abuse, calling him rogue, rascal, an old blockhead, an unthankful villain; declaring that he would "handle him" for refusing to conform; and swearing by God that he deserved to be whipped through the city. Baxter was ably defended by Pollexfen, Wallop, and other eminent lawyers, on whom no small portion of the judge's abuse fell. At length Baxter ventured to put in a word of explanation for himself. "Richard, Richard," roared the judge, "dost thou think we will hear thee poison the court? "Richard, thou art an old fellow, an old knave; thou hast written books enough to load a cart, every one as full of sedition, I might say treason, as an egg is full of meat. Hadst thou been whipped out of the writing trade forty years ago, it had been happy. . . . Come, what do you say for yourself, you old knave?—come, speak up. What doth he say? I am not afraid of you, for all the snivelling calves you have got about you" (alluding to some persons near Baxter who were in tears). To this tirade Baxter calmly replied, "Your lordship need not, for I'll not hurt you. But these things will surely be understood one day; what fools one sort of Protestants are made to persecute the other." And lifting up his eyes to heaven he added, "I am not concerned to answer such stuff; but am ready to produce my writings for the refutation of all this; and my life and conversation are known to many in this nation."

Before such a tribunal neither mercy nor justice was to be expected. Accordingly, after a furious charge from the Chief-Justice, the jury brought in a

verdict of *guilty*. When sentence came to be pronounced, Jefferies would have had the worn-out old man whipped through the city, but to this the other judges would not accede. The sentence pronounced was that he should pay a fine of 500 marks, lie in prison till he paid it, and be bound to his good behaviour for seven years.

Unable to pay this heavy fine, and knowing, besides, that if he did pay it he would in all probability be soon prosecuted again on some other pretence, Baxter went to prison. Here he continued for two years, at the end of which time he was released, through the intercession, it is said, of Lord Powis. It is probable that James's project of favouring the Papists by procuring indulgence for the Dissenters may have had not a little to do in expediting his release.

During his imprisonment, Baxter had liberty to see his friends, many of whom visited him, and with them several of the conforming clergy, who sympathised with him under the cruel injustice with which he had been treated. In the enjoyment of quiet his spirits revived, and even his bodily health improved, so that when he was liberated he was able to resume preaching. This he did in the pulpit of his friend Sylvester, for whom he officiated gratuitously every Lord's-day morning and every alternate Thursday morning for about four years and a half. His growing infirmities having at length constrained him to relinquish public ministerial service, he still sought to be about his Master's work by opening his house morning and evening to all who were willing to be present at family worship, when he read and expounded a portion of Scripture. This he continued till his strength failed, and he was obliged to keep his bed.

As before so still in the midst of all his troubles, changes, sufferings, and sorrows, his pen continued its work. Between the year 1681 and his death some of his most valuable works were written. In these there are no traces either of decaying vigour or of mental perturbation. They have all the depth and all the fervour of his earlier writings. During the time mentioned the number of his publications was nearly forty. In all, he wrote 169 separate works, large and small, some of which appeared after his death. This represents an amount of work which would be surprising in one man under any circumstances: it becomes absolutely marvellous when we consider that it was done by one who was under almost constant bodily suffering, who was much engaged in public service, who was exposed to continual harassment by persecution, and who had rarely a settled abode for more than a few years at a time.

And now the close of this vexed and toilsome life drew near. It is pleasing to know that in his last days Baxter was in peace and comfort, surrounded by kind friends, who attended to his wants and cheered him with their society. With calm, serene, humble confidence, and meek patience, he awaited the summons of death. Most comfortable to his loving spirit was the thought that he was going to join the General Assembly and Church of the First-born. Without any transports or excited emotion of any kind, he was yet without fear or doubt. He knew in Whom he had believed. When a friend asked him how he felt, his reply was, "Almost well." He was leaving his pains and sicknesses behind, and already felt as if the wholesome air of heaven was breathing health into him. He died on the morning of Tuesday the 8th of December, 1691, having just entered on his 77th year.

The feeling with which one contemplates such a history as that we have briefly sketched, is well expressed by Mr. Orme, the latest and best of Baxter's biographers. "In studying the character of Richard Baxter," says he, "while I would do honour to the man and justice to his talents; while I would speak in the strongest terms of his genius and his eloquence; while I would venerate him as the leader of the noble army of Nonconformist confessors, whose labours and sufferings have secured for them a deathless renown; I would, above all, contemplate him as the MAN of GOD, strong in faith, rich in the fruits of love, and adorned with the beauties of holiness."*

W. L. ALEXANDER.

THOMAS-À-KEMPIS' IMITATION OF CHRIST.

THE greater number even of good religious books disappear with the age that produced them. It was sufficient honour for their authors to have ranked among the teachers of one generation. They may still be found upon the topmost and dustiest shelves of book-collectors, or in the cellars of our national libraries, but they have ceased to exert any appreciable influence on the religious thought and action of posterity. What was most valuable in such writings has probably been assimilated and reproduced in new forms and colours by other minds; what was ephemeral has vanished. This is true of thousands of works to which there was promised, at the time of their appearance, a certain immortality.

But there is a rare class of works, which, after making a profound impression on the age that saw their birth, are found to retain their popularity and power, and some of which after the lapse of centuries are, by means of translations, at this hour extending their intellectual and spiritual dominion. As in the instance of the bones of the old prophet, when the dead body was let down into his grave and was immediately revived by contact with them, so do these books continue to give forth a vitalising influence. When this is the case, it will generally be observed that the work contains an unusual amount of the essential truth of Scripture which operates as a preservative spice or salt; that, along with this, the author

* The Life and Times of Richard Baxter, vol. i. p. 511.

has transfused into it an extraordinary measure of his own individuality and earnestness, of his higher and better self, thus stamping it with originality and freshness; and that genius or high talent, in some of its many forms, is linked to religious thought. As in the example of the antediluvians, the great vital force accounts for the longevity. To this rare class of religious compositions belongs "The Imitation of Christ," by Thomas-à-Kempis.

The earliest edition of this religious treatise carries us back through nearly four centuries, or a hundred years beyond the Reformation. In the intervening ages, it is affirmed to have been translated into sixty different languages, and to have passed through 1800 editions, and probably to have been more read than any other religious book, the Bible alone excepted. And that it has in no degree been indebted to external circumstances connected with its composition for the hold which it retains of human interest, may be concluded from the fact, that its authorship was, for many ages, the subject of as much discussion as that of the celebrated letters of Junius, and that the controversial works which have been expended on this one subject have occupied a hundred times more space than the original work itself. It became a national question between the learned schools of different countries; and universities ranged themselves on the side of opposite claimants. The theologians and literary men of France generally contended that Thomas-à-Kempis was merely the transcriber of the book, and that John Gerson, a famous chancellor of the University of Paris, was its real author. Others put forward the name of John Gersen, whose name has been found attached to one manuscript; but one is strongly tempted to suspect that this is only a slight misnomer for the Chancellor. The German and Flemish writers who entered the lists in this long-pending discussion, declared themselves on the side of À-Kempis, and were ultimately supported by the powerful authority of the Sorbonne. The external evidence on the side of the two principal claimants seems nearly equal; but not to speak of a very distinct line of unbroken tradition, the internal evidence turns the scale in favour of À-Kempis; for Gerson was never the inmate of a monastery, which Thomas-à-Kempis was for seventy years, and the whole composition bears the indubitable mark of monastic life, and evidently comes from the pen of a solitary, though kind-hearted ascetic.

Only the scantiest fragments of information have been gathered regarding the life of this singularly eminent devotional writer. Like some other of our greatest names in literature, he is known almost entirely by his book. He is reported to have been born in the year 1380, at Kempen, a little walled town in the Duchy of Cleves. Beginning his theological studies at the age of thirteen, he assumed the habit of the Augustine monks at the age of twenty-five, joining himself to a society of this Order in the Monastery of Mount St. Agnes, of which he eventually became sub-prior. In this monastery he lived for seventy years, and was distinguished for his humility, his diligent study of the Scriptures, his ascetic severity of life, his moving eloquence of speech, as well as for the length of his vigils and the fervour of his prayers. And it was amid the lonely vigils of Mount St. Agnes, after he had long passed the middle period of human life, that his "Imitation of Christ" was slowly written, originally in the somewhat barbaric Latin, which was the common language of learned devotion in those days.

The title, "The Imitation of Christ," which has evidently been adopted from the first chapter, does not accurately designate the entire work. It might with more propriety be represented as descriptive of the inner life of a good man in his struggles against sin, and his efforts after the highest attainments in sanctity, and as designed, by the meditations and the holy maxims with which it is thickly strewn, to assist and encourage others in similar contemplations and earnest soul-conflicts. In all this, there is much of conscious or unconscious autobiography. We may imagine him, like Savonarola in his cell at Florence,

> With looks commercing with the skies,
> His rapt soul sitting in his eyes.

The whole work, however, is circumscribed by the conditions of a formal and entire separation from the outer world, so that there is scarcely any reference in it to social and domestic duties, proving how inaccurately it has been designated "The Imitation" of Christ, who was reproached by his enemies for the freedom and frequency of his intercourse with men, "the friend of publicans and sinners." But within its own circle, as I have thus described it, as reflecting the earnest aspirations of a devout spirit after the good and pure, the communion of the individual soul with itself and God, this work of À-Kempis is by far the most precious devotional treatise that preceded the great religious literature of the Reformation, at least since the time of the Confessions of St. Augustine. The principle which forms the undertone of the whole composition, is the duty and happiness of the complete subjection of our own will to the divine will; and the quaint lines of Bishop Ken have well expressed its condensed spirit:—

> His will entire, he to God's will resign'd,
> And what pleas'd God, pleas'd his devoted mind.
> Thrice happy saint, remote from haunts of ill;
> Employed in hymn, and dispossess'd of will.

We have touched, in what we have just said, on one principal defect of the work,—a defect clinging indeed to all the devotional literature that is the growth of convents,—that it reflects only the religion of contemplation and solitude. The retirement commended in the teachings of Scripture, and by the example of Christ and his Apostles, is temporary and not perpetual, voluntary and not votive,—retirement in order to intercourse with men, and vigorous and devoted action for God when in the midst of them. John the Baptist was in the desert as the fit preparation for his appearing unto Israel; and Paul retired for a season into Arabia, but it was as part of his divine education for his going forth as the great missionary to the Gentiles. Jeremy Taylor, who wrote in a more favoured age than À-Kempis, has put the case not more happily in language than in discrimi-

nating thought, when he has said, "Solitude is a good school, and the world the best theatre. The institution is best there, the practice here. The wilderness hath the advantage of discipline, but society furnisheth the opportunities of perfection." Had the vigils of À-Kempis been alternated by social intercourse, and the culture of domestic virtue in family life, his piety would not have been less heavenly, but it would have been more human and genial, and would have touched human nature at far more points. The devotion of a monastery, even when like that of Thomas-à-Kempis it is most sincere and ardent, reminds us of a lamp burning in a place where it is abundantly fed with oil, but not duly sustained by a fresh and healthful atmosphere. Open the windows and let in a fuller stream of air, it will not extinguish the lamp, but will certainly make its flame purer and stronger.

Unquestionably, too, this remarkable work is also defective, through not bringing into greater prominence than it does the great central Christian motives and helps to holy living. It would indeed be unjust to À-Kempis to say that they are not there; but for the great purpose that he aims at in his book for himself and others, they are not sufficiently outstanding and diffused. In the place which they occupy, they remind us of the towers of public buildings and the village spires in North Holland, as descried by one when sailing on the Zuyder-Zee, scarcely appearing to rise above the flat surface. À-Kempis deals too exclusively in rules and self-inspection, and in a somewhat too vague and abstract contemplation, when he should be looking forth into the sunlight of divine truths, and laying open his bosom to their life-giving warmth. Compare the joy of Luther's religion with the sombre piety of the Augustinian recluse, and you will soon see the difference. On the one there too often falls the cold shadow of the convent-wall; the other is strong in his evangelical freedom, and his healthy happy spirit seems constantly to live within sound of the song of the angels at Bethlehem. We are even prepared to concede that there are passages in which contrition is tinged with asceticism, in which the author appears to do battle quite as much with the instincts of the creature as with the depravity of the sinner, and in which the self-abnegation which he commends and practises has a nearer affinity to that of Madame Guyon and the Mystics than of Christ and his Apostles.

But when we have made these exceptions, "The Imitation of Christ" remains, in our estimate, a great and wondrous book still, standing out, like all great works, with the stamp of originality upon it, bringing the reader into intimate fellowship with a mind of uncommon natural powers that is aiming after seraphic purity, and elevating him into a region of thought into which it is impossible for a mind of any discrimination and religious susceptibility to pass, without coming forth wiser, humbler, and holier. That book must indeed have rare and solid excellences of some kind, which has kept hold of the interest of Christendom for 400 years.

It is remarkable how few of the characteristic errors of the papal system show themselves in the work. Whether À-Kempis formally rejects them or not, assuredly they do not form the pabulum of his inner life. So much has this been felt by Romanists, that in what professes to be a "Brief Summary of the Four Books of the Imitation of Christ," which we have seen, evidently prepared by some Italian ecclesiastic, a considerable measure of the alloy of Romish doctrine is quietly mixed up with the purer gold of À-Kempis, and the whole treatise dishonestly altered for the worse. It is noticeable regarding the greatest of the old masters in painting, such as Michael Angelo, that when they represent sacred subjects, they shake off, by a kind of instinct, many of the human accretions that have gathered around them, and are much more faithful than inferior painters to the simple Scripture facts; and something like this is true doctrinally in regard to the best of those devotional writers that ante-dated the Reformation. While, far from being uninjured by the superincumbent mass of error, their minds, like the roots of some vigorous tree, appear to have struck down to the richer and purer soil beneath, and to have drawn from it their chief nourishment.

"The Imitation of Christ" has a special value to the thoughtful student of Church history. For along with some other writings that appeared in those ages preceding the great revival of the sixteenth century, in which the simplicity of Christian doctrine was overlaid by the inventions of superstition, or superseded by the icy subtleties of the schoolmen, and vices and abuses of every form had grown rank and shameless within the pale of the visible Church, it proves that there were always men who did not partake of the sins and errors of the apostasy, but whose lives and writings were a constant protest against the surrounding evils. There was, in fact, a Protestantism before the Reformation, a stream of inextinguishable light which can be traced up through the darkness of the worst centuries. Bonaventura did much the same service as Thomas-à-Kempis, and Tauler's sermons and other popular writings, not without a vein of the "true evangel" passing through them and vitalising them, helped to keep from extinction the Church within the Church. God's hidden ones lived upon them in secret; and when the cry at length sounded throughout Europe, "Come out of her, my people," these were the men who first welcomed the sound, and not only stepped forth from their convents into the light of day, but into the intellectual and moral sunlight of a revived and restored Christianity.

We think, moreover, that a work like this has its special uses in times like ours, when the meditative element seems well-nigh excluded from the lives of so many Christians. If religion in those days suffered from a too continuous contemplation, have we not, in our days, passed into an opposite extreme; and while we wisely shun the cloister, do we sufficiently frequent the closet? And, if in one case the waters became stagnant, do they not as certainly in the other case become shallow? It will not do, even for the most strong-winged bird, to be always on the wing. A union of the solitude and self-scrutiny of men like À-Kempis with the action of the present age, would produce a form of Christian character more conformed

to the Bible, and more perfect than either. There never was a period in which it was more needed that Christ should take us into the desert for a while that He may talk with us. Luther's practice of spending the three best hours of every day in solitary devotion, is far more wondered at by good men in these times than imitated. And, one kindred benefit likely to be derived from a discriminating acquaintance with this remarkable book, would be to make us more severe judges of ourselves, and so to feel less at ease and self-complacent; and to show us what so many persons with a Christian name appear to have almost forgotten, that the most intense and real, as well as momentous of all battles, is that which we wage within. The mower has always his whetstone near him when he is mowing; the devout Christian is wise who has the "Imitation of Christ" always within reach, to put a finer edge upon his spirit.

But what I believe has given its principal value to this book in the estimate of multitudes, is the wonderful beauty and heart-searching power of many of its detached sentences; there are barbed sayings in it which pierce you through and through; there are others which refresh you by their suggestiveness; and others still which express familiar truths with a conciseness and beauty that remind you of apples of gold in baskets of silver. You cannot read many pages without pausing over a sentence, as you would over a rare gem in some collection or cabinet. Indeed, there are not a few individual sayings which it would not be difficult to expand into a discourse without undue diffuseness; and we think we could even name sermons of some value with their open blossoms, of which the seed-thought had been found in Thomas-à-Kempis. Let us indulge in a few quotations, such as our own age might profitably ruminate.

"I had rather feel compunction than be able to give the most accurate definition of it." This may serve as a rebuke to the men who are more anxious to appear right than earnest to be righteous.

And the following might be useful as a check on the imprudence of many in these times, who are ever leading forth novices in religion to parade their experience: "How often has the growth of holiness been checked by its being too hastily made known and too highly commended. And how greatly hath it flourished in that humble state of silence and obscurity so desirable in the present life, which is one scene of temptation, one continual warfare."

"It would be but reasonable to expect that the fervour of our affections and our progress in holiness should have advanced higher and higher every day; but it is now thought to be a foundation of comfort and even of boast, if a man at the close of this mortal life is able to retain some degree of his first ardour."

"We must be particularly on our guard against the first assaults of temptation, for the enemy will be more easily subdued if he is resisted in his first approaches and not suffered to enter the portals of our hearts."

When Sir James Stephen says: "A scriptural mind is the best interpreter of Scripture," he only reproduces what our author had written four centuries before: "Every part of the Holy Scriptures must be read by the same spirit by which it was written."

And when he thus counsels us, "In the morning and in the evening examine thy behaviour, what thou hast that day been in thought, word, or deed; for in all these, perhaps, thou hast offended God and thy brother," we are thankful to holy Herbert for having turned the vigorous prose into quaint verse,—

> Sum up at night what thou hast done by day;
> And in the morning what thou hast to do.
> Dress and undress thy soul, mark the decay
> And growth of it: if, with thy watch, that too
> Be down, then wind up both; since we shall be
> Most surely judged, make thy accounts agree.

When again he remarks that "it is unprofitable and vain to be dejected or elevated by the anticipation of that which may never come to pass;—what other effect doth thy extreme anxiety about the events of to-morrow produce than the accumulation of anguish upon anguish?"—we are reminded of Howe's denunciation of the utter folly of "causing ourselves to suffer a thousand times beforehand in imagination, what we may only be called to suffer once in reality." The following sentences reflect much of the spirit of the whole book: "When self is once overcome, the conquest of every other evil will be easy. This is the true victory, this is the glorious triumph of the new man! And he whose sensual appetite is kept in continual subjection to his spirit, and his spirit in continual subjection to the will of Christ, he is this mighty conqueror of himself and the lord of the whole world."

These are a few samples of those wedges of gold, those sayings of sanctified wisdom with which the treasury of this ancient book is replenished. It would not, indeed, be very difficult to bring forth other sayings to which we could not give an unqualified approval, and some from which we must entirely dissent. But Thomas-à-Kempis must be judged by the circumstances in the midst of which he lived, and which cast their influence upon him; and so judged, he will be a man wondered at. Had he flourished in the more favourable times which followed the Reformation, the greatest imperfections of his book would have been absent. He would still, indeed, have been the man of meek-eyed contemplation. We can imagine him in England, in the days of the Commonwealth or of the Restoration, finding congenial spirits in such men as George Herbert or Bishop Ken, walking with Jeremy Taylor in his half exile on the shores of Lough Neagh, and even visiting the humble dwelling of the great Puritan, John Howe, listening for hours to his divine philosophy, and thanking him a thousand times for his great work, in which the highest forms of human thought blend so richly with meditative devotion: "A Good man is the Temple of God."

ANDREW THOMSON.

A PRAYER.

ETERNAL Son of God, most high,
To Thee I raise my voice, my cry;
My supplication hear:
Of God true God, and Light of light,
Disperse the shadows of the night,
And let the day appear.

Behold, the night is now withdrawn,
The day appears with lovely dawn,
And spreads its purple round:
The woods, and fields, and flocks rejoice;
The birds awake with grateful voice,
And all harmonious sound.

Yet shades of ignorance cloud my breast;
With mists of error still opprest,
It longs for clearer day;
Arise, O purest Light! arise,
Remove the gloom which dims my eyes,
My darkness chase away.

Dissolve the cold which chills my heart,
The warming beams of light impart,
Enliven every power:
Oh! let the dew of grace distil;
My soul with heavenly virtues fill
And guard it every hour.

G. B.

A VERY REMARKABLE DINNER-TABLE.

HAD the Apostle James seen such a sight as a band of invalids and poor sick children cared for and fed in a large and crowded city, he would undoubtedly have been delighted, and most likely would have adduced it as an example to those whom he reminds that sending away a starving brother without giving him that which is needful for the body, doth not profit (James ii. 15, 16). Certainly the soul is more than the body, and the life is more than meat; and he who supposes that he has done the highest service by giving a poor man a good dinner, ought to look again at the Lord's Prayer, which shows by the order of petitions that daily bread is not the first thing to be asked for. But, on the other hand, the fact that it is one of the petitions, shows that bodily food stands in close connection with man's highest spiritual concerns. It is quite true that you cannot serve God without faith; but it is equally true that you cannot serve Him without food. Experience has taught that continuous scantiness of food, as a rule, is as injurious to man's spiritual life as continuous excess. It is very well to preach the Gospel to the poor, but there are many poor people upon whose hearts your words fail to take effect, because their bodies lack the commonest nourishment. Those Christians who advocate teetotalism aver that drinking must be abandoned before the Gospel can do its work. This statement may be questioned by some, but I do not scruple to aver that the pangs of hunger must be satisfied before any good can come of spiritual teaching.

To feed and clothe the poor so that they may be the better for your charity, is not an easy task. An indiscriminate run of free dinners may be made a very hurtful thing to the poor themselves. There is a vast number of the lowest class who do not care for work. Their number would increase tenfold if they were made sure of their dinner being provided for them.

The founder of "The Invalids' Dinner Table," G. M. Hicks, Esq., was fully convinced of these truths when he started the little institution at Woburn Buildings. "This," he wrote in a circular, "is not an attempt to feed the poor of a district, any more than it is to relieve all the idle vagrants who prey upon the charitably disposed of every neighbourhood." He perceived the true character of Christian charity as distinguished from communistic philanthropy or mere sentimental compassion. Desirous as charity is of lessening the heavy burden that presses upon the shoulders of the poor, it tries at the same time to increase their strength for bearing the burden. This certainly cannot be effected by taking it from their shoulders altogether. The poor must know that to them as well as to the rich it is said "that every man shall bear his own burden" (Gal. iv. 5). If from some reason or other the poor man's strength

proves unequal to the weight he has to carry, charity will step in, but only to give him time and opportunity to gain more strength. The end which true charity always aims at is to make those whom it succours independent of its help as quickly as possible. "We have helped you now," said Ambrosius, the bishop of Milan, to the poor whom he had assisted from the church funds—"we have helped you now, hoping that you will never come to us again for help, but that others will go to you."

One of Mr. Hicks's circulars bears the heading: "Help the poor to help themselves." There are poor people who would rather help themselves than be helped, but who from some reason or other find themselves at the foot of a steep hill which they cannot get over without a lift from a friendly hand. Such a hill is sickness. It not only deprives the poor man at once of his bread, but also of the power to earn it for many days. The hospital provides him with everything he wants, as long as he is within its walls. Sad cares for his wife and family, whom he left without support, disturb his mind and retard his recovery. Still, the thought comforts him that he himself at least is no burden to them, and he hopes that, what with being helped by friends and relatives, and what with doing some work herself, his good wife will manage to get through during his absence. But that consolation is taken from him when, by-and-by, the physician declares him to be cured, and he leaves the house. Here begins the most trying period in the poor man's life. It is true he is *cured*, but he is not *restored*. He is still as weak as a child. Glad as he is at being spared to return to his wife and children, yet he walks, or rather staggers home with a depressed spirit. Instead of being a support to his good wife, he will for some time to come be a burden to her, for he cannot with his weak body begin to work again. What he wants now is good substantial food, which, under God's blessing, would bring him round again soon. But where to obtain it? At home he expects to find a family as much in need of a good dinner as himself, and alas! as little able to get it. No wonder that these reflections sadly mar his happy feeling at his recovery, for he sees himself now on the edge of that inclined plane which hurries the honest poor down to the abyss of pauperism.

The painful position in which such convalescent working people find themselves, attracted the attention and sympathy of a benevolent Christian lady as early as the year 1859. She particularly desires her name to be unknown, but it ought at least to be known, that "The Poor Invalids' Dinner-Table" which she established in November, 1859, and which is now located at 66, Earl Street, Lisson Grove, N.W., was the first charity of that kind founded in London. It provided about 5000 substantial hot meals in two years. It not only excited the admiration, but also the imitation of other benevolent persons, and a second "dinner-table" was spread to the poor invalids in 1861, at 65, Upper Ebury Street, Pimlico; which was soon followed by a third one at 5, Poplar Place, Moscow Road, Bayswater. That at Pimlico provided not less than 5798 dinners in the first year of its existence.

Mr. Hicks was the fourth whose sympathy with the poor led him to address himself to a work of this kind. Tavistock Square, the place of his residence, and the neighbouring squares, do not seem places in whose vicinity much poverty could be found. Still, you have only to walk a few steps across Euston Road, and you will find yourself in a labyrinth of back streets, lanes, closes, passages, and courts, crowded with working and non-working people from the basements up to the fourth and fifth stories. Half a mile south of Tavistock Square are the dens of St. Giles, and a little towards the south-east are the shambles and rag stores of Clare Market, and between these again is Drury Lane, with its horrible-looking closes branching off right and left. If a dinner-table were to be spread for all the poor invalids of these neighbourhoods, I believe that many of the squares between Oxford Street and Euston Road would be filled.

It was not an easy matter to find a suitable place in this district large enough to admit a good number of guests at a time, and so respectably located that it could be visited by gentlewomen with propriety. At length, about the close of 1861, Mr. Hicks was so fortunate as to find a room on the ground floor of a house in Woburn Buildings, together with the basement, which served for a kitchen. It was hired for 10*s.* a week. A respectable woman was found, who, as matron, would superintend the preparing of the food, and the attendance of the guests. Furniture was bought both for the room and the kitchen. And thus Mr. Hicks and his kind-hearted partner in life, who is not second to him in zeal for this good cause, were able to commence a work of charity by which as many as 13,300 poor invalids, and 2700 poor sick children, have already enjoyed the blessings of a nutritious well-prepared dinner, or of various other comforts as prescribed by their doctors.

Woburn Buildings is a quiet, respectable-looking little thoroughfare, the entrance to which is from Euston Square. Walking a few yards up the street, you notice on your right hand a broad window, on which are the words, "The Invalids' Dinner-Table." You open the glass door, and you find yourself at once in the dining-room. It is an oblong place, measuring about 30 feet by 14. There is plenty of light, for there is a broad window in the back as well as in the front of the room. But you wonder how there can be sufficient room here for from 30 to 40 guests, and for the ladies who come to distribute the food and speak a kind word to the poor sufferers. Nor would it have been possible to find sufficient space for all this, had not a mechanical contrivance helped them out. This was the first dining-room I ever saw, in which there was no dinner-table. Not that the guests hold their plates on their knees. They place them on a broad board before them, which being covered with a white table-cloth, looks like a table, but is in reality the back of the form upon which they are sitting, which is by means of two iron bars connected with the form in such a manner,

that if turned one way it lies horizontally before the faces of the people, and if turned the other, stands perpendicularly behind their backs. Thus this wonderful board may be looked upon as symbolic of the double object of the place, now offering food to the hungry, and again offering support to the infirm. The room is brightened up here and there by pictures hanging on the walls. The benevolent visitor who enters the place, is reminded by an inscription opposite the door that "Blessed is he that considereth the poor and the needy;" and the guests are told by another inscription on the wall that they are cordially "welcome" to their repast. Next to the door is a large glass case, containing a miniature representation of a fish-pond, surrounded by rocky scenery, and throwing up little jets of water from its centre. While these pleasing objects gratify the sight, the ear is regaled by melodious tunes which from time to time sound forth from a musical box.

Thus Christian love proves ingenious in contriving what may promote both the health of the sufferer and the comfort of the poor. Nor is the opportunity neglected of reminding them of the one thing needful. At the close of the dinner, a portion of Scripture is read, and as the place is open to the poor of all denominations, it is left optional to every one either to stay or to withdraw.

The "Dinner-table" is intended for invalids, but the term is broadly interpreted, and includes aged infirm people, and indeed all who are past work. To prevent as much as possible the intrusion of such as do not deserve support, no guest is admitted without a ticket. These tickets are sold at forty for one guinea to parties known to Mr. Hicks and his friends. Many tickets, however, are presented to district visitors, Bible women, and charitable societies. The invalid who is favoured with such a ticket, has to bring it to the matron at nine o'clock the next morning; and she, according to the number of tickets thus received, prepares the dinners, which are to be ready at half-past twelve. The tickets which those persons hand in are white. Each of them entitles the bearer to a plentiful meal, consisting of bread, meat and vegetables, and a mug of porter; or, if the latter should not be taken, to a double allowance of bread. And provision is also made for such invalids as are too ill to attend. They send in a green ticket, and their dinner is sent to their homes. When I visited the place, at dinner time, I saw women, boys, and girls coming in with baskets to get them filled with the desired nourishment for their home-bound invalid relatives. Nay, whatever is required to restore the invalid to full health and vigour is supplied if ordered by the doctor. A red ticket provides the holder with medical comforts, such as sherry, port, brandy, beef-tea, arrowroot, &c., the value of which, however, must not exceed sixpence.

Now it must be observed that if you take forty tickets for a guinea, one shilling goes to the printing expenses of the tickets, &c., while the full amount of the remaining twenty shillings is given in food, without any deduction whatever for rent or management. That is to say, you may rest assured that the poor invalid to whom you give a sixpenny ticket really receives its full value in food. Nay, it appears from the balance-sheets that each ticket costs Mr. Hicks a halfpenny more, viz.:—

The Wine-merchant's account	. .	$\frac{3}{4}d.$
,, Baker's	,, . .	$\frac{1}{2}$
,, Brewer's	,, . .	$\frac{1}{2}$
,, Butcher's	,, . .	$3\frac{1}{2}$
,, Greengrocer's	,, . .	$\frac{1}{2}$
,, Oilman's	,, . .	$\frac{1}{2}$
,, Coal-merchant's	,, . .	$\frac{1}{4}$
		$6\frac{1}{2}d.$

Mr. Hicks's system requires, however, that his poor guest pay something. He must add twopence out of his own pocket to every ticket which he hands to the matron. From these twopences the rent of the house, the salaries of the officials, &c., are paid. Of course, if you find that the poor invalid whom you desire to benefit with a ticket is not able to pay even so much as twopence, you may supply him from your own pocket; but this should be done as seldom as possible, being against the principle of the system. Mr. Hicks has shown a correct insight into the nature of true charity, as well as a real knowledge of the character of the poor, by requiring them to submit to a small sacrifice on their own behalf. Experience has shown that poor people, on the whole, never appreciate what costs them nothing. They think they may safely waste that which they have obtained so cheap and so easily. Support wholly gratuitous is apt to make them careless, inert, and ungrateful, inasmuch as it tacitly implies a declaration on your part that you consider themunable to do any thing whatever for themselves. If, on the contrary, you show that you expect them to do *something*, you raise their self-esteem and stir their energy. You say to them as it were: "*I* will provide you the food, but *you* must pay for the cooking of it. There is not an infinite distance between you and me, as if I were everything and you were nothing; but we join hands together as friends and fellow labourers for one and the same good object."

The excellent effect which this dinner-table produced upon the invalids who enjoyed it, was soon noticeable. It was found not only that many a convalescent workman was speedily enabled to resume his work, but that many an invalid was actually restored to health,—a good substantial meal having proved the best possible medicine that could be given to him. This good result led Mr. Hicks to turn his attention to the sick children of the poor. He resolved some eighteen months ago to add a dinner-table for these little folks to that of the adults. It was not a new idea, however, for several years previously the Hygienic Institution of France had recommended dinners for poor children, expecting the best results, even though they should be given only at intervals of many days. And the celebrated French poet, Victor Hugo, had carried the suggestion into practice in the Island of Guernsey. And following his example, a poor child's dinner-table was opened at Clare Market Colonnade, London. Then other little dinner-tables sprang up here and there, making Victor Hugo rejoice, and in-

ducing him to write as follows :—"I am glad to see that my poor little mustard-seed germinates and springs up. My seed is a trifle, but your crops are excellent. I have sown it ; you cultivate it that it may bear fruit. I congratulate you, and I thank you for the poor. I have pledged myself before my own conscience to try the means which were indicated to me as conducive towards curing and preventing disease—I have succeeded. The health of my forty little ones progresses encouragingly," &c.

Mr. Hicks's plan met with the most cordial sympathy of his friends. The Rev. Canon Champneys, vicar of the parish, one of his staunchest allies in his work, wrote : "I know enough of the circumstances of the poor to be satisfied that an occasional good and substantial meal to their children would be a great boon and real good. I have made it my business to inquire into the causes why so many poor children are in bodily growth so far below their age, and in constitutional stamina often so weak that disease, when once it gets hold of them, so rapidly and fatally prostrates them. I am satisfied that among other causes deficient food, and especially the want of animal food, tends to create this state of body. I have no doubt whatever that a good meal of meat, if only once a week, would be a material help to them, and assist to form their constitutions, and to prepare them as they grow up for that work which must be their maintenance. I heartily wish success to this important addition to the Invalids' Dinner-Table. It is indeed a valuable leaf added to that already useful Table."

The children's dinners are twice a week—on Monday and Thursday, at five minutes before twelve. They end at half-past twelve, when the dinner for the adults begins. It is a pity that the children's dinners are a little in the way of those of the adults. Fewer of the latter come on those days, as they do not like to wait till the children are done. But this cannot be helped for the present, want of space making it impossible to appropriate a separate room for the children. It was an affecting and yet cheering sight to witness some thirty of those poor little creatures merrily waging war with knife and fork against everything eatable on their well-filled plates. In the back part of the room, Mrs. Hicks and a few other ladies were busily engaged distributing the meat which the servant brought up from the kitchen. The musical-box chimed in with its cheerful tunes. There was more perfect order than could have been expected in any school. What struck me particularly was the cleanness of the children's hands. "Do you get them to wash their hands before they come to the table ?" I asked Mrs. Hicks. "By no means," was the answer ; "but when a child comes with dirty hands, one of the ladies, in a gentle way, speaks to it, and we find that that is sufficient to make it come tidy afterwards." The appearance of the little guests was really that of poor and invalid children. The dress of many a one was very torn and ragged. Many a one, too, looked very pale and feeble. But the eager appetite with which they emptied their plates showed that here they were under the medical treatment they stood most in need of.

The children's tickets cost only fourpence, and they only pay one penny towards the working expenses. The balance-sheet, however, shows that here again each ticket costs Mr. Hicks more than fourpence. During the eighteen months of the existence of the institution, 2700 dinners have been given to poor sick children.

The sympathy which this little charity at Woburn Buildings meets with among the friends of the poor, may be seen from the numbers who have subscribed for tickets or favoured the institution with donations. Their number amounted to nearly one hundred in 1864. They purchased no less than 5075 tickets, of which 1788 were sent in by the clergy of the district, 472 by the hospital of the district, 131 by medical gentlemen, 522 by the Bible Mission of the district, and 679 by societies for relieving the poor.

"And is this the only place where you get a hot dinner, or do you also have one at home sometimes ?" I asked a poor man of about thirty, whose pale emaciated countenance showed that he had just recovered from a severe illness.

"I never have one at home, sir. My wife is dead, and I have four little children."

"Ay," said an old woman of seventy, "you will be glad if you have a piece of bread for 'em, I'm sure. There is no thinking of such a thing as having a dinner at home for people like us, sir."

"Then you haven't one either, I suppose ?"

"Not on weekdays, sir. I'm alone. I have no children. I go out every day for a job. I am a charwoman, but I am too old. People want young, strong persons, you see. But the servants sometimes allow me to do a little bit of work for them for a penny or two and a piece of bread. I always try to save enough to buy a few bones at the butcher's on Saturday evening, and have 'em cooked on Sunday. But it isn't much, sir."

An old woman was standing bashfully in the doorway. On noticing me she dropped a curtsey. Seeing that she had not the courage to come forward, I beckoned her to take her place at the table. There was plenty of room, for there were not many guests that day. She had come rather late, and waited patiently like a child till the good matron placed her dinner before her. She looked round, as if inquiring whether there was anybody to say grace ; but perceiving that she had come too late for that, she rose, and, lifting her folded hands upward, said with an audible voice : "We praise Thee, O God our Heavenly Father, for this blessing, and for all the other blessings which Thou givest us from time to time, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Was it for show she did this ? Was she an old hypocrite ? It seemed not so, for all was done with the greatest possible simplicity, and there was an expression of truth on her honest-looking face which greatly pleased me. I thought I would put a few questions to her about her prayer—but no, I changed my mind. I just looked round the room as if I had taken no notice of the prayer at all. Then, after a few minutes, I resumed my conversation with the other woman who told me that she was seventy-one.

"And what is your age?" I asked of the woman who had said grace.

"Sixty-nine, sir; if the Lord spares my life, I shall be seventy at Christmas."

"Have you a hot dinner at home sometimes?" I asked.

"Oh no, sir, never," she answered with a smile, evidently amused by the contrast between the reality and my supposition.

"Have you any children?"

"I have, but they are married and poor like myself, and live a far distance away. I have been a widow for these last fifteen years. I have earned my bread by selling toys at the houses. And I am trying to do so still. You see my basket over there under the bench. But I am getting too old now. I cannot walk now as far as Camberwell, and Kingsland, and Stoke Newington. There is many a day I do not earn more than a penny or twopence. Then I buy a ha'p-orth of coffee and a ha'p-orth of bread. That's a penny, sir. And that's sometimes all I get a-day."

"That's not too much, certainly," I said. "I wonder you look so well then."

"The Lord sustains me, sir. I always find, when I am hungry, that prayer has a wonderful effect. It takes away my hunger. I say to the Lord; 'Now Thou knowest what I am. Thou hast made me. Thou canst give me bread or make me that I don't want it.' And then, sir, I always feel fresh strength to go on."

These words of the good woman, uttered in all the simplicity of a child-like faith, struck me. I never witnessed such an illustration of the text: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God."

"Do you know that there is a glorious supper for you in prospect?" I asked.

She understood directly what I was alluding to. It was not a strange subject to her mind.

"Yes, I know," she answered, with a beam of joy on her face. "It won't be long before I see it, sir. I am nearly seventy now. The Lord will not leave me long here. What a blessing it is, sir, to know that there is a rest for the people of God!"

Other guests came in. I inquired of the matron about this woman.

"I believe she is a very good woman," she said; "but exceedingly destitute. I often saw her in winter standing, basket on arm, in the snow. To tell the truth, she has no right to be here, for she brought no ticket. But I made up a plate for her from the little bits which the children left yesterday. And she is as thankful for it as if it were the richest dinner in the world, poor thing."

I did not ask to what denomination the woman belonged: Mr. Hicks, though himself a "thorough Churchman," has made the basis of his work as wide as possible. "Charity," he said to me, "admits, in my view, of no distinction of creed, and I have done my utmost to enlist the sympathies of all classes in the common bond of helping others."

This is the true Gospel spirit. And if anyone wishes to see what a source of blessing and comfort a man influenced by that spirit may be to the poor and the sick, the languid child and the feeble grey-headed man, let him pay a visit to the Invalids' Dinner Table at Woburn Buildings, St. Pancras.

JOHN DE LIEFDE.

A FLY-LEAF.

MRS. BERTRAND was very much like almost all the other women in her village, her district, I might almost say her county—not to speak of the whole world—for, in point of fact, women do resemble each other much more closely than you might suppose at first sight; and, as for that, so do men. Outward differences of rank merely exercise an external influence,—at bottom the heart is the same in peasant and in prince.

Mrs. Bertrand, then, had lived the life of women of her class in general. As a child she had loved dolls, and played at dressing herself out; as a young girl she had gone to dance on the village green, to laugh with her friends, to listen to the neighbours' gossip, which was often of a very unedifying character; and as a married woman she had brought up four children, and expended during that process no small amount of scolding, slaps, and strong language. With her husband she had of course had sundry little squabbles, but nothing more. For the rest she had been a very industrious woman, putting by a few shillings every year in the bottom of an old stocking kept in a corner of an old cupboard, the key of which was carefully concealed.

She had never been in the habit of borrowing from her neighbours, having observed that two generally played at that game, and that, where one had things of one's own, it was much better to make them suffice than to run the risk of having them borrowed in their turn. In her household everything showed economy, except indeed a little personal finery. She had a tendency to boast of having so many gowns, so many sacks of corn—only the fund of shillings never got talked of, her husband knowing nothing of it. Hers was a vanity tempered by avarice. One little incident will help to the understanding of her character. She had had left to her certain silver forks and spoons. She never dreamed of using them: to use them, would be to wear them out. She would gladly have turned them into money; but then, besides the probability that the silversmith would cheat her, she had been warned that she would get nothing for them but the mere weight of the metal. Thus finding herself as it were forced to keep them, she determined at least to turn them to some purpose by displaying them, and so enhancing her own importance; and consequently they were arranged on the chimneypiece behind a grating, and she took great delight in showing them off. But then, again, came the fear of tempting burglars by such an open appearance of wealth, and this led her to repeat her own triumph by invariably saying to admiring gazers: "Aye, they're very fine

are they not? but don't go and fancy that they are real silver."

As she grew old, Mrs. Bertrand determined to take care of her spiritual interests. She had long been in the habit of attending church and going through the forms of religion. But all this had cost her next to nothing, and she thought that the time was now come when she must really make a few more serious sacrifices to secure heaven.

One day a stranger turned in for some refreshment (the Bertrands kept a public-house) and fell a chatting with her husband. The good woman dosed asleep, and chanced to dream of that very paradise that she had been planning to make sure of. She dreamed that she was dead, but felt just as well as usual, and was on a journey from earth to heaven, during which she thought over all that she was likely to find in her new abode. Already her imagination pictured to her a great and magnificent palace, in which there was room for an immense crowd. A venerable form was seated on a throne of gold, in a vast hall containing long tables set out with a sumptuous repast. Everything was the very best! One could sit long at that festival, and one's appetite never failed; and meanwhile wondrous things took place, impossible to describe—suns, stars, passed, like a display of fireworks, before wondering eyes. After that the inhabitants tranquilly reposed on soft silken couches, gorgeously attired in jewels. In short, there was everything there that heart could wish—songs, music, plays, promenades, dances, feasts; everything, in short, that one had longed for while on earth, only all were far more beautiful now, and, besides, they were to last for ever! Such was the heaven that Mrs. Bertrand kept picturing to herself in her dream while journeying on towards heaven. At last she got there, and, oh! lamentable surprise! she found nothing, absolutely nothing, that she expected to find. She asked for something to eat. An angel replied, that in heaven "they hunger no more." She called her husband. A seraph informed her that in eternity there is neither marriage nor giving in marriage, but that all are as the angels. She heard singing, and felt inclined to join; but discovered that they were chanting the very hymns she had found so tedious on earth. She drew near to a group of the blessed, and they were praying. She showed herself, did all she could to attract attention: not a glance was turned towards her, all were absorbed in the praises of the Lord. She tried to speak of what she had left behind in the world—of her house, her wealth, her plate: no one listened to her. Although all the inhabitants of heaven seemed happy, not one had the least sympathy with her, and very soon she found out that she was quite out of place. Everyone there was occupied with something external to self: she cared for self only. Everyone was made happy by sacrifice and devotion: she had no taste for any but personal enjoyment. The glory of God absolutely effacing all other glory, even Mrs. Bertrand's, she was thoroughly bored, and her only anxiety was to get away. Her disappointment actually woke her, and she was no less surprised than relieved to find herself on earth, in her own house, with her silver plate shining safe opposite to her, and by the side of her husband, to whom the stranger before mentioned was talking on religious subjects.

"As I have before pointed out to you," said the latter to Mr. Bertrand, "even if God were willing to admit you into heaven, you, in your present state, would decline to enter. Do you suppose that people eat and drink in heaven? Not so: immortal bodies have no need for nourishment. Do you expect that your praises will be sung there, your wealth talked about? By no means. If you are praised in the world, it is by some one who does not know you well; if your riches excite attention, it is only because they are envied by others. But what would be the use of them in heaven, where the saints have need of nothing? No: to love our brethren, to adore our God, to contemplate his glory, obey his commands, and live holily in his sight—these are the joys of Paradise. Now you see plainly that these pleasures do not suit your taste, and, as I have before said, even were God willing to bestow them on you, you could not know what to make of them."

"But if so," chimed in Mrs. Bertrand, thoroughly awake, "what is the use of making so many sacrifices on earth in order to gain heaven?"

"Of no use; for those sacrifices are with you mere matter of calculation: you want to purchase heaven in exchange for a few trumpery shillings! This is a mockery, an insult. God is not a broker, as you make Him out to be. What need has He of your silver and gold? That which He demands is your heart, and your heart is just what you cannot give Him."

"Why not?"

"Because you have already given it to Satan."

"How so?"

"By your avarice, your vanity, your love of self-indulgence, which is sin."

"Why, by your account, I am one of the reprobate."

"No doubt of it, if you continue as you are now."

"What must I do, then?"

"First of all, you must confess that you are absolutely worthless, and that to the present day all your works have been prompted solely by selfishness or fear."

"How—my charities even?"

"Yes, your charities; you have only bestowed them through dread of perdition."

"Then, according to you, I have done nothing good?"

"Nothing!"

"What must I do, then?"

"You must repent, pray, cry for mercy, till God takes compassion upon you. When you have sincerely confessed your sins, when you have wept over them, when you believe yourself lost, then it is that Jesus will come and save you, for He himself has said that He is come to seek and to save the lost. Now, do you believe yourself lost?"

"Not exactly."

"Very well, then, you are not one of those that Jesus came to seek."

"But for all that——"

"No: since you are not lost, there is no need that you should be saved."

"Still——"

"No: for Jesus himself has declared, 'I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.'"

"But yet——"

"No, no: since you are so good, a Saviour cannot be necessary for you."

"But I must own to you that I begin to think all this is well worth thinking about."

"No doubt it is, and, above all, well worth praying about. Whosoever seeketh findeth, not fortune indeed, but salvation; and to him that knocketh there is opened, not a palace, but heaven; for salvation and heaven are not of men, but of God."

N. Roussel.

THE GRACE OF HOPE.

Sister to Faith and Love! sweet grace,
I woo thee to my breast;
O come, and, with thy lovely face,
Smile all my fears to rest.
For, sooth to tell, thine influence well
Can cheer the mind oppress'd;
And I, indeed, that influence need,
For I am much distress'd.

Yes, thou art fair, and much I love
To dwell in peace with thee;
Then come, and never hence remove
Till I shall cease to be.
When I depart, this beating heart
No more will need thine aid,
But will, I trust, join yonder host
Of just men, perfect made.

In vain my feeble heart would strive
To sing the joys of heaven;
Eyes cannot see, nor hearts conceive,
The pleasures God hath given.
But this we know, God will bestow
A store immensely great,
In realms of bliss, where Jesus is,
And endless, glorious state.

O grant to me, my gracious Lord,
This grace, this hope divine;
And let me feel my heart assured
That I indeed am thine.
Most cheerfully my days will fly,
When Hope the hours shall gild;
My parting breath, in pangs of death,
Shall bless Thy mercy mild. S.

THE STORY OF NAIN.

(*From a newly-discovered Manuscript of Edward Irving's.*)

Our Lord having fulfilled his commission to the town and neighbourhood of Capernaum, where He had done many mighty works, and held many doctrinal and instructive discourses, both in the synagogue and in the open plain, passed on to another corner of the great harvest-field, which is the world, there also to scatter the seed of life eternal. And most like to a traveller bound on a celestial message to the souls of men, He hastened to another town, where He might have numerous audiences of the people, and large scope for his ministry of health to the bodies and his ministry of salvation to the souls of men. In this, as in everything else, He should be the example of his ministering servant, to whom the scenes of silent nature, with all their picturesque beauty and sublime grandeur, should be as nothing, and all the sentimental musings which are sung and said over them should be as the voice of the idle wind which sighs among their solitudes, while he hastens on to the dwellings of immortal souls, to populous villages and the sickly alleys of crowded cities, to impart to the famished and perishing people the word of life with which he is commissioned from the Prince of Life. A man, the countenance of a man, though it be fierce and savage as the rough wilderness and hard as the flinty rock—the countenance of an immortal man is the true scene to awaken the lively emotion of a minister of Christ. Thereto let him address his weightiest discourse; over that image of God in ruins let his melancholy musings wander; to repair that wreck, let him

Drawn by F. W. Lawson. Engraved by W. J Linton.

Sister to Faith and Love ! sweet grace,
I woo thee to my breast ;
O come, and, with thy lovely face,
Smile all my fears to rest.

bring his heavenly means; and to quicken it with divine life, let him prophesy from morn to eve.

In one day our Lord journeyed on foot from Capernaum to Nain—a distance, I should judge, from the best information I can obtain, of not less than twenty or thirty miles, attended by many of his disciples and much people. For we know, that as He went along his custom was to drop into the ears of the people words of wisdom, and parables containing the deep mysteries of his kingdom, so that the multitude followed Him to hear and learn more of his doctrine and to witness larger demonstrations of his power. He had not yet ventured to expound unto these Galileans the mystery of eating his flesh and drinking his blood which scattered them abroad; the first feeling of curiosity still lay fresh upon their minds; their hope that He would fulfil their idea of Messiah still lingered in their hearts; He had not discovered the unworldliness of his kingdom, and the spirituality of his discipline, and they pressed on his heels in multitudes and hung upon his lips with earnestness.

And never until Christ come again shall men have such evidence of the divinity of their Teacher, as was prepared for this company which attended his journey from Capernaum to Nain. For the Father, in consideration of the weakness of their faith, had prepared a scene whereby to glorify his Son in their sight, and in the sight of the people of the plain to which He came; and, that He might be received with due honour into the town, it was done without the gate, in the presence of a great concourse of the townsmen.

Amongst the Jews in those times, as in Eastern countries still, the cemeteries of the dead were generally without the walls of the town, because from the great respect which they paid to the bodies of the dead, and from certain superstitious notions concerning the resurrection, they were careful not to molest for a long time the graves of the departed; so that their burying-grounds were of much larger extent than ours, and not included within the walls of fenced towns. Another custom also is necessary to be known, concerning the habit in which they bore the body to its long home. The bier was borne upon the shoulders of men, and upon it lay the corpse of the deceased, attired in its grave-clothes, with the face exposed to view until it came to the place of burial, which by the Jews was called the house of the living. Then the lid of the coffin was nailed down, and the body consigned to the earth, with many words and acts significant of the resurrection, concerning which it is not needful to speak particularly.

As the Lord approached the gate of the city with the multitude of disciples and followers who had borne Him company from Capernaum or joined Him by the way, they were carrying forth to the common burying-ground the body of a young man, the only son of his mother, who was a widow, and much people of the city was with her. It is the severest trial which death can inflict, the death of an only son. To a widowed mother it is doubly severe, and to a mother in Israel the shock was embittered manifold. For in Israel, to have a son was to have a personal interest in the Promised Seed; and to be without a son was to be cut off from that sweetest, noblest expectation. Upon the deceased youth all the affections of a mother's heart had centered, and in him all the widowed affections of a wife had taken refuge, with which the religious feelings of maternal dignity had entwined themselves; and he had grown up to manhood under her anxious, careful eye. From their attendance, we may judge he was highly honoured and beloved of his townsmen; and haply the mother was entering into the honours and occupations of her son, forecasting many a scheme of maternal fondness, living in him and living for him, and in him renewing the hopes of her youth,—when at once the staff of her age is taken away, and the consolation of her widowhood is cut off, and her memorial is perished from the earth, and the glorious hope of a mother in Israel is gone from her for ever, and she is left forsaken and forlorn. The Lord saw her as she went weeping by the bier of the deceased; He needed no interpreter of her sad calamity, and her sad calamity needed no advocate in his breast. "When He saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And He came and touched the bier: and they that bare it stood still." A moment of great wonder and awful surprise to the mother, the mourners, and the multitude. They are stopped in their short and solemn journey by a stranger, who forbids the bereaved mother to weep, and lays his hand upon the bed whereon the body of the deceased reposed. Fit prelude of tenderness and dignity to the mighty act which follows, and ready summons to the attention of the multitude; which being held in mute amazement and swelled in deep expectation of what was to follow, the Creator and Lord of life, and the Redeemer from death, then gave forth his solemn word into the ear which had been for days sealed by death: "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise!" The lifeless clay heard the voice of the Word of God, and arose. That which was numbered with the clods of the valley was again numbered with the sons of living men. The ear stopped by death awoke to the voice of man, and the eye sealed by death opened to the light of heaven, and the stiffened joints resumed their living power, and the bloom of health reanimated the pale clay, and the soul from its unknown sojourn came back to its desert habitation, to possess it once more with quickening life,—all at the bidding of a man, of one of the sons of men. But he cannot be of the sons of men whose voice could speak to things that are not, as though they were. That was not the voice of man which the disinherited clay and the disembodied soul at once obeyed. It was the same Voice which said, "Let there be light, and there was light"—the Power by which all things were created out of nothing, in whom is life, and who came to destroy death and him that had the power of death, and who said concerning Himself, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of man; and they that hear shall live;" "For as the Father hath life Himself, so shall He give the Son to have life in Himself."

There are two such mighty acts recorded in the

Old Testament: one done by the hand of Elijah upon the widow of Zarephath's only son, who gave him harbour when Israel afforded him none; the other done by the hands of Elisha upon the only son of the Shunamite woman, who made for the Prophet a chamber in the wall, and entertained him with bread so oft as he passed on his way. These two acts of raising the dead were done by prayer unto God, and in dependence upon his divine power, and are to be regarded as singular dispensations of his grace, whereby He rewarded the singular kindness of those two women unto his servants, and magnified the Prophets in their sight and in the sight of all the people. There is another instance mentioned in the book of Acts, wherein Peter, after kneeling down and praying, raised Tabitha from the dead.

In all these cases the servants of God sought and found help of Him, taking no strength or glory unto themselves. But in this case of the widow's son of Nain, and in that of the daughter of Jairus, our Lord proceeded, without any confession of inability or request for help, to do that which belonged to Him, and was proper to Him in his own right, and was always present to Him. In his own name and in his own power, He said to them both, "I say unto thee, Arise;" but his Apostles said, "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, I say unto thee, Arise." And when the people wondered at their power, they said, "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look you so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?" Not only did Christ in his own name work the works which He wrought, but the Apostles wrought them in his name also. By which we are to understand that He is the resurrection and the life, as He declared to the sisters of Lazarus before raising him from the dead. On which occasion it is to be remarked that He addressed these words to the Father, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me;" but immediately added, "And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." That is, He referred these, as He did his other acts, to the Father, that the people might believe that He had come from the Father, but in doing so declared his continual and immutable union with the Father. "I am in the Father, and the Father in me." "The words which I speak, I speak not of myself; and the Father which dwelleth in me He doeth the works." The Apostles suspended their power from Christ; Christ identified his with the Father, did the works in his own name, and desired the people to regard them as demonstrations that the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Him bodily. In the same manner He says, "I have power to lay down my life, and power to take it up again;" while the Apostles refer his resurrection to the mighty working of the Spirit. For in truth there was in Christ a manifestation of the Godhead. He was the Word; and besides being the Word, he manifested the Father and the Spirit. So that the Father declared Himself by Him, and the Spirit showed Himself in Him. And while He asserted his own divinity, He taught and manifested the divinity of the Father and the divinity of the Spirit, and is our way unto them and their way unto us—in all respects the mediator between us and God. The burden of revelation lay upon his shoulders; the clouds and darkness which covered the throne of the Father, and hid it from the eyes of mortals, waited till He should dispel them; the Spirit also could not come until He should have opened the way through death, and ascended unto the right hand of God. So that he is well called by the Apostle "the author and finisher of our faith," and well entitled Himself "the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Such is the doctrine which groweth out of this speech unto the dead and inanimate clay, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise."

"And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak." He raised himself on the couch on which he was stretched, and began to speak, thereby giving immediate testimony unto both the eyes and ears of all the people that he was as truly living and in the possession of all his faculties, as the foregoing instant they had known him to be dead, and were proceeding with him to the silent chambers of the dead. "And he delivered him to his mother." This sense of power and tenderness is very sweet in all the actions of our blessed Lord, and is another testimony to the divinity of his being; so that I know not of the three which to admire the most, the almighty power, the sublime majesty, or the tender feeling of the act. He laid his hand on the bier and said, Young man, Arise. And he that was dead sat up and spake. There is the almighty power and sublime majesty of the act, but that almighty power and sublime majesty were only, as it were, the means by which the divine compassion testified itself. He had compassion upon the mother, and said unto her, "Weep not;" then touching the bier he awoke her son from the sleep of death, and delivered him unto his mother. The impulse, the movement which called forth the divine action in the bosom of the Son of Man, was compassion to a sorrowful woman of whom He knew nothing but her sorrow; and the divine action accomplished not its end until the tears of the mother were dried up and her lost son restored to her arms. Therefore, the thing to be admired is the end for which the deed was done, the tender and compassionate feeling of the Lord for one of the sorrowful daughters of Adam, undistinguished by anything, as hath been said, but the greatness of her sorrow.

What was there in that woman that is not in any of the daughters of the people of this land? or what was there in her sorrow that is not in the sorrow of every afflicted mother? And what was there in the sorrow of Jairus for his daughter, that is not in the sorrow of any of the fathers of the people of this land? Let every afflicted father and every afflicted mother, with all the sons and daughters of affliction, know of a surety that the same Saviour who had pity upon this desolate widow, will have pity upon them, to bind up their broken hearts and comfort their mourning. And in the day of our troubles let us make known our sorrows unto Him who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are. He who, unsought,

had compassion upon the widow, had already compassion upon us, and He who wept over the tomb of Lazarus his friend, weepeth with all his friends in their distress, and will bring them consolation. Nay, and He who wept over the stony-hearted and bloody-handed Jerusalem, weepeth also over his enemies and his persecutors, praying his Father to forgive them, for they know not what they do. What less can we say, therefore, than this: that He who raised the son of the strange woman, and stopped the fountain of her troubles by his almighty power, hath for us all—yea, for the most prodigal and the most wicked hath He a most tender compassion, which moved him to empty Himself of glory and of power, yea, and of life itself, and to humble Himself to the dust of death? That death was to do for as many as believe that which this act of power and mercy did for the widow of Nain: to restore to them, not a son that had been lost, but to restore to themselves their own glory that had been lost; and to quench, not one fountain of sorrow in their hearts, but every fountain of sorrow, and to bring in an everlasting peace, giving what the world cannot give, nor the prince of the world take away. These acts of mercy and grace were but as the slow and infrequent drops before the plentiful summer shower for which the thirsty earth was longing, or the few ripe ears of corn before the harvest, or the early clusters of ripe grapes before the vintage. The harvest which is to feed the world's famished soul with fatness, the vintage which is to replenish it with fulness of joy, was accomplished in the death of Christ, wherein the Prince of Life emptied himself and exhausted his power in the sight of the world, that the world might be filled with life. And having passed into the realm of death, where sin and Satan are absolute, He stripped them there in their citadel of strength, and put them to shame, spoiling the spoiler, and leading captivity captive, so that the heavenly host which sung the overture of our redemption at his birth, with the words, "Glory to God in the highest; peace on earth, good will to the children of men," might have sung its finish in the words "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Therefore, all who believe in his name have a constant fountain opened of consolation, to which in all their distresses they have a free access, and to which let their souls hasten that they may be filled with joy and gladness. And specially in trials and afflictions may they be assured of the compassion of their Lord. For He is then very near unto them, and desireth that they should take everlasting consolation to themselves. If to this woman, whom there is no reason to believe that He had ever seen, or known anything of her works, He should have, out of mere feeling for her loss and pity of her lamentation, extended this grace, then why should any one doubt or hesitate to entreat Him with the voice of their weepings and the aspect of their calamities, that He may dispense unto them the consolation whereof they stand in need? But how much more his people, who have entered into covenant with Him, whom He hath justified while yet they were enemies, to whom all trials are sent for the very end that they may profit by them, all afflictions that they may be chastised out of sin and promoted to greater holiness! May the Lord bless this instance of his tenderness, that it may prove life for the dead to as many as are still numbered with the dead—dead in trespasses and sins. And as the uncalled and unsanctified are aptly represented by the young man who lay stretched upon the bier; so the living and sorrowful mother may be represented by those whom God hath quickened with the principle of everlasting life; for it is not less fitting that we should cry with heavy lamentation over our lifeless brother, or sister, or parent, or friend, than she did over her lifeless son. And surely the Lord will more tenderly regard the spiritual weepings and lamentations of his spiritual people, than the natural weepings and lamentations of those who are not his people. Therefore, as many as the Lord our God hath called, we would entreat, by the love which Christ bore to the ungodly for whom He died, that they would bear a love to their unquickened brethren, and entreat the Lord for their sakes, that the Lord may say unto them, "Awake, thou that sleepest; arise from the dead." And they shall arise and speak the discourse of living men, to the salvation of their own souls, the edification of our faith, and the glory of God.

THE MOTHER OF THE WESLEYS.

In St. Mary's Church at Haseley, a small Warwickshire village, "Samuel, sonne of John Anslye and Judith his wife," was baptised on the 27th of March, 1620. Left early to the sole care of his mother, young Annesley grew up with grave and reverent habits, reading twenty chapters of the Bible daily, dreaming of martyrdom, and letting the conviction of his call to the Church shape itself so persistently in his mind that, in 1644, he was ordained, "probably according to the Presbyterian form." His first parish received him with spits, forks, and stones, and even threats of murder, moved apparently by pathetic remembrance of his predecessor, who danced, drank, and made merry with them week-day and Sunday. The young rector was not to be dealt with in this fashion. "I am resolved," he said, "to continue with you, until God has fitted you to entertain a better." A few years taught them to value his ministry quite as much as his sincerity, and enabled him when he resigned his cure to keep his vow. Then he moved to a small London parish, held the Evening Lectureship at St. Paul's, and, in 1658, was presented by Richard Cromwell to Cripplegate. The Act of Uniformity drove him from the Church; but, upon the Declaration of Indulgence, he licensed a meeting-house in Little St. Helen's, Bishopsgate Street, and assembled a large congregation, to which he ministered till his death. He was a man of fine

presence, and gracious and winning manner; a most zealous preacher, preaching two or three times every day without fatigue; temperate in his habits, and temperate in his opinions. He could not identify himself with any of the parties of his time; and was as hearty in calling Cromwell "the arrantest hypocrite that ever the Church of Christ was pestered with," as in denouncing the King, when preaching to the Commons. He wrote no controversy, but "charmed with his godliness." Besides the tenth that he devoted to God, his purse was always open for widows, and sick and starving ministers. In his family he was strict, earnest, and a man of remarkable fervency and faith in prayer. And his family was almost a congregation. When Manton had baptised one of the children, he mentioned to a friend that Annesley had "two dozen, or a quarter of a hundred." The beauty and accomplishments of the daughters and the repute of their father made the minister's house in now decaying Spital Yard, a place of note and pleasant resort. Nonconformist pastors and raw young students, city men and "wealthy lovers," were to be met with there, with Defoe, and Dunton the bookseller, who were both members of the congregation. And among other guests of the time was a young student at Mr. Veal's, in Stepney, by name Samuel Wesley.

Wesley was the son of an ejected vicar, whose life was worn rapidly to the grave by persecution. He was thrown from early life into close association with the Nonconformist party, used to write out Charnock's sermons, and listened to Bunyan. Clever, and with a gift of rhyme, he was encouraged to write lampoons on Church and State, and was pitched upon to answer some invectives published against the Dissenters. It was during the preparation for this latter task that he saw reasons to change his own opinions, and, commencing by abjuring the politics of his party, he ended by abjuring the party itself. With forty-five shillings in his pocket he walked to Oxford, entered himself at Exeter College, and left it an extreme partisan of the Church and State he had lampooned.

Dunton is bold to say that one of Annesley's daughters attracted him to St. Helen's even more than her father's preaching; and another daughter seems to have had as much share in attracting Wesley to Spital Yard. Susanna Annesley may have had a fair share of the family beauty, but her kindred have only noticed the worth and beauty of her character. She had an intellect above the average, a strong decisive mind, and a spirit of investigation. She formed her own opinions and scrupled at no trouble in discovering the truth. Her reading was grave and solid, as might be expected in so grave a household, and questions of theology had more interest for her than the creations of fiction. She lived in a time of keen controversy and championship. Disputes on the doctrine and order of the Church absorbed men's minds. The conversation among her father's guests was always drifting in that direction, and she soon found herself drawn into the current. The Socinian controversy first drew her attention, with the untoward result of unsettling her faith in the doctrines of the Gospel; and before she recovered from this she examined the claim of Church governments. Wesley's influence may be traceable in the conclusions she reached on both subjects. He was familiar with the theological investigation she had unwarily begun; and she blessed God that "by him she was first drawn off from the Socinian heresy." He was in the heat of his own dissatisfaction with Nonconformity, and before she was thirteen she firmly embraced the Church of England. She was ruled in this as in all else by the highest sense of duty, and her religious life was one of principle and not emotion. "When I was young," she says, "and too much addicted to childish diversions, I used never to spend more time in any matter of mere recreation in one day than I spent in private religious duties." It is a characteristic feature, consistent with the gravity of her character, and with all that is known of her in after-life.

Wesley had held a London curacy for a year, a chaplaincy on board a man-of-war for as long; and on returning to London, in 1689, seems to have been married to Susanna Annesley. He was a curate on thirty pounds a-year, and though in a twelvemonth he received the living of South Ormsby, in Lincolnshire, it was but twenty pounds better. The rectory was "a mean cot, composed of reeds and clay;" and there came "one child additional *per annum.*" The rector rose betimes in the morning and wrote his metrical "Life of Christ;" wrote also a treatise on the Hebrew points; and did such work as offered for his brother-in-law, Dunton the bookseller. With much writing and thrifty management, seven years passed fairly over. The Marquis of Normanby, his patron, had asked for him an Irish bishopric, but Queen Mary contented herself with accepting the dedication of the "Life of Christ," now completed in nigh eleven thousand lines, and published with sixty copperplates. Then a more substantial benefit came, though not from royal favour, and the living of Ormsby was exchanged for that of Epworth, in the same county. Epworth, or the Hill Farm, is a small market-town in the centre of the so-called Isle of Axholme. The parishioners were mostly yeomen and small farmers, primitive if not barbarous in their ways. There was no extravagant living: the women wore their mothers' gowns, and the men never appeared in an entirely new suit of clothes. The maid dressed in linsey-woolsey, rose up to her spinning in the morning at three, and had forty shillings a-year. The parish was worth four times the last, and much household economy was possible. But there were heavy drawbacks. The men of the Isle were lawless. They vented their displeasure in a rough savage way: they burned crops, stabbed cows, maimed watch-dogs, and put coals in the thatch. Wesley provoked their enmity in election times, and was called, on the steps of his own church, rascal and scoundrel; was forewarned of a design to murder him; and when Mrs. Wesley lay exhausted after her confinement, they "kept drumming, shouting, and firing," until at last the baby was killed in the nurse's fright. There was but one Presbyterian and one Roman Catholic in the parish, yet the congregation was of the thinnest, and the communicants seldom above twenty. "Monsters of men-children were brought to baptism, whose manful voices disturbed and alarmed the whole congregation." The tithe corn was stolen

in open day: and gross immoralities were the habits of the place. Then there were accidents. The barn fell down: a third of the parsonage was burnt: his "entire growth of flax" shared the same fate; and in 1709 the house was utterly destroyed by fire. "I was not in a condition," Mrs. Wesley writes, "to climb up to the windows, neither could I get to the garden door. I endeavoured three times to force my passage through the street door, but was as often driven back by the fury of the flames. In this distress I besought our blessed Saviour for help, and then waded through the fire, naked as I was, which did me no farther harm than a little scorching my hands and my face." One child, "a lovely boy, six years old," lay asleep. No help could be rendered; and when he was missed his father could but kneel in the hall "in an agony of prayer." The child woke and ran to the window. No time was to be lost. "I will fix myself against the wall," some one cried; "lift a light man and set him on my shoulders." As the roof fell in, John Wesley was caught in friendly arms, and Methodism gained its founder *as a brand from the burning*. The next day among the ruins the rector picked up a solitary scorched leaf of his Polyglot, on which there was nothing legible but *Vade; vende omnia quæ habes, et attolle crucem, et sequere Me*—"Go; sell all that thou hast; and take up thy cross: and follow Me." With these disastrous losses, with his mother dependent on him, and apparently with the steady addition of a child per annum, it is little wonder he was poor. In the spring of 1701 they could only reckon up six shillings; in 1726 they had but five pounds to last them from May-day till harvest. The children were only half-clothed, the rooms half-furnished. "Tell me, Mrs. Wesley," said Archbishop Sharp, "whether you ever really wanted bread?" "My lord, I will freely own that I never did want bread. But then I had so much care to get it before it was eat, and to pay for it after, as has often made it very unpleasant to me. And I think to have bread on such terms is the next degree of wretchedness to having none at all." Yet, even to sustain such wretchedness money had to be borrowed, and not always from easy creditors. A vindictive man of the Isle had Mr. Wesley arrested for a paltry debt that a few hours' delay would have cleared, and the rector found himself in a debtors' cell in Lincoln Castle. It is true he but changed his parish. "I have leave to read prayers every morning and afternoon here in the prison; and to preach once on Sunday. I am getting acquainted with my brother jail-birds as fast as I can." Yet the poverty remained. "Thank God," he says, when he was nearing seventy, "I creep up-hill more than I did formerly;" and he can say no more. His largest debts were paid, but when he died his chattels had to be set off against the remainder. The shadows of such a life are deep, and the picture of such life-long embarrassment, and of a cheerful, helpful, and most Christian man, carrying such weary burden with him away into dim old age, is harsh and melancholy. But there were gleams of light across it, pleasant bits of sunshine that relieved the gloom.

His study was his castle and the debtors' cell could not cut him off from the memories of books. Collating the Pentateuch, or writing vigorous Latin dissertations on the Book of Job, or penning epitaphs and epithalamiums, his heart was kept light and his mind had rest from care. "A learned man," Pope calls him, writing to Swift; Lord Oxford bears him the same testimony; and his wife, with a judgment that even affection did not make partial, laments that "a man of his brightness and rare endowments of learning, and useful knowledge in the Church of God, should be confined to an obscure corner of the country." His diligence and faithfulness as a pastor softened the hostility of his parishioners, and many of them died happy before him. He was three times elected a member of Convocation, and the months he spent in London at those "Convocations of blessed, blessed memory," were a bright change from the monotony and unkindness of Epworth. As his children grew up, and the boys went to college, he maintained a constant correspondence; in Latin occasionally, if there was anything they wished to confide to him without troubling their mother; and these Westminster boys turned out excellent scholars. But his great blessing was his wife. She is as beautiful a type as we have of a godly English mother. Her life never leaves the impression of haste or neglect. With so large a family, so little to live on, and a husband who was neither thrifty nor extravagant, she contrived leisure for occupations to each of which others would have given their lives. An hour each morning and evening, and occasionally at noon, were devoted to communion with God and prayer. Before the morning worship of the household, she sought the same intercourse, and would not even then walk in the open air, "because it discomposed her head. Though the lamp of devotion is always burning, yet a wise virgin will arise and trim before going forth to meet the Bridegroom." When her eldest son was in suspense about his scholarship at Oxford, she wrote: "If you can possibly, set apart the hours of Sunday afternoon from four to six to beg God's favour in this great affair, which time I also have determined to the same work." At least three times a day she examined her conscience, and omitted no opportunity of retirement. There is "nothing in the disposition of your time," she wrote to John, "but what I approve, unless it be that you do not assign enough of it to meditation." She laid down rules for her own conduct, and nothing could better characterise it. "If you desire to live under the continual government and direction of the Holy Spirit, preserve an equal temper." "It always argues a base and cowardly temper to whisper secretly what you dare not speak to a man's face. Therefore be very cautious in speaking of these three sorts of persons, namely, the innocent, the dead, and the absent." "In telling a story, be careful to speak deliberately and calmly; avoiding immoderate mirth or laughter on the one hand, and uncharitableness and excessive anger on the other, lest your invention supply the defect of your memory." It was the custom to drink rounds of healths, and she set herself against it for the sake of others, by resolving she would "drink not the third glass;—which thou canst not tame."

Her aspirations were profound; her sense of God

clear, reverent, and holy. "If to esteem and have the highest reverence for Thee, if constantly and sincerely to acknowledge Thee, the supreme, the only desirable God, be to love Thee,—I DO LOVE THEE! If to rejoice in Thy essential Majesty and Glory, if to feel a vital joy overspread and cheer the heart at each perception of Thy blessedness, at every thought that Thou art God, and that all things are in Thy power; that there is none superior or equal to Thee; be to love Thee,—I DO LOVE THEE! If comparatively to despise and undervalue all the world contains, which is esteemed great, fair, or good; if earnestly and constantly to desire Thee, Thy favour, Thy acceptance, Thyself, rather than any or all things Thou hast created, be to love Thee, —I DO LOVE THEE." "The fault," she says again, "is in myself; and I attribute all mistakes in judgment and errors in practice, to want of faith in the blessed Jesus." "O, my dear Charles," she wrote to her son, "when I consider the dignity of his person, the perfection of his purity, the greatness of his sufferings, but above all, his boundless love, I am astonished and utterly confounded; I am lost in thought. I fall into nothing before Him."

Charles Wesley had reason to know much of this devout temper of his mother. Like her other children he had received from her the greater part of his early education, for she considered that her life was first devoted to them. From their infancy they were brought under her firm method and principle. Their rising, midday sleep, and bedtime, nay, their rocking in the cradle, were regulated to the moment. At seven they were prepared for bed; at eight they were left in their rooms awake; "there was no such thing allowed as sitting by a child until it went to sleep." Their food was governed by laws as peremptory; and they "dared not refuse" what was set before them. When they were a year old, they were "taught to fear the rod, and *to cry softly*." Their will was to be mastered; "I insist upon conquering the will of children betimes, because this is the only strong and rational foundation of a religious education . . . . The parent who studies to subdue it in his child, works together with God in the renewing and saving a soul." If a child has to be corrected, she maintained it must also be conquered. But, as cowardice and fear of punishment often lead children into lying, whoever, when guilty, confessed a fault, was not beaten. None of the children were reprimanded or beaten twice for the same fault, nor upbraided with it if they amended; and every act of obedience was noticed with encouragement. But life was not cheerless in the midst of such strictness. "I take Kempis," Mrs. Wesley says, "to have been an honest, weak man, who had more zeal than knowledge by his condemning all mirth or pleasure as sinful or useless, in opposition to so many direct and plain texts of Scripture;" and the lonely house and the poverty seem to have been steadily brightened by the gay spirits of the children. When a child's fifth birthday was past, it took its place in the school-room, and from nine till twelve, and two till five, learnt the alphabet, a feat that was accomplished in one day by every child but two. This much won, the next step was to spell the first chapter of Genesis,—a task never given up till it was mastered. "I wonder at your patience," said Mr. Wesley. "You have told the child twenty times the same thing." "Had I satisfied myself by mentioning the matter only nineteen times, I should have lost all my labour." The school opened and closed with the singing of a psalm: and nothing—visiting, nor business, nor accident—was allowed to interfere with its routine of six hours; with the result, among others, that the children could read better in a quarter of a year "than the most of women can do as long as they live." Nor was courtesy neglected. Rudeness to one another or to the servants was never passed over. Promises were to be strictly kept: gifts bestowed could not be reversed; and the rights of property were adjusted and guarded even to a pin. Before they could speak, their grace before meal was asked by signs. The Lord's Prayer they said morning and evening, and to this, short prayers were added as they grew older; and as they came to boyhood and womanhood, she determined to give them as thorough training in religion, as in other branches of learning. She prepared a manual on natural theology; a treatise on the doctrines of the Gospel, founded upon the *Apostles' Creed;* and an analysis and exposition of the Ten Commandments. Having their origin in the need of some elder child, they successively came to be the text books of the family, and the basis of a thoroughly sound knowledge of religious truth. That it might not be mere learning of religious books and sound doctrine, she arranged for conferences and prayer with the children. "On Monday, I talk with Molly; on Tuesday, with Hetty; Wednesday, with Nancy; Thursday, with Jacky; Friday, with Patty; Saturday, with Charley; and with Emilia and Sukey together on Sunday." When the family assembled in the new rectory after the fire, she added to the former rules, that after school on each day "the eldest child took the youngest that could spell, and the second the next; and so with the rest, until they passed two and two into private rooms, where they read a chapter in the New Testament, and the Psalms for the evening of the day." Nor did these influences cease when the children left home. Her son John describes the calmness with which his mother wrote letters, while surrounded by thirteen children; and her letters to *them* "are probably such as no other mother ever wrote." A single extract addressed to her son Samuel, an exemplary, but not then a Christian lad, must suffice. "I have a great and just desire, that all your sisters and your brothers should be saved as well as you; but I must own, I think my concern for you is much the greatest. What! you, my son! you! who was once the son of my extremest sorrow, in your birth and in your infancy, who is now the son of my tenderest love; my friend, in whom is my inexpressible delight, my future hopes of happiness in this world, for whom I weep and pray in my retirement from the world, when no mortal knows the agonies of my soul upon your account, no eye sees my tears, which are only beheld by that Father of spirits, of whom I so importunately beg grace for you, that I hope I may at last be heard! Is it possible that YOU should be damned?

Oh, that it were impossible! Indeed, I think I could almost wish myself accursed, so I were sure of your salvation. But still I hope, still I would fain persuade myself, that a child for whom so many prayers have been offered to Heaven, will not, at last, miscarry." Pleading, that for tenderness and solemnity could scarcely be surpassed, and that must have been felt by her son as an echo of the Epworth schoolroom, as well as the frankest outburst of his mother's heart.

A spirit so active within the family was sure to be active without. One of the rector's journeys to London left the parish to a lazy and helpless curate; and Mrs. Wesley, watchful and prompt, saw the danger to the children, and held an evening service for them and the servants at the rectory. It oozed out among the neighbours, who asked to attend, and being permitted, brought others, with whom "she sang psalms, read prayers, and also a short sermon." As many as two hundred crowded in, and others left for want of room: people who had not been to church for years became regular worshippers, and the habits of the place changed for the better. Mrs. Wesley was led into this reluctantly, and only by that supreme sense of duty that marked her life. She doubted if it was proper for a woman "to present the prayers of the people to God;" she would "fain have dismissed them before prayers, but they begged so earnestly to stay that I durst not deny them." Inman, the curate, was of another opinion, and with one or two men of the Isle sent up a protest to the rector against such irregularity and conventicle-worship of the rector's wife. Mrs. Wesley's defence closed with so forcible an appeal that her husband refused to interfere. "If you do, after all, think fit to dissolve this assembly, do not tell me that you desire me to do it, for that will not satisfy my conscience; but send me your positive command, in such full and express terms as may absolve me from all guilt and punishment for neglecting this opportunity of doing good, when you and I shall appear before the great and awful tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Mr. Wesley was now wearing old. To compose his Dissertations on Job had cost him the palsy and the gout. The stream of rhyme that had flowed at two hundred couplets a day was dried up. He was wasted, changed, sometimes unable to preach. An accident, by which he was thrown out of a wagon, and a serious illness, were heavy shocks to his constitution. And he had some fear of death. But as his end drew nearer the fear ceased. His last words were full of fire. "Let me hear you talk of heaven: nothing is too much to suffer for heaven." To his youngest son: "Be strong. The Christian faith will surely revive in this kingdom. You shall see it, though I shall not." "Are you not near heaven?" whispers his son John. "Yes, I am." "And with a cheerful countenance he falls asleep, without one struggle or sigh or groan."

"I am heard," said his widow, "in his having so easy a death, and my being strengthened to bear it." Most of his daughters were married. His eldest son was a clergyman; John was a college tutor; Charles had no income. They were bound to their mother by no common attachment, and, as far as they could, they would assure her comfort. Her first resting-place was with her daughter Emilia, who had opened a school at Gainsborough. Another daughter received her at her husband's parsonage in Salisbury. In 1739 she went to London, and found her last resting-place at the Foundery in Moorfields, where her son John had begun to preach. She had already given him and Charles sanction to join Oglethorpe's ill-starred expedition to Georgia. "Had I twenty sons," she had said, "I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more." But on learning the circumstances of their trials she vehemently protested against their return. She had already lost her firstborn. "I somewhat marvelled," she wrote to Charles, "that Jacky did not inform me of it before he left, since he knew thereof. But he was unacquainted with the manner of God's dealings with me in extraordinary cases, which indeed is no wonder; for though I have so often experienced his infinite power and mercy in my support and inward calmness of spirit, when the trial would otherwise have been too strong for me, yet his ways of working are to myself incomprehensible and ineffable. Your brother was exceedingly dear to me in his life, and perhaps I have erred in loving him too well. I once thought it impossible for me to bear his loss, but none know what they can bear till they are tried. As your good old grandfather often used to say, 'That is an affliction that God makes an affliction.'"

Her youngest daughter followed, "full of thankfulness, resignation, and love;" and the widow was soon to rejoin her husband. She was never as strong in body as in mind. The want of proper clothes and food occasioned her repeated sickness. She was once confined to her room for many months. "I have many years," she says, "suffered much pain and great bodily infirmities." As she drew on to old age her infirmities strengthened their hold. In the July of 1742, John Wesley hurried up from Bristol, to find his mother "on the borders of eternity." The next morning she said, on awakening, "My dear Saviour! art Thou come to help me in my extremity at last!" Her son and his five surviving sisters sang round her bed. "It was just four o'clock. She opened her eyes wide, and fixed them upwards for a moment. Then the lids dropped, and the soul was set at liberty, without one struggle or groan or sigh. We stood around the bed and fulfilled her last request, uttered a little before she lost her speech—'Children, as soon as I am released, sing a psalm of praise to God!'"

Eight days after, an innumerable company of people came to bury her in Bunhill-fields. "At the grave there was much grief when Mr. Wesley said, 'I commit the body of my MOTHER to the earth.'" The same Mr. John Wesley then stood up and preached the funeral sermon. "It was," he says, "one of the most solemn assemblies I ever saw or expect to see on this side eternity." She had written her husband's epitaph, and her son now wrote hers, "on a plain stone at the head of her grave." She had come back to where she started. The girl who had heard the

Nonconformist pastors in her father's house in Spital-yard, now slept with the Nonconformist dead. There were occasional curious links of coincidence between her life and her husband's. Their maternal grandfathers were both eminent Puritan divines, both active members of the Westminster Assembly, and each a John White—his a clergyman and hers a lawyer. They themselves were both the children of ejected ministers. Each of them left the party of their fathers and served in the Church which their fathers had forsaken. Each of them, about the same time, was touched by a missionary impulse. The story of Ziegenbalg and Plutscho led Mrs. Wesley to pray more for the Epworth people, to speak to them with more warmth, and to begin with her own children. Mr. Wesley, for one hundred pounds *per annum*, and forty for his curate, "would venture his life" among the heathen from St. Helena to the furthest east, "inquire into the state of Christianity in all our factories and settlements, and endeavour to bring over some of the Brahmins and common people to the Christian religion." Whether this sound Churchman, had he been spared, would have yielded his sympathy to his sons, and established a last coincidence by alliance with Nonconformity in his old age, is but conjecture. But if Methodism claims the last days of his wife, there is a touching incident by which it claims something also of him.

Seven years after his death, seven weeks before his wife's, "a grave man, little of stature, in full canonicals," stood on his tombstone in Epworth churchyard and preached there for eight successive summer evenings to dense and ever denser crowds. "Near forty years," John Wesley says, "did my father labour here; but he saw little fruit of his labour. I took some pains among this people too, and my strength also seemed spent in vain. But now the fruit appeared. There were scarce any in the town in whom either my father or I had taken any pains formerly, but the seed sown so long since now sprang up, bringing fresh repentance and remission of sins." A new religious movement had sprung up, destined to waken the religious life of England, and to found a vast Church, and of the first fruit that was gathered the seed was sown by the patient hand of the old rector of Epworth. Nor was this the only mark he left upon it. His gift of rhyme developed in his son Charles into a worthier faculty. The poet of Methodism became the poet of the Church, and hymns of Wesley will be sung as long as there are hearts in England to love Christ.

But the mother of the Wesleys left a deeper mark. The method and order of her own mind stamped the new revival. Her influence was daily and secretly moulding her son. The principles he had drawn from her lasted him through life. She has more claim to be linked with Methodism than giving it its founder—the claim of that clear sense, vigorous intellect, supremacy of duty, and firm conscientiousness, that meditative piety and holy living, that made her a noble woman, and that helped to make John Wesley a noble man, the man he was.

A SUNDAY MORNING'S MEDITATION.

BY A BUSINESS MAN.

Welcome to my heart, most precious day of rest! Life here below is wearisome. It is like a wilderness where the hills are very steep and the ways are very rough. It is like a noisy, bustling market, where incessant turmoil tells upon the nerves; and endless excitements and disappointments weary the soul. I hail thee, precious day of rest, for I long to sit down for a few moments—alone with my God and myself—to breathe, and to gather fresh strength for the rest of my journey.

Will that journey be a long one?

Thou alone knowest, Lord, in whose hands my breath is, and whose are all my ways! Perhaps this is the last Lord's day which is allotted to me to spend on earth. It is true, I am not old yet. I am still in what is called the prime of my life. But what is life's strength? It is Thy will and pleasure alone, O my God! When Thou sayest, "Return, ye children of men," even the strongest disappear like a vapour. How many a one is perhaps now resting in his grave, who this day week was buoyant with health and vigour. How little, perhaps, did they then think that they were spending their last Sabbath on earth! Perhaps many of them desecrated the day in calculating the profits of the enterprises, or in anticipating the pleasures of the dissipations, which the new week was to bring them. And now they are buried, with all their enterprises and pleasures, in the deep dark pit of death! And so, perhaps, not many days hence, my wife, my children, and my friends, may walk to the fresh grave in which I shall be sleeping my long sleep till the great day dawns.

Suppose it should be so. Is that a reason for depression of mind? Oh, I remember the time when the mere thought of it would have made me perfectly miserable. It was when I did not know Thee, Jesus, my Lord, Son of the living God! It is true I had heard of Thee from my childhood, and I could tell Thy life's wonderful story, and I bore Thy name. Yet I knew Thee not. Thou wert a stranger to my heart, which was full of this world's pleasures, hopes and prospects. Oh, I could not then bear even so much as the thought of death, because life—alas! this poor, short, perishable life—was my all and all, my heaven and my God. But stranger as Thou wert to me, yet I was no stranger to Thee. Thou knewest *me*, though I knew Thee not, neither cared to know Thee. Thou knewest me in my folly, in my blindness, in the foolhardiness with which I could dance on the brink of an abyss, and sleep, like Jonah, in the sight of the approaching judgment. Thou knewest me, and Thou hadst compassion on me. So Thou touched me with the finger of Thy grace, and awoke me out of my lethargy, and Thou opened

my eyes to make me see that what I called life was death, and that Thou, and Thou alone, art Life. Since then, I have learnt to think of death without trembling, for through the grave's dismal shade I behold Thy glorious form, Jesus, Resurrection!

O Thou First-born of the Dead, this day is Thy ever-returning, never-waning birthday. All creation, radiant with wonder and delight, proclaims, "The Lord is risen indeed! He was dead, and, lo, He liveth!" Save for that, creation would be one immense frightful grave! Whatever doctrine may have been doubted or contested, the doctrine of death never was. Take away Christ, and the human eye cannot discover one thing in the universe which does not end in death and destruction. Replace Christ, and that same human eye now armed with faith's wonderful glass, beholds nothing which does not speak of the new heavens and the new earth; which is not symbolic of Him who maketh all things new; which is not prophetic of the glorious resurrection with which the creature one day is to rise out of the bondage of corruption.

Oh, how can man be so blind as not to see that glorious Day-spring from on high which hath visited us in the darkness of our night! Nay, how can he be so stubborn as to refuse to see it, while he is fostered by its warmth, and nourished by the fruits which it makes to grow! Oh, ye blind philosophers, who deny Christ while enjoying the blessings of Christianity, ye who now boast of your knowledge and civilisation, wherein would you differ from the heathen, but for Christ and his church? Have you never put to yourself the question, how is it that the Church, sprung up from a dozen poor ignorant fishermen, has exercised such a wonderful regenerating power upon the life of mankind—a power of which your knowledge and civilisation are only faint results? Do you not see that the Church would be powerless and hopeless, were she not the bearer of Life from the Dead? And what was it which enriched her with this all-quickening, all-conquering power? Her faith. She has seen Him who was crucified and died, was buried and rose again. She has seen Him ascend into heaven, and she now sees Him seated there upon his throne, crowned with honour and glory. *You* cannot see it, because you do not believe it. But the Church of God believes it, and this faith of hers is the answer to your question, how it is that she can conquer the world. She is the fulness, the body, the bride of Him that filleth all in all. He liveth in her, He speaketh through her, and it is by her that He has strewn over the world those jewels of wisdom, knowledge, and civilisation with which you boastfully adorn yourself, being ignorant that they are only refuse, when compared with that exceeding and eternal weight of glory which He has prepared for his people, and which you despise.

But let me not ask how man can be so blind, for I was once as blind myself, and if I see now, it is only through the grace of God. Next to the unfathomable depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, man's natural aversion to Christ is the greatest mystery. Can we conceive of any object so loveable as Christ? And yet is there any object which man in his natural state hates so much? Oh, I remember how thoroughly I disliked Him! Not only his church and chapel, his hymns, his organs, his sermons, his bible, but Himself! To go into my closet, to lock the door, to kneel down in the dust at his feet, to speak to Himself face to face as if there were not a being in the universe besides Him and me, to open my life's book, to disclose my heart's innermost chambers, and to discuss the question what He was to me, and what I had been to Him—Oh, I remember how I used to flee from the mere idea of this! The slightest allusion to it would make my spirit miserable.

What was the reason of this? An instinctive feeling told me that my first step in a new course would be a death-blow to everything I had hitherto called life. I perceived that my own life and Christ's could never go together; that each absolutely excluded the other. My life's principle was to make myself the beginning and the end of everything. In opposition to this Christ cried, "*I* am the Alpha and Omega!" than which nothing is more unbearable to human nature, in its fallen state. When through sin we cut the vital artery which connected us with the heart of God, we set ourselves up as independent fountain-heads of life. We became like gods, living in ourselves, through ourselves, for ourselves, desiring to be dependent upon no being but ourselves, and trying to make every being dependent upon us. And ever since then the term "human nature," has obtained a meaning opposite to what it had originally. When God created man in his own image, after his likeness, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, human nature and divine nature were two different degrees of one and the same life, so that the one could not help being the image of the other, so far as the finite can resemble the infinite. After the fall, on the contrary, human nature and divine nature became two opposite lives, the one having disconnected its vital principle from the other, to live a life of its own. This is our innate pride, which, since no life can live apart from God, must necessarily end in destruction. The only way of escape is to return to God, to the Rock from which we were hewn, the Root from which we sprang. Yes we must—but with shame on our faces, with the confusion of shame on our lips, with the feeling of shame in our hearts, saying, "Lord, we had a name to live, but we were dead! We were dead in trespasses and sins, loathsome in Thy sight because of the leprosy of our form; yet we walked about as if we were kings, decking ourselves with ornaments, and swelling our breast with pride."

Here lies the true cause of our natural aversion to Christ. His appearance amongst us opened up the only possible way through which we can return to God, but it is a way of the deepest humiliation, because a way of truth—humiliation, not of the body, neither of the garment, but of the heart. To confess that we have been wrong—how difficult is it to human nature! But to confess not only that we have been wrong, but foolish, wicked, faithless, and godless—how impossible is it to human nature,

except through the grace of God! Yet to come to Thee, O crucified Son of Man, what is it but such a confession? Why should we go to Thee at all, if it were not for salvation from sin and guilt, from everlasting death and destruction? Gold and silver Thou givest not. Thou wert poor when on earth; even the beasts of the field, and the birds of the air, were richer than Thou wert. Fame or name Thou givest not, for Thou wert despised and rejected of men, and didst breathe Thy last on a tree of shame, between two malefactors, as if Thou wert the worst of all. But what Thou givest is a body broken for sin, and blood shed for iniquity. What then, if we go to Thee, are we doing but just acknowledging that we need that body because we are sinners; that we need that blood because our iniquities are gone over our heads? Oh, how I perceived the deep humiliation implied in that acknowledgment! It was, to my mind, like pronouncing a verdict of total bankrupcty upon my whole life, upon all I had been and thought and done! It was to me like dying, for my life's garden was such a bright, blooming Paradise in my eyes!

And yet an inward voice whispered in my bosom that there was not one flower in that garden, however bright-looking, that could stand the close inspection of the eye of God. For virtuous and irreproachable as my life might appear in the sight of men, nay, noble and highly moral as it appeared in the estimation of those who knew me well, yet I felt that, if probed to the very core, all true and really good principle would be found lacking. I could not have analysed even the best of my actions, without finding that selfishness had been its leading motive. To honour myself, to benefit myself, to please myself, was from my earliest childhood the object of all my thinking, doing, and striving. To this end I had loved my friends, helped my neighbours, and even performed my religious duties. How different, Lord! was Thy life! Thou, too, didst perform Thy duties as a man: didst love Thy friends, didst help Thy neighbour, didst attend the temple and the synagogue, but it was to honour God Thy Father, to please Him, to promote the glory of his name, to have his will done on earth as it was in heaven. Thou didst not seek Thine own honour. Thou didst not seek Thine own life, but wert prepared to lose it by the most shameful of all deaths, if only Thy Father's will would be fulfilled. Oh, what remained of all my highly-praised virtue and righteousness, when I compared them with Thine! I covered my face with my hands. All my life's flowers drooped, as if blighted and withered. Idolater was my true name. I had spent all my life in worshipping my own miserable self, as if it were God and the centre of the universe.

Hadst Thou been like me, Thou couldst never have risen from the dead. Selfishness cannot rise again; its only prospect is to die and be buried. It never can find a place in the region of light and life, however bright the glory it adorns itself with. It must go down to the realm of darkness and death, because it is hell-born. But Thou, Emmanuel! wert love; therefore Thou wert life. It was impossible that Thou shouldst be holden of death. Thou must come out of the dark prison of hell again, because Thou wert heaven-born. Thy resurrection has declared Thee with power to be the Son of God. Oh, the grave is God's great crucible for testing the spirit. How was it that not one of the great geniuses who set the world wondering after them ever rose from the grave? They all loved their own selves. How was it that He in whom we "saw no beauty that we should desire Him," burst the bands of death and rose victorious? He loved God; He loved men; He loved when none else loved, and all round was hatred and contempt.

Yes, Thou didst speak the truth when Thou saidst that Thou wert come into this world for judgment. As long as I knew Thee not, I could not judge myself; I could only measure myself by myself, and I always came out pure in my own eyes. But from the moment I saw Thee, I could drop down at Thy feet and cry, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" Thou didst not pronounce the judgment; Thou only didst show Thyself in the beauty of Thy holiness, in the glory of Thy love—and the judgment was there. I was frightened at my own form. I had been like an Ethiopian, walking in the shades of night, and thinking that I was bright and white like the angels of the resurrection. But Thou, Sun of Righteousness, arose—and oh, how manifest did it become, that I was black from the crown of my head to the sole of my feet! No; Thou didst pronounce no judgment. Thou didst not condemn. Thou didst not curse. Thou didst only stand before me with the smile of love on Thy face, and the joy of salvation in Thine eyes. Yet I felt judged at once and for ever. Condemned was my past life which I had lived without God and without love. I saw the wounds in Thy hands; they ought to be in mine. I saw Thy crown of thorns; it ought to press upon my head. No, Thou didst curse not me; but I felt what the tree upon which I saw Thee hanging spoke. I learnt the immensity of my debt, but not from the lips of a judge—no, from the immensity of the ransom paid down by Thee! Not until I saw my salvation, didst Thou permit me to know the depth of my destruction. Thy love was too strong for me. Hadst Thou come to me with the law and its curse, verily I should, in despair, have taken up my armour to fight Thee. But Thou camest with grace and truth, not as a lion, but as a slain lamb, meek and lowly in heart, and I was disarmed—I bowed my head—I had nothing to say save this, "Show me a place at Thy feet, my Lord and my God! I am Thine henceforth by the right of Thy love's conquest."

How difficult it is for anyone living without Christ, to believe that Christ's yoke is easy, and his burden light! Yet no master is so kind as He of whose commandments it is said with so much truth, that they are "not grievous." To serve two masters is hard work; to try to live two lives at a time is dreadful labour. But when once the choice is fixed, and fixed for ever,—when our own will is broken and our own life is killed, then nothing can be so delightful as to be left alone with Him whose meat it was to do the will of his Heavenly Father. There can be no hardship in the service of love, for the work which love does is exactly the work it desires to do.

It is true it may be a painful work to the flesh, it may be the bearing of a heavy cross and the drinking of a bitter cup. But heaviness is heaviness no more, when there is delight in bearing, because there is the conviction that it is good and necessary, and required for the pleasure and honour of a beloved one. That which makes a yoke grievous and a burden painful, is the unwillingness of the heart to bear it. To sit day and night in a dull dreary room by the cradle of a sick child, is like sitting in a prison cell to the careless, light-minded, pleasure-loving young servant; but the mother of the child would not for all the treasures of the world exchange the spot for the most charming place in creation. She would feel miserable anywhere but here. What is the key to this mystery? Love. Love has its own tastes and appetites, peculiar to itself and unintelligible to every one else. Love can even hanker after pain and thirst after suffering. "I have a baptism to be baptised with," thus it speaks, "and how am I *straitened* till it be accomplished?"

This explains the mystery of the Christian life. It looks, to those who do not live it, like a life of mere sacrifice and suffering, of dulness and melancholy. It is, on the contrary, the only life in which there is true peace and happiness, and where no misery is possible to those who live it. The cause of this is love. "We love Him because He first loved us"—this is the motto which explains everything. The Christian life is not an engagement by contract between a master and his servant. It is the union of two hearts—that of the Saviour with that of the saved—by the enduring ties of the most intimate love. It is compared to the marriage tie in the Epistle to the Ephesians. It is not a mere agreement in opinion, in plans or purposes, in doctrines or rites. It is a transmission of the life of the one into that of the other, the one thinking henceforth with the thoughts of the other, and feeling with the heart of the other. "I live not," the saved one says, "but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Here the one does the will and the work of the other, not from reflection and calculation, but from the instinctive impulse of the new nature. Both natures are alike, breathing one and the same atmosphere, that of the Spirit of God. They have the same appetites and aversions, feed upon the same meat, and rejoicing in the same delights.

How can that wonderful union be brought about? Only by faith in the sin-atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God. Not by faith in that doctrine as a doctrine, but by faith in the thing which that doctrine signifies. Thou camest from Heaven, Lord, to save me. It was my sins which Thou didst bear in Thy precious body upon the tree. It was the penalty of my crimes which Thou didst suffer. Thou didst undergo all that shame, those pains, those agonies of death, those horrors of the dark valley, because Thou didst love me. Thou didst descend into the deep abyss and didst burst the doors of the grave, to open up a way out of the prison for me, because Thou didst desire to see me in Heaven, saved from everlasting ruin, plucked out of the hands of the terrible murderer, restored to God as a lost child to his father.

How can man believe all this with his heart, and at the same time continue to live his own life? A Being who has done all this for me, cannot but take possession of my whole heart, and become the root of a completely new life, which will henceforth live and move only from love towards Him. Such a faith is not merely the knowledge of a doctrine, but the experience of the power of unspeakable facts. Through that faith I look upon the history of Jesus as upon my own history. In Bethlehem I see Him born with whom *my* true life was to take its beginning. On the cross I see Him die with whom my old life was crucified, killed, and for ever buried. In Joseph's garden I see Him rise as the First-born of that wonderful family of which I shall appear as a later-born member. This is my biography. I have none of my own; I have only one in Christ. For what I have besides is not biography, but nekro-graphy—a record of death.

Oh, Jesus—Saviour! when will Thy nature's holy, heavenly instinct act so immediately within me, that at each moment Thy will and work shall be done long before my own old nature has time to reflect? It is not Thy fault, that so often Thy will is left undone, and so many a work spoiled. It is my fault, because I am slothful in keeping my members which are on earth subdued in mortification. Through faith and love, Thou art born and formed in me; but, alas! that form cannot yet come to its full growth, from its being hedged in by the thorns of my mortal nature. Sin has not my heart. Thou hast it, as Thou knowest. But sin has often still my thoughts, my habits, my passions. Help me, oh Thou quickening Spirit, to expel it entirely. Take Thy scourge of cords, and thoroughly purify Thy temple! I cannot rest as long as there is one fibre within me which does not thrill with joy at the beckoning of Thy finger. For within me, as everywhere else, Jesus, Jehovah, my Saviour, my all, Thou must be King of kings, and Lord of lords!

THE GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY.

A Story told to a Child.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STUDIES FOR STORIES."

I.

Not many things have happened to me in the course of my life which can be called events. But of one great event, as I then thought it, happened when I was eight years old. On that birthday I first possessed a piece of gold.

How well I remember the occasion! I had a holiday, and was reading aloud to my mother. The book was the "Life of Howard, the philanthropist." I was interested in it, though the style was considerably above my comprehension; at last I came to the following sentence, which I could make nothing of; "He could not let slip such a golden opportunity for doing good."

"What is a golden opportunity?" I enquired.

"It means a very good opportunity."

"But, mamma, why do they call it *golden?*"

My mamma smiled, and said it was a figurative expression; "Gold is very valuable, and very uncommon; this opportunity was a very valuable and uncommon one; we can express that in one word, by calling it a golden opportunity."

I pondered upon the information for some time, and then made a reply to the effect, that all the golden opportunities seemed to happen to very rich people; or people who lived a long time ago; or else to great men, whose lives we can read in books—very great men, such as Wilberforce and Howard; but they never happened to *real* people, whom we could see every day, nor to children.

"To children like you, Orris?" said my mother, "why, what kind of a golden opportunity are you wishing for just now?"

My reply was childish enough.

"If I were a great man I should like to sail after the slave ships, fight them, and take back the poor slaves to their own country. Or I should like to do something like what Quintus Curtius did. Not exactly like that; because you know, mamma, if I were to jump into a gulf, that would not really make it close."

"No," said my mother, "it would not."

"And besides," I reasoned, "if it *had* closed, I should never have known of the good I had done, because I should have been killed."

"Certainly," said my mother; I saw her smile, and thinking it was at the folly of my last wish, hastened to bring forward a wiser one.

"I think I should like to be a great lady, and then if there had been a bad harvest, and all the poor people on my lord's land were nearly starving, I should like to come down to them with a purse full of money, and divide it among them. But you see, mamma, I *have* no golden opportunities."

"My dear, we all have some opportunities for doing good, and they are golden, or not, according to the use we make of them."

"But, mamma, we cannot get people released out of prison, as Howard did."

"No, but sometimes, by instructing them in their duty, by providing them with work, so that they shall earn bread enough, and not be tempted, and driven by hunger, to steal, we can prevent some people from being ever put in prison."

My mother continued to explain that those who really desired to do good, never wanted opportunities, and that the difference between Howard and other people was more in perseverance and earnestness than in circumstances. But I do not profess to remember much of what she said, I only know that, very shortly, she took me into my grandfather's study, and, sitting down, began busily to mend a heap of pens which lay beside him on the table.

He was correcting proof-sheets, and, knowing that I must not talk, I stood awhile, very quietly watching him.

Presently I saw him mark out a letter in the page, make a long stroke in the margin, and write a letter *d* beside it.

Curiosity was too much for my prudence; I could not help saying—

"Grandpapa, what did you write that letter *d* for?"

"There was a letter too much in the word, child," he replied; "*I* spell 'potatoes' with only one *p*, and I want the printer to put out the second."

"Then *d* stands for *don't*, I suppose?" was my next observation; "it means don't put it in?"

"Yes, child, yes—something like that."

If it had not been my birthday I should not have had courage to interrupt him again. "But, grandpapa, '*do*' begins with *d*, so how is the printer to know whether you mean 'do,' or 'don't?'"

My grandfather said "pshaw!" turned short round upon my mother, and asked her if she had heard what I said?

My mother admitted that it was a childish observation.

"Childish!" repeated my grandfather, "childish! She'll never be anything but a child—never; she has no reasoning faculties at all." When my grandfather was displeased with me, he never scolded me for the fault of the moment, but inveighed against me *in the piece*, as a draper would say.

"Did *you* ever talk nonsense at her age—ever play with a penny doll, and sing to a kitten? I should think not."

"I was of a very different disposition," said my mother, gently.

"Aye," said the old man, "that you were. Why, I wouldn't trust this child, as I trusted you, for the world; you were quite a little woman, could pay bills, or take charge of keys; but this child has no discretion—no head-piece. She says things that are wide of the mark. She's—well, my dear, I didn't mean to vex you—she's a nice child enough, but, bless me, she never *thinks*, and never reasons about anything."

He was mistaken. I was thinking and reasoning at that moment. I was thinking how delightful it would be if I might have the cellar keys, and all the other keys, hanging to my side, so that every one might see that I was trusted with them; and I was reasoning, that perhaps my mother had behaved like a little woman, because she was treated like one.

"My dear, I did not mean that she was worse than many other children," repeated my grandfather; "come here child, and I'll kiss you."

My mother pleaded by way of apology for me—"She has a very good memory."

"Memory! aye, there's another disadvantage. She remembers everything; she's a mere parrot. Why, when you, at her age, wanted a punishment, if I set you twenty lines of poetry, they'd keep you quiet for an hour. Set this child eighty—knows 'em directly, and there's time wasted in hearing her say 'em into the bargain."

"I hope she will become more thoughtful as she grows older," said my mother, gently.

"I hope she will—there's room for improvement. Come and sit on my knee, child. So this is your birth-day. Well, I suppose I must give you some present or other. Leave the child with me, my dear, I'll take care of her. But I won't detain you, for the proofs are all ready. Open the door for your mother, Orris. Ah! you'll never be anything like her—never."

I did as he desired, and then my grandfather, looking at me with comical gravity, took out a leathern purse, and dived with his fingers among the contents. "When I was a little boy, as old as you, nobody gave *me* any money."

Encouraged by his returning good humour, I drew closer, and peeped into the purse. There were as many as six or eight sovereigns in it. I thought what a rich man my grandfather was, and when he took out a small coin and laid it on my palm, I could scarcely believe it was for me.

"Do you know what that is, child?"

"A half-sovereign, grandpapa."

"Well, do you think you could spend it?"

"O yes, grandpapa."

"'O yes!' and she opens her eyes! Ah, child, child! that money was worth ten shillings when it was in my purse, and I wouldn't give sixpence for anything it will buy now it has once touched your little fingers."

"Did you give it me to spend exactly as I like, grandpapa?"

"To be sure, child,—there, take it,—it's worth nothing to you, my dear."

"Nothing to me! The half-sovereign worth nothing to me! why, grandpapa?"

"Nothing worth mentioning; you have no real wants; you have clothes, food, and shelter, without this half-sovereign."

"O, yes; but, grandpapa, I think it must be worth ten times as much to me as to you; I have only this one, and you have quantities; I shouldn't wonder if you have thirty or forty half-sovereigns, and a great many shillings and half-crowns besides, to spend every year."

"I shouldn't wonder!"

"And I have only one. I can't think, grandpapa, what you do with all your money; if I had it I would buy so many delightful things with it."

"No doubt! kaleidoscopes, and magic lanterns, and all sorts of trash. But unfortunately you have not got it: you have only one half-sovereign to throw away."

"But perhaps I shall not throw it away; perhaps I shall try and do some good with it."

"Do some good with it! Bless you, my dear, if you do but try to do some good with it, I shall not call it thrown away."

I then related what I had been reading, and had nearly concluded, when the housemaid came in. She laid a crumpled piece of paper by his desk, and with it a shilling and a penny, saying, "there's the change, sir, out of your shoemaker's bill."

My grandfather took it up, looked at it, and remarked that the shilling was a new one. Then, with a generosity which I really am at a loss to account for, he actually, and on the spot, gave me both the shilling and the penny.

There they lay in the palm of my hand, gold, silver, and copper; he then gave me another kiss and abruptly dismissed me, saying that he had more writing to do; and I walked along the little passage with an exultation of heart that a queen might have envied, to show this unheard-of wealth to my mother.

I remember laying the three coins upon a little table, and dancing round it, singing, "There's a golden opportunity! and there's a silver opportunity! and there's a copper opportunity!" and having continued this exercise till I was quite tired, I spent the rest of the morning in making three little silk bags, one for each of them, previously rubbing the penny with sand-paper, to make it bright and clean.

Visions and dreams floated through my brain as to the good I was to do with this property. They were vain-glorious, but not selfish, but they were none of them fulfilled, and need not be recorded. The next day, just as my lessons were finished, papa came in with his hat and stick in his hand; he was going to walk to the town, and offered to take me with him.

It was always a treat to walk out with my father, especially when he went to the town. I liked to look in at the shop windows, and admire their various contents.

To the town therefore we went. My father was going to the Mechanics' Institute, and could not take me in with him, but there was a certain basket-maker, with whose wife I was often left on these occasions: to this good woman he brought me, and went away, promising not to be long.

And now, dear reader, whoever you may be, I beseech you judge not too harshly of me; remember I was but a child, and it is certain that if you are not a child yourself, there was a time when you were one. Next door to the basket-maker's there was a toy shop, and in its window I espied several new and very handsome toys.

"Mr. Miller's window looks uncommon gay," said the old basket-maker, observing the direction of my eyes.

"Uncommon," repeated his wife; "those new gimcracks from London is handsome sure-ly."

"Wife," said the old man, "there's no harm in missy's just taking a look at 'em—eh?"

"Not a bit in the world, bless her," said the old woman; "I know she'll go no further, and come back here when she's looked 'em over."

"O yes, indeed I will; Mrs. Stebbs, may I go?"

The old woman nodded assent, and I was soon before the window.

Splendid visions! O the enviable position of Mr. Miller! How wonderful that he was not always playing with his toys, showing himself his magic lanterns, setting out his puzzles, and winding up his musical boxes. Still more wonderful, that he could bear to part with them for mere money!

I was lost in admiration, when Mr. Miller's voice made me start.—"Wouldn't you like to step inside, miss?"

He said this so affably, that I felt myself quite welcome, and was beguiled into entering. In an instant he was behind the counter. "What is the little article I can have the pleasure, miss—"

"O," I replied, blushing deeply, "I do not want to buy anything this morning, Mr. Miller."

"Indeed, miss, that's *rather* a pity. I'm sorry, miss, I confess, on *your* account. I should like to have served you, while I have goods about me that I'm proud of. In a week or two," and he looked pompously about him—"I should say in less time than that, they'll all be cleared out."

"What, will they all be gone? all sold!" I exclaimed in dismay.

"Just so, miss, such is the appreciation of the public;" and he carelessly took up a little cedar stick, and played "The blue bells of Scotland" on the glass keys of a plaything piano.

"This," he observed, coolly throwing down the stick, and taking up an accordion, "this delightful little instrument is half-a-guinea—equal to the finest notes of the hautboy." He drew it out, and in his skilful hands it "discoursed" music, which I thought the most excellent I had ever heard.

But what is the use of minutely describing my temptation. In ten minutes the accordion was folded up in silver paper, and I had parted with my cherished half-sovereign.

As we walked home, I enlarged on the delight I should have in playing on my accordion. "It is so easy, papa: you have only to draw it in and out; I can even play it at dinner time, if you like, between the meat and the puddings. You know the Queen has a band, papa, to play while she dines, and so can you."

My father abruptly declined this liberal offer; so did my grandfather, when I repeated it to him, but I was relieved to find that he was not in the least surprised at the way in which I had spent his present. This, however, did not prevent my feeling sundry twinges of regret when I remembered all my good intentions. But, alas! my accordion soon cost me tears of bitter disappointment. Whether from its fault, or my own, I could not tell, but draw it out, and twist it about as I might, it would not play "The Blue Bells of Scotland," or any other of my favourite tunes. It was just like the piano, every tune must be learned; there was no music inside which only wanted winding out of it, as you wind the tunes out of barrel organs.

My mother coming in some time during that melancholy afternoon, found me sitting at the foot of my little bed holding my accordion, and shedding over it some of the most bitter tears that shame and repentance had yet wrung from me.

She looked astonished, and asked "What is the matter, my child?"

"O mamma," I replied, as well as my sobs would let me, "I have bought this thing which won't play, and I have given Mr. Miller my golden opportunity."

"What, have you spent your half-sovereign? I thought you were going to put poor little Patty Morgan to school with it, and give her a new frock and tippet."

My tears fell afresh at this, and I thought how pretty little Patty would have looked in the new frock, and that I should have put it on for her, myself. My mother sat down by me, took away the toy, and dried my eyes. "Now you see, my child," she observed, "one great difference between those who are earnestly desirous to do good, and those who only wish it lightly. You *had* what you were wishing for—a good opportunity; for a child like you, an unusual opportunity, for doing good. You had the means of putting a poor little orphan to school for one whole year—think of that, Orris! In one whole year she might have learned a great deal about the God who made her, and who gave his Son to die for her, and his Spirit to make her holy. One whole year would have gone a great way towards teaching her to read the Bible; in one year she might have learned a great many hymns, and a great many useful things, which would have been of service to her when she was old enough to get her own living. And for what have you thrown all this good from you and from her?"

"I am very, very sorry. I did not mean to buy the accordion; I forgot, when I heard Mr. Miller playing upon it, that I had better not listen; and I never remembered what I had done till it was mine, and folded up in paper."

"You forgot till it was too late?"

"Yes, mamma; but O, I am so sorry, I am sure I shall never do so any more."

"Do not say so, my child; I fear it will happen again, many, many times."

"Many times? O mamma! I will never go into Mr. Miller's shop again."

"My dear child, do you think there is nothing in the world that can tempt you but Mr. Miller's shop?"

"Even if I go there," I sobbed, in the bitterness of my sorrow, "it will not matter now, for I have no half-sovereign left to spend; but if I had another, and he were to show me the most beautiful toys in the world, I would not buy them after this, not if they would play of themselves."

"My dear, that may be true; you, perhaps, would not be tempted again when you were on your guard;

but you know, Orris, you do not wish for another toy of that kind. Are there no temptations against which you are not on your guard?"

I thought my mother spoke in a tone of sorrow. I knew she lamented my volatile disposition; and crying afresh, I said to her—"O mamma, do you think that all my life I shall never do any good at all?"

"If you try in your own strength I scarcely think you will. Certainly you will do no good which will be acceptable to God."

"Did I try in my own strength to-day?"

"What do you think, Orris? I leave it to you to decide."

"I am afraid I did."

"I am afraid so, too: but you must not cry and sob in this way. Let this morning's experience show you how open you are to temptation. To let it make you think you shall never yield to such temptation again is the worst thing you can do; you need help from above; seek it, my dear child, otherwise all your good resolutions will come to nothing."

"And if I do seek it, mamma?"

"Then, weak as you are, you will certainly be able to accomplish something. It is impossible for me to take away your volatile disposition, and make you thoughtful and steady, but 'with God all things are possible.'"

"It is a great pity that at the very moment when I want to think about right things, and good things, all sorts of nonsense comes into my head. Grandpapa says I'm just like a whirligig; and besides that I can never help laughing when I ought not, and I am always having lessons set me for running about and making such a noise when baby is asleep."

"My dear child, you must not be discontented; these are certainly disadvantages; they will give you a great deal of trouble, and myself too; but you have one advantage that all children are not blessed with."

"What is that, mamma?"

"There are times when you sincerely wish to do good."

"Yes, I think I really do, mamma; I had better fold up this thing, and put it away, for it only vexes me to see it. I am sorry I have lost my golden opportunity."

And so, not without tears, the toy was put away. The silver and the copper remained, but there was an end of my golden opportunity.

II.

My birth-day had been gone by a week, and still the shilling and the penny lay folded in their silken shrines.

I had quite recovered my spirits, and was beginning to think how I should spend them, particularly the shilling, for I scarcely thought any good could be done with such a small sum as a penny. Now there was a poor Irish boy in our neighbourhood, who had come with the reapers, and been left behind with a hurt in his leg.

My mother had often been to see him; while he was confined to his bed, she went regularly to read with him, and sometimes she sent me with our nursemaid to take him a dinner.

He was now much better, and could get about a little. To my mother's surprise she found that he could read perfectly well. One day, when she met him, he "thanked her honour for all favours," and said he should soon be well enough to return to old Ireland.

As we walked home one day my mother said to me—"Orris, if you like, I will tell you of a good way to spend your shilling. You may buy poor Tim a Testament."

I was delighted, and gave my immediate assent. "Well then," said my mother, "that is settled. I should have given one myself to Tim, if you had wished to spend your shilling in something else. And now, remember, you must not change your mind; papa is going to the town to-morrow, you may go with him and get one then."

To-morrow came, and with it a note to me from my two cousins, saying that they were coming over to spend the afternoon with me, and see my Indian corn, and my tobacco plants, which I had planted myself.

I was very proud of my corn, and still more proud that my cousins should think it worth while to come and see it, for they were three or four years older than myself, and did not often take part in my amusements.

By dint of great industry I finished my lessons an hour earlier than usual, and ran into the garden to see how my corn looked. Old gardener himself admitted that it was beautiful; the glossy green leaves fell back like silken streamers. and displayed the grain with its many shades of green, gold, and brown.

I thought how delightful it would be if I could build a kind of bower over against it, in which my cousins could sit and admire it at their leisure. There were some hop plants growing just in the right place: I had only to untwist them: and there was a clematis that could easily be pressed into the service.

I set to work, and with a little help from him, soon made two or three low arches, over which I carefully trained the flowering hops, and mingled them with festoons of clematis. The bower seemed to be worthy of a queen at the least; and no doubt it was really pretty.

I was just carrying some pots of balsams in flower to set at the entrance, when my father came up. "Well, Orris," he said, "mamma tells me you want to go to the town. Be quick, if you do, for I am just ready to start."

"Just ready! O papa, surely it is not one o'clock? If I go this bower will never be finished by three."

"Certainly not, we shall scarcely be home by three but why need it be finished?"

"Don't you remember, papa, that Elsie and Anne are coming!"

"Oh, I had forgotten that important fact. Well, then, if they are to sit in this bower, I think you must stay at home and finish it; you can go with me some other day."

Now my father knew nothing about the Testament,

or he would doubtless have given different advice. While I hesitated, anxious to stay, and yet afraid not to go, my mother drew near, and I thought I would leave it to her to decide.

"The child wants to finish her bower, my dear," said my father; "therefore, as it is not particularly convenient to me to have her to-day, she may stay at home if she likes, for, I presume, her errand is of no great consequence."

My mother made no answer; in another moment he was gone, and I was left with a long hop tendril in my hand, and a face flushed with heat and agitation.

I thought my mother would speak, and advise me to run after my father, but she did not; and I went on with my work, conscious that her eyes were upon me.

Presently, to my great relief, gardener came up, and asked her some questions about the flower-beds. She went away with him, and I breathed more freely, comforting myself with the thought that I could easily buy the Testament another day.

I worked faster than ever, partly to drive away reproachful thoughts. The little bower was lovely, it was scarcely high enough for me to stand upright in, but it would be delightful I knew for us to sit under. Gardener had been mowing, and when I had brought a quantity of sun-dried grass, and spread it thickly over the floor, I thought my bower an eighth wonder of the world. My cousins came shortly, and confirmed me in this opinion; they spent a very happy afternoon, seated under it, and, but for remembering the Irish boy, I might have been happy also. We were very quiet till after tea, and then I am sorry to say that our high spirits quite carried us away; we got into mischief, and my share of it was throwing an apple into the greenhouse, and breaking two panes of glass. This was on a Saturday.

On Sunday no one mentioned either this or the Irish boy; but on Monday, just as I had finished my lessons, I saw my father pass the window, and ventured to ask mamma if he was going to the town, and whether I might walk with him.

"Why do you wish to go, Orris?" she inquired.

"To buy the Testament, mamma, for poor Tim."

"He is gone," said my mother; "he went away early this morning."

I put on my garden bonnet, and went out, with a curious sensation, as if, when I did wrong, all circumstances conspired to punish me. I turned the corner of the greenhouse, and there stood my father, looking at the broken panes.

"Orris," he said, "did you do this mischief?"

"Yes, papa."

"This is the third time it has happened. I have repeatedly forbidden you to play in this part of the garden."

"I am very sorry, papa."

"Your sorrow will not mend the glass, and I am afraid it will not make you more obedient another time."

He spoke so gravely that I knew he really was displeased. After a pause, he said:—

"Have you got any money?"

"I have a shilling, papa, and a penny."

"It will cost more than that to repair this damage; I shall be obliged to claim forfeit of the shilling."

I wiped away two or three tears, and produced my little silk bag, he turned it over, and bit his lips; perhaps its elaborate workmanship made him understand that a shilling was much more for me to give up than for him to receive.

"Is this all you have got?" he inquired.

"Excepting the penny, papa," I replied; and, child as I was, I perfectly understood his vexation at having to take it from me. He remained so long looking at it as it lay in his palm, that I even hoped he would return it, and say he would excuse me that once. But no, he was too wise; he put it at last into his waistcoat pocket, and walked away, saying:

"I hope this will make you more careful another time."

He went towards the house, and I watched him till he entered. Then I ran to my bower, sat down upon the dried grass, and began to cry as if my heart would break.

Repentance and regret, though they may be keenly felt by a child, are not reasoned on very distinctly. I had often been very sorry before, but whether for the fault, as distinct from the punishment, I had scarcely inquired. I was heartily sorry now, not only for my disobedience and because my father had forfeited the shilling, but because I saw it had vexed and hurt him to do it,—not only because I had preferred pleasure to duty, neglected the opportunity for doing good, and lost it,—but because the feeling, if not the words, of St. Paul pressed heavily upon my heart, "When I would do good, evil is present with me."

I was still crying, when on a sudden, looking up, I saw my father standing before me, and watching me with evident regret. My first impulse was to say,—"O, papa, I was not crying about the shilling."

He beckoned to me to rise out of my bower, and said, "Then what were you crying about, my little darling?"

I tried not to sob; he led me to a garden seat, and took me on his knee. Then, with a great many tears, I told him all that I have now, dear reader, been telling you, and ended with a passion of crying.

"O, papa, do teach me to be different, and to wish the same thing when I am tempted that I do when no pleasure tempts me. Pray teach me to do good."

"My dear child, God is teaching you now."

"What, papa! when my golden opportunity is gone, and my silver opportunity has come to nothing."

"Quite true; but then you are doubly sure now—you know by ample experience, do you not?—that of yourself you can do nothing."

I was so convinced of it, that I was verging on an opposite fault to self-confidence. I was almost doubting whether any assistance that I could hope to have would make me proof against temptation.

But now was my father's "golden opportunity," and he availed himself of it. Although I cannot remember his words, their influence remains to this

day. Certain sensations and impressions connected with that wise and fatherly conversation return upon me often, even now. It conveyed to my mind the idea that this weakness itself was to be my strength, if it made me depend upon a stronger than myself —that this changeable disposition would make more precious to me the knowledge that "with God is no variableness, neither shadow of changing."

When he ceased to speak, I said with a sorrowful sigh, "And now, papa, there is only one penny left of all my opportunities?"

"Well, my darling," he replied, "it is possible that you may do acceptable good even with that. Remember what our Saviour said about the cup of cold water."

"Yes," I said, "but the person who gave the cold water had nothing better to give; he had not a cup of milk, or a cup of wine, which he first wasted and threw away."

"My dear, you need not inquire into that; you might have done better: but as there is still something to be done, 'Do it with thy might.'"

When I was quite calm again, and almost happy, he sent me into the house to play at ball. As I passed the kitchen door, a poor old woman whom my mother used sometimes to help turned from it, and I heard the housemaid say, "Mistress has just walked out, and I cannot say when she will be at home."

She was hobbling away when I bethought me of my penny; took it out of its bag, and pulling her by the cloak, offered it to her.

At first she did not seem to understand me, but when she saw my copper opportunity, which was as bright as sand-paper could render it, she gave me just the shadow of a smile, and taking it in her skinny hand, said, "I thank you kindly, my pretty."

"Poor old creature," said the housemaid, "that will buy her a trifle, mayhap; she and her husband are going into the workhouse to-morrow."

I passed into the house penniless, but in a subdued and humble state of mind. The lessons I had had were not without good effect; but it cannot be expected that I can remember much of the working of my mind. I only know that time *did* pass, that I went to bed, got up, said my lessons, and had my play for a long time, perhaps a fortnight. At the end of about that time my little sister, Sophy, and I went out one day for a long walk, with Matilda, our nurse, and took a little basket with us to put flowers in, and blackberries if we should be so fortunate as to find any.

We walked a long way, till Sophy was tired, and became clamorous to sit down; so Matilda led us to the entrance of a little wood, and there we sat and rested on the steps of a stile. There was a cottage near at hand: presently an old woman came out of it with a kettle in her hand, and I recognised her as the woman to whom I had given my penny. She hobbled to the edge of a little stream which flowed close to our seat, and dipped her kettle in, but did not notice us till Matilda called to her.

"How are you, Mrs. Grattan, and how's your old gentleman?"

"Thank you kindly, girl, we be pretty moderate," was the reply. "He"—and she pointed with a stick to a field opposite, where several men were at work—"*He* be among them, picking up stones—Ha! ha! he be as blithe as a boy!"

"We was all very glad up at the Grange, to hear of your good luck," said Matilda, in the loudest tones of her cheerful voice, for the old woman was rather deaf. "Our mistress was main glad, I'll assure you."

"Ah, very kind on you all. How be the old gentleman?"

"Quite hearty."

By this time she had reached us, set down her kettle, and taken her place beside Matilda. I was busily plaiting straw, but I listened carelessly to their conversation.

"And so you got your rent paid and all," said Matilda, turning her eager black eyes on the old woman. "What a good son Joe is to you."

"Ah, that he be, dear," was the reply; "that he be; wrote he did, so pretty, 'My dear mother,' he says, 'don't you go for to think I shall ever forget how good you was to me always—for I shall not,' he says——"

Matilda's eyes flashed and glistened: she took a particular interest in this young man, though I did not know that till long afterwards.

"Tell us how it all was," she said, quickly.

"Why you see, dear, he was not my own: but I did as well as I could by him; and he be as fond of me like, ay fonder, than he be of his father."

"Yes, I know," said Matilda.

"Well, dear—I went to Mr. T.'s house" (my father's) "and I was very down at heart—very, I was; for Mr. Ball, he'd been that morning, and says he, 'It signifies nothing that you've lived here so long,' he says—'if you can't pay the rent.' I says, 'Mr. Ball, will you please to consider these weeks and weeks that my poor old man has been laid up wi' rheumatize?' 'But,' he says, 'I can put in younger and stronger than him; and besides that,' he says, 'I know you owe money at the shop, over all you owe to my employer.'"

"He was always a hard man," said Matilda.

"Well dear, he says, 'It ain't no use my deceiving of you, Mrs. Grattan, but I must sell you up, for,' says he, 'the money I must have, and you must go into the workhouse; it's the best place by half for such as you;' and, dear, it seemed hard, for, I'll assure you, we hadn't a half-ounce of tea, nor a lump of coal in the house, for we was willing, my old man and me, to strive to the last to pay our owings, and we was living very hard."

"How much did you owe?" asked Matilda.

"Over three pounds, dear; and then the rent was four. I hadn't one halfpenny in the house; I paid the baker, Thursday was a week; t'other four was for the doctor, and we was hungry and cold, we was; but, the Lord be praised, we aint now."

"Ah! Joe's a good son."

"As good as ever breathed, dear; but we hadn't

heard from him of a long while, by reason his regiment was up the country, but you'll understand I didn't know that till I got his letter. And so we was to be sold up, and go into the house. I fretted a deal, and then I thought I'd go and tell your missis: she be a good friend;—but deary me! I owed such a world o' money;—only, thinks I, she'll be main sorry to hear we must go; and a body likes somebody to be sorry."

"Ah, to be sure they do," said Matilda.

"But she was out, and so I got nothing—only this child, bless her! she runs up and gives me a penny; but, deary me! thinks I, what's a penny to them as owes £7, 2*s*.? But, thinks I, my old man and me, we won't cry together in the dark this last night. So I walked on to the town with it, to buy a half-penny candle of Mr. Sims, at the Post-office. I was half way there from my place, and when I got into the shop, 'Sit you down, Mrs. Grattan,' says he, for he saw I was main tired; 'I haven't seen you of a long time.'

"'And that's true, Mr. Sims,' says I, 'for it's little enough I have to lay out, and the shop t'other side of the turnpike be nigher.'

"Well, I sat me down; maybe a quarter of an hour after I'd bought my candle, and just as I was a going, in comes Mrs. Sims, and, says she, 'Is that Grattan's wife?'

"'Ay,' says he.

"'Well,' says she, 'I reckon you remembered to give her that letter.'

"'A good thing you spoke, my dear,' says he, 'I should have forgot it—that I should.'

"If you'll believe me, I trembled like a leaf, to think I should so near have missed it. 'Be it a letter from the Indies?' says I.

"'Ay,' says he, 'that it is, and nothing to pay on it; and it's marked "to be left at the post-office till called for."'

"Well, dear, I took it home, and waited for my old man to come home, by reason I can't read, and about dusk he comes in, and we lights the candle, and my old man he read it right out, for he's a fine scholar. And there was two five-pound notes inside, bless him; and, says he, 'Mother, I've got made sergeant, and now I shall send to you regular."

"Well, I've heard no better news this many a day!" said Matilda.

"It *was* good, dear. Well, I paid the doctor, and when Mr. Ball came next day, says I, 'There's the money, sir,' and he stared. 'Indeed,' he says. 'I am surprised, but them that pay can stay.' So you see, there's money to spend, more money, dear, when we be laid up with the rheumatize." Upon this she laughed with genuine joy, and, taking up her kettle, wished Matilda good afternoon, and hobbled away.

And I knew, though it had never occurred to the old woman, that all this happiness was owing to my penny! If she had not had it to spend, she would not have walked to the post-office; if she had not walked to the post-office, she would not have got her son's letter—that precious letter which had saved her from misery and the workhouse.

How happy I was as we walked home; I seemed to tread on air, and yet I knew of how little value the penny really was, it was only my having been permitted to give it under such peculiar circumstances that had made it such a worthy and important coin.

The lesson taught me by these little events I did not easily forget, and I think their moral is too obvious to need elaborately enforcing. It may, however, be summed up in few words.

First, Do not expect that in your own strength you can make use of even the best opportunity for doing good.

Second, Do not put off till another day any good which it is in the power of your hand to do at once.

And thirdly, Do not despond because your means of doing good appear trifling and insignificant, for though one soweth and another reapeth, yet it is God that giveth the increase; and who can tell whether He will not cause that which is sown to bear fruit an hundred-fold; who can tell whether to have even a penny to give under certain circumstances may be to have, not a Copper, but a Golden Opportunity!

POINTED WORDS HEARD AT KING'S CROSS.

[One Sunday forenoon, a middle-aged man stood in the open space before the carriage entrance to King's Cross railway station. He had a little Bible in his hand, and a crowd of about two hundred people round him. He preached from Acts xvii. 30: "*And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent.*" And this is the substance of what he said, taken from the notes of one who happened to hear him.]

How kind it was of our blessed Saviour to send St. Paul to tell the Athenians how to escape from their state of sin and misery! The Apostle stood on the top of a hill, when he uttered the words which I have read, as I am standing here now to speak to you. Of course I do not presume to put myself on a level with that great servant of Christ, but I have the same message to you that he had to the Athenians. It is a message of love. It proceeds from the unfathomable mercy of that great God who created all of us, in whose hands our breath is, and whose are all our ways. It is the glad tidings of the salvation of lost sinners through Him who paid our debts with his blood, and opened up the way to God by his resurrection.

What was it the Apostle said to the Athenians? "*The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent.*" What cause for rejoicing it would have been to the Athenians had they understood those words and believed

them! They and their fathers had been ignorant from time immemorial. From their childhood they had been sinning against God, drawing iniquity with cords of vanity and sin as it were with a cart rope. The day was not far distant when they would have to appear before God as their judge—when they would have to give an account of all their thoughts, words, and deeds to Him into whose hands it is a fearful thing to fall. But behold the compassion and grace of that merciful God. He knows that they will not be able to answer one out of a thousand questions. He knows that He must doom them to everlasting misery if they appear before his tribunal in their present condition. He knows that they are impotent to atone for even one of their countless transgressions. There is no hope for them, unless the mighty God himself comes to their rescue. But, He *has* come—He *has* provided a stream in which they may wash away their sins—He *has* offered to them a spotless robe to cover all their iniquities. Jesus came into this world to bear their penalty,—He, the Lamb of God, came to take away the sins of the world! And now in God's sight the past with all its darkness, ignorance, sins, and crimes, is buried in oblivion. Represented as it were in the person of his Apostle, He stands before them, his hand stretched out to them for reconciliation. "Come unto me," He cries, "and be saved. Turn away from your former paths and give yourselves up to Me. Let us be friends, for I love you. Be My children, and I will be your Father, and you will live and not die."

Well now, what is repentance? The word means, in the language in which the Apostle spoke, *to change one's mind* or *heart*. It does not mean merely a change in the outward conduct, but a complete alteration of the inner man. Suppose a drunkard, when he finds that his bad conduct brings him into disgrace and into the hands of the police, alters his way of life, and becomes of regular and respectable habits, but continues in his heart an enemy to God and a friend of worldly pleasures—people who do not know the heart, will say that that man has repented. They will call him a converted man. But God will not call him so. In the sight of God, who knows the heart, that man is still walking in the way of darkness and ignorance, because there is no true hatred of sin in him, because there is no love to God, no delight in divine and heavenly things. But suppose that, upon thinking over his past life, he becomes ashamed of it—sees that his whole course of conduct has been a disgrace, not only in the eyes of men, but of God; that not only his drunkenness and dishonest practices, but all his thoughts, words, and deeds have all his life long been bad and wicked;—suppose, on his realizing this, he becomes distressed, because he has so long and so recklessly dishonoured God his Creator, and ruined his own soul. In this state of alarm he locks himself up in his closet, and throws himself at the feet of Christ, who he believes has died for the sins of the world; and pours out his heart before that merciful Saviour. He tells that Saviour all about his past life, and says to Him that he regrets having been such a transgressor. He asks for mercy, and that all his sins may be blotted out by the blood of the Cross. He tells the Lord that he has resolved to begin a new life, and he entreats Him to give him the power of carrying that good resolution into practice. He gives up his heart to Jesus and rises from his knees as a friend, henceforth, of that mighty Saviour.

Now, though there are many among us who never return thanks to God for his benefits, but dishonour Him by their sinful lives, yet He continues every day to cause his sun to rise upon them, and to fill their mouths with the gifts of his hand. Truly, this is enough to show that He winketh at our sins, and that He does not punish us as we deserve. But oh, let us bear in mind that this cannot possibly continue for ever. There *must* be an end to it, for God is not a God to be mocked at, and if his goodness does not lead us to repentance, what else can we expect but a terrible doom at the approaching day of retribution?

Just look, my friends, at that wall over there covered with large bills. Do you see that one with the figure of an immense hat? It reminds me of a story which may illustrate my subject. In the days when princes were invested with unlimited sovereignty, and could dispose of a man's life according to their pleasure, there was a prince in Italy who was one of the most merciful that ever ruled a nation, but at the same time was a terrible punisher of wickedness when once he rose to do justice. Among his servants there was one who abused his goodness by numerous transgressions, not only against the rules of the palace, but also against the laws of the State. He was an oppressor of the poor, quarrelsome with his fellow-servants, and neglectful of his duties to his master. The prince had several timee kindly but seriously rebuked him, but as the servant found that punishment never followed, he became impudent and reckless. One day he allowed his passion so to get the better of him, that he caused a fellow-servant's death. He entreated his master's pardon, and the prince forgave him once more. This token of mercy, instead of softening his heart, made him more regardless still. He now thought that he could do anything, so one morning he ventured to appear before his master with his hat on. The prince, in a calm voice, asked him why he thus came covered into his presence. The answer was that he had caught a cold. His master's patience was now exhausted. "I will take care," said he, "that you never catch a cold again. Call the officer of the guard." The servant soon came back with that personage. "Take that man to prison," the prince said, "and order the executioner to nail his hat to his head." One of the prince's friends expressed his surprise at this severe sentence, since the servant had been pardoned for more serious crimes. The prince took a goblet, and having half filled it with water, requested his friend to put an apple into it. This made the water rise to the brim. The prince, thereupon, told his friend to drop in a coin. This made the water to run over. "How is it," the prince asked, "that the small coin caused the water to run over, whereas the large apple raised it only to the brim!"

My dear friends, the long-suffering of God is very

great, as we may learn from the history of the Jewish nation, whose iniquities He bore with for centuries, "rising early and protesting, saying: Obey My voice." But there is a limit to that long-suffering, and when matters have risen to such a height as to cause the cup of God's patience to flow over, that same God, who is "slow to anger," proves a God of "great power," who "will not at all acquit the wicked." This also is shown by the history of the Jewish nation. They obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of his evil heart, and therefore God gave them into the hands of their enemies, and scattered them abroad among the nations. And who can sum up the miseries to which that unhappy people have been subject since! Let us not suppose that God, because He winks at the times of our ignorance and rebellion, does not keep account of our transgressions. There is a fixed time, up to which He allows sinners to proceed, hoping that they will turn at his frequent warnings and urgent admonitions; but if they continue rebellious, and proceed beyond that limit, there is an end of patience, and justice steps in to do its awful work.

I beseech you, dear friends, let us not allow things to go so far as that. If our conscience tells us that we are walking in ways in which Jesus cannot walk with us, let us not suppose that those ways may, after all, end in peace, because they look so pleasant for the present. Let us not depend upon the testimony of our own deceitful hearts, for we are short-sighted beings, and when we walk in a way that leads through a paradise, we cannot see the fearful wilderness which is lying beyond. Let us rather depend upon the testimony of Him who sitteth upon the circle of the earth, whose eyes are in every place, and who knows as well what will follow as what is present. If it were possible that a life without Jesus could end in happiness, it might not be so necessary for us to repent. But it is absolutely necessary for our happiness to have Christ, and if we have Him not, every step we take is a step nearer to destruction. It is not merely better to be with Jesus than to be without Him, but to be without Him is death. And there is no true *life* but in Him. He is the ark, and out of it there is not one inch of ground which the deluge will not destroy.

My eye has just caught that hoarding over there. I see several persons reading the bills pasted on it, while one man is taking notes of the contents in his memorandum book. Now, what is the impression which those advertisements produce upon the minds of the readers? I am perfectly persuaded that they have not the slightest doubt as to the truth of all they read. They do not doubt for one moment but that they can get a hat for such and such a price at such and such a shop. They are quite assured that there is a fire and life insurance office in such and such a street, which was established fifty years ago, and has paid out so many thousand pounds. If one of those people resolve to insure his house, he will take an omnibus to-morrow morning and tell the conductor to put him down at the corner of that street, for he is perfectly sure that he will find the office there, though he never saw the place. Now, how is it that that man is so certain? There is but one answer possible to the question. *He believes the bill.* It contains a message to every man who reads it; and he places confidence in that message. He never saw the parties from whom that message comes; he does not even know their names; yet he puts his trust in their word; he is assured that they do not deceive him.

Now, dear friends, what else is the blessed Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ but just such an advertisement? And if we, without the slightest hesitation, believe the message of mortal men whom we never heard of before, why do we not eagerly receive the message of God our Creator? And what else does He require of us, but just that we simply *believe* his word? Perhaps there are some amongst us who scruple to come to God, because they think their sins are too great. But is it not distinctly written that He winketh at the times of our ignorance? Why, then, should you not rely upon that assurance, and come "just as you are, without one plea?" Or perhaps there are some amongst us who say, "I am not sure this is a message for *me*. I do not find *my* name mentioned in it." There is a bill over there, on which, in colossal types, a public meeting is advertised, and which all are invited to attend. What would you think of a man who said, "I hesitate to go there, for I am not quite sure this invitation is for me; I do not see my name mentioned in it?" Is not the message of God a message to *all men?* And are you not a human being? Has God not ordered the message to be proclaimed *every where?* Well, then, it must be his will that it shall be proclaimed at this King's Cross, just at the moment when *you* are standing here, that *you* may hear it.

Perhaps if I were to ask you whether you believe the Gospel, you would all with one consent answer: "We do." And so it is. The Gospel tells us that sin is destructive, and we believe it. Only we allow ourselves to make one exception: "*our* sins are not destructive." And the Gospel tells us that Jesus is the only Saviour, and we believe it, but again with this exception, that *we* can save ourselves if needs be. Alas! my friends, this is the great evil that gnaws at the life of Christendom: we believe the Gospel in its general tendency, but not with special application to ourselves. Oh yes, when we look at society at large, at its sins, its worldly-mindedness, its wars and strifes, we exclaim: "Why doesn't the world repent! What must matters come to if they go on in this way!" But we seldom say: "*I* must repent. *My* way is wrong." And yet society at large will never turn until every individual turns, without heeding what society ought to do. Did you ever see the Volunteers drilled? Then you must often have observed how a whole rank which was walking in a certain direction would in a moment turn and walk in the opposite direction. Each man turned himself, not minding what his comrade did, and thus the whole row was turned.

I see a baker's shop at the opposite side of the road, and a public-house here on my left. Suppose a man comes up to the public-house with a shilling in his pocket. He has a wife and family, and they are nearly starving. Now undoubtedly he ought

not to go in. He ought to turn his back upon the public-house and walk straight to the baker's. Suppose you tell him to do so, but he refuses, and goes to the bar, and comes out deprived of both his money and his wits. How could he act so foolishly? Did he not believe that you spoke the truth to him when you reminded him that he was ruining himself and his family? Yes, there was something within him which told him that you were perfectly right,—from previous sad experiences he well knew the misery which he was about to cause. Yet, notwithstanding all this, he went on recklessly. And how *could* he do so? Two causes led him to it, one sensuality and the other self-deception. Sensuality, which made him grasp present enjoyment at the expense of future misery. Self-deception, which made him hope that for some unknown reason the future misery might not happen, or at any rate might not be so very bad. In the same way do sinners go to the world to have a draught from its sweet but poisonous cup, while they despise the wholesome bread which is from heaven.

Do you see that funeral establishment over there? What a sad thing it is that there should be need for such places. Death has settled amongst us. We have called it to come to us, to dig our graves, and to make us weep. All this is the consequence of our ignorance, of our disobedience, of our rebellion. But behold, what a kind, gracious God is ours! "Repent," He says, "and it shall all be put right. Come to me and I will conquer death, and wipe the tears from your eyes." Now let us not shut our ears and hearts to that voice of love. Jesus loves *you*, though you may have been careless about Him hitherto. Do come to Him and you will find that there is no happier place than at the feet of that adorable Saviour.

NOTES FOR READERS OUT OF THE WAY.

The publication of the fourth Report of the Royal Commissioners on the Employment of Children in Trades and Manufactures has startled the country with another of those revelations of social slavery which are from time to time horrifying all kind-hearted and Christian people. When the Commission was appointed, it was known that in various branches of industry the evils prevailed which the Factory Act had put a stop to in the great manufactories; but the successive reports of the Commission have revealed a state of things infinitely worse than was formerly dreamt of. As new processes come into use, it would seem, there is sure to grow up under their shadow a horrible crop of cruelties, which the unhappy workers are too feeble to remedy, or even to make publicly known. In thoughtful minds, the fear increases that the development of our manufacturing system will prove more and more destructive to the working population, unless the legislature shall become far more vigilant, and employers far more considerate, not to say philanthropic. The Report in question deals chiefly with the metal manufactures, and a prominent place is given in it to the Sheffield grinders. It is known that their employment is about the most destructive of any to human life, the steel-dust entering their lungs, and usually proving fatal before the middle period of life. Yet it is found that it is common for children to enter on this employment as young as nine; most begin it before the age of ten; some as young as eight, or even seven. One of the Assistant Commissioners found a child engaged at it at the age of six. The ignorance of these young persons is at once ludicrous and deplorable. A boy of eight did not know who Jesus Christ was, or if He was a man; had never heard about Him. A polisher, aged 16, who could write a little, believed Glasgow to be a state where the Indians lived. Scotland was the abode of strange people, but Scotchmen came from Ireland. He did not know the Queen's name, but he believed it was Mary. The Commissioners recommend some of the clauses of the Factory Act to be extended to the Sheffield trades, and that the use of fans to protect workmen from the steel dust should be made compulsory. Among other recommendations of the Report are these, that Sunday work should be abolished in furnaces and rolling mills, and that females should not be allowed to be employed on pit-banks, nor in coke-hearths, nor in the manufacture of glass. At the Social Science Congress at Sheffield the unhealthy and cruel character of many of the Sheffield occupations was brought out in a paper by Dr. Hill, who showed that in that town the deaths are annually 2000 more than they would be if due precautions were taken for the protection of life.

A Church Congress has been held in the city of Norwich, similar to that held last year at Bristol, attended by clergymen and laymen of the Church of England. Though in the main a High Church gathering, it was attended by not a few representatives of the other sections of the English Church, some of whom took a pretty conspicuous part in its proceedings. The Congress was carried on by means of written papers and oral addresses and discussions on subjects partly affecting the Church of England, and partly relating to the community at large. Of the latter class of questions, we may specially notice the relations of Science and Scripture, and the subject of Preaching. The former of these was introduced by papers read by Dr. Pusey and Mr. Birks. Both papers strongly urged the duty of patient waiting for the solution of difficulties as yet unsolved, and rebuked the spirit that leaps to conclusions adverse to the Scriptures. In the course of the discussion that followed, the Earl of Harrowby mentioned an interesting circumstance in connection with the late Lord Lyndhurst. Calling on him a few months before his death, he found him sitting in his chair in extreme feebleness, with many books on his table before him. He said he had been reading many things on the Old Testament, and that he could not meet many of the difficulties that he encountered: all he could say was that his Saviour had

said, he who would not believe Moses and the Prophets would not be persuaded though one rose from the dead. That was enough for him, and having that, he did not need to trouble himself with those discussions. The first paper, on "Preaching and its Adaptation to the Present Times," was read by Dr. Alford, who commented on the utter want of care taken to train ministers as preachers. He urged the modification of the formality that usually marks written sermons; great attention to the beginning and the conclusion; an average length not exceeding thirty minutes; and simplicity without childishness. Sermons addressed to children he had no faith in. Above all, unreality should be guarded against—sermons should express real feelings, and deal with the realities of life. He urged preachers to be simple and earnest in proclaiming their blessed Lord and Master, and to maintain that childlike faith, and that steady earnest church life that would not preclude the unbeliever from obtaining access to them, or show him that he met with no sympathy. The Rev. Daniel Moore, Rev. Edward Bickersteth, Rev. J. C. Ryle, the Dean of Ely, and others addressed the Conference on the same subject. Mr. Ryle dwelt on the special case of country congregations, mostly uneducated, the difficulty of preaching to whom was extreme. One of the most difficult positions possible to conceive was that of a clergyman who stood up in a pulpit of a country church on a summer afternoon, when the people were warm, and then endeavoured to keep them awake. He was strongly opposed to the notion that uneducated preachers were most adapted to uneducated people. The Gospel of Jesus Christ was not effete, and had lost none of its power; to strain after novelty of doctrine was not the way to get a real hold on the people.

The Nineteenth Conference of the Evangelical Alliance has been held at Hull. Among those who took an active share in its business may be mentioned the Hon. J. W. Van Loon, of Amsterdam, Supreme Judge of Holland; Rev. Dr. Bliss, of the United States, President of the Protestant College at Beyrout; Pasteur Revel, President of the Waldensian College, Florence; Pasteur Casalis, of Paris, and Pastor Beskow, of Stockholm. Some interesting information was communicated regarding the progress of the Gospel in Continental countries. M. Revel remarked that Italy formed at present one of the most favourable fields in the world for Evangelistic labours. At Brescia, for example, on the very borders of Austria, the ground had been broken by a colporteur, three years ago, selling a number of Bibles, and now there were sixty-five communicants. At Florence they were printing an edition of the "Pilgrim's Progress" of 10,000 copies, and other books of religious instruction. Pastor Beskow, of Stockholm, observed that a great revival was going on in Sweden, which might be said to have begun almost with the century. For himself, he had to preach every day. At first the people had been forbidden to hold prayer meetings, but they would not give them up, and by-and-by the restriction was removed. The Hon. J. W. Van Loon gave a somewhat dark account of the state of religion in Holland, but expressed the hope that the Alliance, by holding its next annual conference at Amsterdam, would help to promote the spiritual good of the country. Dr. Bliss, in speaking of the religious condition of Syria, referred to the importance of the recent translation of the Bible into Arabic, and to the purpose of the college with which he was connected, which was to train native ministers for the East. Among the most prominent of the miscellaneous papers read was one by the Rev. Dr. M'Cosh, Professor in Queen's College, Belfast, on the characteristics of the Broad Church and the Narrow Church in all denominations.

Some laymen of mark in England have been giving expression to their sentiments on the subject of missions to the heathen. Mr. J. D. Coleridge, M.P., in addressing a meeting at Exeter in connection with the Societies for Propagating Christian Knowledge and Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, strongly urged the necessity of union on the great foundations of Christianity. "We live in a time when the very foundations of Christianity are assailed, not by open enemies but by men calling themselves, and from their hearts believing themselves, to be true Christians—men of genius and of learning, and men of chastened tempers and self-denying lives, men justly and greatly honoured and beloved, and against whom I should be ashamed to say a word except this—that if it be true that we and they differ about the foundation of Christianity, their genius and their virtue, their abilities and the loftiness and purity of their character make them all the more powerful and formidable opponents. That we are so at issue, is my very intimate conviction: and how are these men to be met? Not by personal abuse; not, forgive me for saying so, by public condemnation; not by imputation of bad motives, and not by any of the ordinary and more allowable arts of polemical controversy; but they are to be met by clearly, strongly, and perpetually teaching those simple matters of fact in the New Testament upon which all people profess to be agreed, and which, at least directly and in terms, have never yet been openly assailed." We presume that Mr. Coleridge means, not that the refutation of fundamental error is never to be resorted to, but that the inculcation of truth should be more relied on for the removal of unbelief and the production of faith. The Attorney-General, Sir Roundell Palmer, whose "Book of Praise" is so widely known and so much esteemed, addressed a meeting on Missions, at Atwick, near Hornsea, in Yorkshire, some evenings ago. His testimony to the connection of Christianity and civilisation was strong and emphatic. "What," he asked, "should we be this moment, if we were to depart from the Gospel of Christ? Why, we should be savages of a worse kind, savages armed with the knowledge which devils may possess, but without any of those gifts and graces which alone give value to empire, to power, to wealth, to arts, to civilisation, to anything which we have. Am I without authority, without evidence in saying so? Whether we look to ancient times or modern times, that proposition can be clearly proved. That which gives value to all the civilisation on which we pride ourselves, to all the wealth which we possess, to all our commerce, to all our arts, to all our power, is our Christianity alone. I say the proof is not difficult. Those who have read

the account of the Christians and Romans at the beginning of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, will be able to understand that, in ancient times at all events, it was as I say; but it is so now also; for if we look abroad there are other civilised nations, not perhaps equal to us, not by any means so far beyond us as some suppose, without the Gospel. The Chinese are a civilised nation, the Hindoos are a civilised nation, the Mohammedans of Asia are a civilised people; but the horrible atrocities which prevail amongst them, the disregard of life, the want of natural affection, the abominable vices and crimes which prevail, are such that everyone must feel that civilisation on those terms is no gift of value to man. It wants the salt with which alone it can have savour." No less emphatic was Sir Roundell's testimony to Christianity as the only true basis of social prosperity—a position to which able writers of a certain class are now offering vigorous opposition: "If we desire to do good to mankind, it is not only our duty to endeavour to do it in this way, by extending the knowledge of the Gospel, but there is no other way in which it can possibly be done."

The year 1866 has long been looked forward to by interpreters of prophecy as one that would mark an important epoch in the downfall of the Papacy. When the Emperor of the French fixed on that year as the time when he would withdraw his troops from Rome, the expectation that some decisive change would take place then was greatly quickened. It appears, however, that the Pope and his advisers are bent on signalizing the year in a different manner. The 29th June, 1866, according to tradition, will be the 1800th anniversary of the martyrdom of St. Peter, and the Pope, it is rumoured, will celebrate the event by convoking all the catholic bishops of the church at Rome. It is plain that there is no lack of courage of a kind in the proceedings of the Vatican, for in addition to the Encyclical that lately astonished the world, denouncing all progress and innovations in church and state, an allocution has just been delivered which is levelled at Freemason brotherhoods and all secret societies. No one can tell what the next eighteen months will bring round in the history of Italy and the Papacy. It is, however, gratifying to find both that the civil government of the country gets more consolidated, and that streaks of evangelical light are shooting here and there over the firmament.

Among recent illustrations of the parable of the mustard-seed, the history of a Protestant mission in the island of Elba is one of the most remarkable. Some ten years ago, a vessel from that island entered the harbour of Nice. The captain, Cignoni, a respectable man and a zealous Roman Catholic, happened to be accosted one day on the quay by the well-known Francesco Madiai (whose persecution in Tuscany some years ago created so much interest), and asked to buy a Bible. As Cignoni did not know what that was, he naturally hesitated, but being told it was the Word of God, he bought it, and taking it home, showed it to a humble acquaintance, a mason named Quattrini. At first but little interest was felt in it, but as Quattrini proceeded, he became more in earnest; prayed for light from Heaven, and at last came to see and embrace the truth, without any human instrumentality. Meanwhile, Cignoni and his brother, in their voyages to Nice, became acquainted with Madiai, attended his religious meetings, and became like-minded with him; so that when at home, they and Quattrini and a few friends held similar meetings to read the Word of God. For some time this went on in secret, the Bible being concealed sometimes in a pit in Quattrini's garden, and sometimes in a hole made by him in the wall of his house. By-and-by, the Elba converts avowed their change of religion, and by the announcement created great consternation among their friends and the public. Still they held on; and in 1862, at their earnest request, an Evangelist was sent to hold meetings in the island. At Rio Marina, where the converts reside, he was received with great joy. The room where his meetings were held became crowded; and through the contributions of the people, which amounted to a considerable sum, and the aid of Christian friends, a neat church, capable of containing 250 people, was erected. There are now three stations where worship is held, and out of a population of 12,000, 500 are believed to have received the truth.

In the annals of missionary operations, an interesting event has occurred at Aberdeen, in the launch of a missionary ship, a beautiful new clipper barque, named the "John Williams," having been launched for the London Missionary Society. The ship has been built by subscriptions raised in the Sunday schools throughout the kingdom, and is intended to replace a vessel bearing the same name that was recently lost. An immense number of children and a vast miscellaneous assembly were present at the launch.

The presence of Queen Emma of Hawaii in England at the present time lends additional interest to a group of islands in which Christianity has achieved one of its greatest triumphs. This result has been accomplished mainly by the instrumentality of the American missionaries. A few years ago, Mr. Richard H. Dana, a distinguished lawyer, and member of the Episcopal Church in Boston, U.S., visited the islands; more recently he has published an account of his impressions. He bears the highest testimony, both to the character of the missionaries, and to the fruits of their labours. "It is no small thing to say of the American Board, that in less than forty years they have taught this whole people to read and write, to cipher, and to sew. They have given them an alphabet, grammar, and dictionary; preserved their language from extinction, given it a literature, and translated into it the Bible and works of devotion, science, and entertainment, &c., &c. They have established schools, reared up native teachers, and so pressed their work that now the proportion of inhabitants who can read and write is greater than in New England; and whereas they found these islanders a nation of half-naked savages, living in the surf and on the sand, eating raw fish, fighting among themselves, tyrannised over by feudal chiefs, and abandoned to sensuality, they now see them decently clothed, recognising the law of marriage, knowing something of accounts, going to school and

public worship with more regularity than the people do at home, and the more elevated of them taking part in conducting the affairs of the constitutional monarchy under which they live, holding seats on the judicial bench and in the legislative chambers, and filling posts in the local magistracies."

A treaty has been completed and ratified between Great Britain and Madagascar, regarding which Mr. Ellis writes:—"It contains more in favour of the Christians than I expected," Lord Russell having taken care to introduce explicit provisions securing civil and religious freedom both to the missionaries and the native Christians. Mr. Ellis being on his way home, will bring explicit accounts of the progress and prospects of Christianity. Meanwhile, a missionary writes, that "although some members of the government may not be favourable to foreigners or to their religion, yet Christianity is spreading far and wide, and the seed scattered in the days of persecution is still springing up and bearing fruit in places where one would least of all have expected it. The government know that they cannot extirpate Christianity; that it has become a power which no force or ingenuity can destroy."

From China fresh accounts arrive of the progress of the mission at Amoy. In six months thirty-three members have been added to the church of the London Missionary Society, making a total in that city of 413 native Christians, there being also about the same number in connection with the English Presbyterian Mission. Some interesting facts are mentioned, showing the self-denying fidelity of some of the converts. A man of forty-six, who gained his living by selling gilt paper, used in idolatrous services, becoming a Christian, made up his mind, after much opposition by his relations, to abandon that business entirely and follow the Lord fully. Another convert publicly burned the implements by which he had made his living, as a maker of gambling cards.

Turning to the field of literature, an official announcement has appeared that the elaborate commentary on the Bible, commonly called "The Speaker's Commentary," is in steady progress. It was suggested by the Speaker of the House of Commons, and the work has been parcelled out among the most learned divines of the Church of England, who are now hard at work with their respective tasks.

The editorship of the *British Quarterly Review*, which since its commencement, more than twenty years ago, has been in the hands of the Rev. Dr. Robert Vaughan, has been resigned by that distinguished gentleman, who says that a man of seventy must not expect to be what he was at fifty. It has been throughout the chief literary organ of the Congregationalist body, though it has not confined itself to the advocacy of their predominant views Its literary character has always stood high, and its articles have been generally good, though hardly brilliant, and uniformly on the side of revealed truth. It is hereafter to be conducted by the Rev. H. Allon, of Union Chapel, and the Rev. H. R. Reynolds, Principal of Cheshunt College.

Of the theological works that have recently appeared, one of the most considerable, and certainly one of the most interesting and instructive, is "The Collected Writings of Edward Irving," in five large volumes. It is edited by his nephew, the Rev. G. Carlyle, and consists to a considerable extent of hitherto unpublished materials. A supplementary volume is promised, to include the best of his writings on prophecy. Mr. Irving's case is an instance of the benefit that sometimes arises from delaying for a generation the publication of a biography. The Life, by Mrs. Oliphant, has kindled the interest of the present generation in the remarkable preacher, and made thoughtful and Christian readers turn with avidity to his writings. In many respects these writings are more adapted to the present generation than to the last. Tendencies which were but in the germ when he lived, but against which he launched many a bolt of rebuke, are now in full blow, and the fearless exposure of their godless character and unprofitable results, which he made so eloquently, would be most useful to many at the present day. No man had ever a deeper dread of that tendency to the idolatry of the human—to enthrone man's will, intellect, imagination, interests, and passions, which asserts itself so strongly at the present day. No man ever showed more fearless boldness, more impassioned courage, in claiming for the one living and true God, the God of the Bible as well as of Nature, the honour and glory due to Him alone. The prophet-like character of the preacher; his identification of himself with his Master; his speaking like one having authority,—while no doubt it leads him often into affectation, and sometimes into presumption, gives, nevertheless, a noble and most refreshing tone to his eloquence, that contrasts finely with the timidity and feebleness of much modern religious teaching. It is almost needless to refer to the faults and errors of Irving, or to the strange opinions he held on some points of doctrine, and the wild speculations on Prophecy into which he was ultimately led. The sensible reader will not regard him as an authority either on the human nature or on the atonement of Christ. But Irving is an author who can well afford an abatement to be made from the value of his writings, without any fear of their being rendered valueless. To those readers to whom five or six large volumes are too formidable to read, or too expensive to buy, as well as to those who possess the whole, the publisher has done a favour by issuing a volume of "Miscellanies," consisting of some of the most valuable and characteristic pieces selected from his writings—ethical, social, doctrinal, practical, historical and prophetical, missionary, biblical, and critical. Similar in form to the well-known Selections from the writings of Ruskin, and those of Carlyle, this volume will be eagerly welcomed by many who will be pleased to find together so many of Irving's choicest gems.

NOTE.—*We have to explain to our readers that circumstances have induced Dr. Hanna to substitute a series of papers on the Life of Our Lord for his Journal of a Tour through Palestine, advertised to commence in the present Part.*—EDITOR.

Drawn by [illegible]. Engraved by J. Swain.

THE SHEPHERD'S FIELD AT BETHLEHEM.

(From a Photograph.)

"NO ROOM IN THE INN."

A CHRISTMAS ADDRESS.

THOUGH you know the Christmas story by heart, and hear it read again and again every year, yet it never ceases to strike you. No wonder; for it is not a second-hand tradition, under which your hearts can continue cold, or even begin to doubt. How inexhaustibly rich is it in matter for consolation, for instruction, for raising the spirit heavenward! How full of significance are all the features of the unparalleled picture! But let us, for the present, limit our attention to the last of these features. Mary lays her first-born Son, wrapped in swaddling-clothes, in a manger. This word is alone sufficient to tell us that that "holy thing which was born of her, and which *was to be called* the Son of God," saw the first rays of light in a stable. And why in a stable? "Because," the Evangelist writes, "there was no room for them in the inn."

"Because there was no room for them in the inn!" Not for them, and consequently not for Christ, whom this woman carried under her heart. Here we stop. The Evangelist does not comment. Nor is comment necessary. The fact speaks for itself, and leads us to feel much, and to think more.

No room for them in the inn! Poor deplorable inn! What an honour it denies itself! What a blessing it sends past its door! It does this in ignorance, but not without guilt. The person who locked his door upon Mary and Joseph under the cover of such words as these:—"Good folks, there is no room for you here, nor anywhere else, I think, for every inch is occupied in these busy days of the taxing. I would advise you to try and get under any roof. Perhaps you may be able to find an empty stable or pen somewhere:"—that man certainly knew not what he was doing, nor who they were whom he was refusing. But he must, at all events, have noticed Joseph's honest face, and observed the condition in which Mary was. And they undoubtedly told him how long a way they had come, and how they, too, came to be taxed, because they were of the house and lineage of David. All the same! "No room here," was the answer.

Alas! we know all about it. A numerous company of travellers, who come with a large suite and much luggage, often find room where the simple pedestrian who carried his own knapsack was told, hours before, that the house was quite full. And full as the inn at Bethlehem was, yet, with a little exercise of kind feeling, a corner might doubtless have been found for this humble couple from Galilee, especially for a woman in Mary's condition. But this kind feeling seems to have been lacking, so that if there were persons who might have found accommodation, or for whom room might have been made, this much is certain, that Joseph and Mary were not of the number. "*For them*," St. Luke says, "there was no room." An Apostolic pen writes: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." We add: "And by being forgetful, others have sent away the mother of the Lord, and with her the Lord himself."

What must not Mary's heart have felt when she, the "mother of the Lord," found the inn of the city of David shut upon her! Before this it must have been as if the salutation of the angel was still sounding in her ears: "Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women;" or the exultation of her cousin Elisabeth: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? . . . And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord." Those words had strengthened her faith; and faith, thus strengthened, had found power and utterance for praising God: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name." Nor had she failed to experience that He *continued* doing great things for her. That which it was not in her power to tell to her beloved Joseph, the Lord himself had made known to him by sending an angel in his dream; and the man who "had been minded to put her away privily," now doubled his tenderness and care for her, not knowing what to do to make up, through love and reverence, for the innocent suspicion with which he had saddened her heart. The decree of Cæsar (God's way with her) had, in this her last month, called her to Bethlehem; to Bethlehem, that city which she of all the daughters of Israel, was the last to think of without being reminded of that word, "Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from old from everlasting." Far away in the south of Judah lay that city of David which was called Bethlehem. A long way it was from Nazareth in Galilee; a hard journey, across hills and valleys, for a woman in her state. But the Lord, to whom she had lifted up her eyes for help, had been her guide, "her keeper, her shade upon her right hand." "The sun had not smitten her by day, nor the moon by night," and with her Joseph she had reached the old royal city, their "own city," in safety. It is true, though it was their own city, yet they were perfect strangers in it; they had there neither a relative nor a friend, and they entirely lacked both the required outward appearance and the necessary recommendation to secure for themselves a good reception. But whenever, during their journey, anxiety rose in their minds, no doubt they said to one another in a voice of firm confidence, "The Lord will provide. In the mountain of the Lord it shall be seen!" But now—no provision was made. This, indeed, looked different

from what Mary had described in her doxology, "He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away." Here the rich carried everything before them, while the needy one, though carrying the Salvation of the world under her heart, had to look on.

Such are the tests to which God puts the faith of his saints. But if those saints are Marys and Josephs, they neither complain nor marvel. In their humble-mindedness nothing can offend them. One moment they may receive a shock, and feel at a loss; in the next they take even the refusal of man as from the Lord. Very well, let the door of the inn remain closed against them; it will be all right with them when they are landed in the stable. They are sure to witness there as well as in the best inn, nay even more so, the realisation of that promise, "The Lord will provide. In the mountain of the Lord it shall be seen."

So it is. The words, "No room for you in the inn," remain to the account of the churlish unmercifulness which pronounced them, while to faith they are a cause of trial. But it is not long before the pious Galileans discover in all this a wise, holy, kind dealing of their Divine Guide. Here in this stable it is so quiet and peaceful; here they are alone with their God. No indiscreet eye spies them, and yet their discreet want finds what it desires. How happy do they deem themselves in this seclusion, when, soon after their arrival, the painful hour comes upon Mary, and the holy moment is there in which she is permitted to press "that Holy Thing which is born of her" to her bosom, to wrap it in swaddling-clothes, to lay it in the manger, prepared by her husband, with gratitude and veneration. And when by-and-by their solitude is broken and the low door is opened to let the shepherds in, whose honest, pious faces still reflect the heavenly glory which they beheld in the fields of Bethlehem; and when thereupon, with words never to be forgotten, they tell the words which were spoken to them, and the doxology which they heard from the lips of angels, surely this was not a scene for an inn! this was not a sight for profane eyes! Merely accidental, uncalled-for witnesses, would here have been in the wrong place. The Holy One of Israel hid this scene from the proud, and from the light-minded. The God of the humble and the quiet had destined it for his elect, and therefore brought them together in this quiet place, in this humble stable, and "shut them in."

Thus He makes everything work together for good, and in the end causes his Wisdom to be justified of her children. Thus He keeps back that which is apparently good, to give that which is really better instead. Thus the unmercifulness of men may be the means of leading his people to the experience of his most special love and care. As under the hospitable roof of cousin Elisabeth, so in the quiet corner of this dark stable, which is far better than any inn, the joyful anthem continues to rise: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."

In another respect still the wise love of God, as manifested in this dealing of his with Joseph and Mary, comes to light. Truly it would not have been good for them, nor would it have been proper, if such a tone as Elisabeth raised when exclaiming, "Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" had been protracted too long. That tone must give place to another. "No room for you in the inn," that was a more appropriate introduction to what now and henceforth was to be expected. Will it not be within a few weeks: "No room for this babe in Bethlehem. No safety in the whole land of Israel?" Oh, how rich in significance, how strikingly characteristic is this saying: "No room in the inn," for the history at the commencement of which it stands; for the whole history of the life, the sufferings, and the privations of the Prophet "without honour in his own country, without credit amongst his own kin;" of the Son of Man "who had not where to lay his head;" of the incarnate Word, who "came unto his own, but his own received him not;" of the Saviour of the world, who was not welcome to the world, whom Judea left to Galilee, whom Israel left to the heathen; whom the rich made over to the poor, the wise to the ignorant, the righteous to the publicans, the many to the few—just as the inn made Him over to the stable; but who takes that stable as his place, to fill with his presence and blessing, and make it resound with the hallelujahs of men and angels;—nay, who makes that obscure spot the starting-point of such wonderful works as only humble, suffering, self-denying love can perform, and of victories such as only that love can command.

If it is true that this was the first experience of Joseph and Mary, of the "highly favoured and blessed among women," who carried the Holy Thing of God under her heart, and that this experience was, as it were, symbolic and prophetic of what for his sake was in store for them; if it is true that refusal, repulse, dismission, were the peculiar lot and share of Him, who never announced Himself save to bring blessing and honour, then do not marvel, O you who are his disciples and followers, that yours is often the same experience. You know the words which He, stretching forth his hand toward his disciples, pronounced: "Behold my mother and my brethren; for whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother." But closely akin to Him as you are, yet as He could not spare those painful experiences to his mother after the flesh, so neither can He spare them to you. As long as the world is the world, and wherever it is emphatically so, these experiences will be yours. If ye were of the world, the world would in you love its own; but now ye are not of the world, as your Saviour was not of the world, therefore the world refuses you as it refused Him. You are highly favoured of God; you follow your calling; you do your duty; you give to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's; moreover, you carry a blessing with you which you desire to communicate, to pour out and to spread, and which nobody can do without: but you lack worldly recommendations, and cannot divest your-

selves of that "unacceptable and alarming something" which characterises you in the eye of the world as it characterised the pedestrians of Galilee, especially the daughter of David, in the eye of the Bethlehem innkeeper, whose first thought was: "No room for you." Let the world alone. Pity the inns—I mean the circles, the families, the hearts in which there is no room for Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, the Redeemer of the soul! Alas! there are many such hearts, and manifold are the things that fill them. Here it is the care of the world, there the pride of life. With some it is their much learning; with some their great vanity; with some their numerous occupations—that unmanageable, indescribable thing which is called "business." Do pity them. Poor people they are, indeed. May they not be poor for ever! Do pray God that in due time, in his way, He may make room where there is no room as yet. But do not pity yourselves if you should try in vain to get their doors opened to Jesus. Depart with humility; depart in love; depart in faith. Be content where the Saviour is content, in a quiet humble corner, with the little ones in Israel, for whom, if it please God, even the stars in their courses will fight (Judges v. 20) to introduce a host of unexpected worshippers of Him for whom this world has no room.

But is it only hints and encouragements of this kind which I, as a servant of the Lord, have to administer while addressing a festival meeting from a Christmas text? Or is it not my duty also, with all the seriousness which love inspires, to put the question in the midst of this assembly:—How is it with you, my hearers, my fellow-professors of Christ, who with me celebrate this festival? Have you truly taken into your heart, into your house, into your life, Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, refused by so many? Have you let Him in with his Word and Spirit, with all his blessings, with all his virtues, as your Saviour, as your Regenerator, as your King and Lord, whom you thank, whom you serve? Have you Him, and do you keep hold of Him, with the hands and arms of faith and love? Have you made room for Him by removing everything that cannot be under the same roof with Him, and are you still, with a love which every day grows more attentive, occupied in removing one thing, and another, and another which you apprehend to be offensive and displeasing to Him? Or is the unhappy heart of any one of you still like the inn—the inn for all that comes and goes—where, one after another, all the lusts, all the cares, all the vanities, all the concerns, and all the hallucinations of the world put up, but where Jesus knocks in vain, and where there is "no room" for anything that comes from Him? Oh, poor, deplorable heart! How great is thy loss! This Jesus would bring rest where now there is nothing but restlessness; quietness and order where now there is so much ado! O, believe me, where the door is opened to Him, where He comes in and stays, there is "none other but the house of God, and the gate of Heaven." If then at this festival He "stands at the door and knocks," if his servant knocks to secure room for Him, I beseech you, open the door unto Him!

The relations which the souls of the children of man occupy with regard to the Saviour are various and manifold; and there are thousand gradations between a full acceptance and an absolute refusal. Oh, certainly, all those workings and movements of the heart towards the Saviour which evince a want of Him, which show that a voice within whispers, You cannot do *without* Him, though you will not yet go *with* Him—all these ought to be appreciated, for they may be highly blessed. Nay, I will not even despise the phenomenon by which persons who all the year round do not care for a Christian church or a Christian sermon, come to our public assemblies on Christmas-day, as if afraid to allow themselves to become complete strangers to Christ; as if the manger of the Saviour of the world contained something which they cannot help hearing say to them, "Do not leave me altogether out of sight! I am needful to you!" But, my friends, let no one deceive himself by taking these more or less important evidences of inward strife and struggle for evidences of true Christian life. Not until you live with and for Christ, and feel that you live through Him, is that life yours. That life cannot manifest itself save where "Christ dwells in your heart, and you are rooted and grounded in love; so that you are able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God."

May "He that is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us," bring all of us to this fulness in Christ through his power! And "unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end!"

N. Beets.

WORD OF LIFE.

Precious Volume, gift divine!
Love displayed in every line.
Book of truth, effulgent light!
Cheering day, dispelling night;
Sent the narrow path to show,
Sent to lead from sin and woe.
Source of comfort, choicest balm!
Yielding hope, inspiring calm.
Sacred medicine, bringing health!
Purest treasure, lasting wealth!
Sweetest manna, holy food!
Heavenly nectar, unmixed good!
Word of Life! to all made free;
Breath of Christ, we pant for thee!
Sunlike gospel, lamp of God!
Shed thy quickening rays abroad.

A SABBATH IN ELBERFELD.

THERE are two methods, by no means incompatible with each other, of depicting a country, a people, or an age. You may give a comprehensive sketch of the whole, statistical, historical, geographical ; or you may photograph small sections on such a scale that the observer may be able to detect the minutest features of the landscape. Both are best ; and the most successful of recent historians, such as Macaulay and Froude, have woven their beautiful fabrics by throwing in alternate threads of comprehensive generalisation and of particular detail.

It is on the latter of these two lines that the subjoined sketches proceed. In this department the limited knowledge of the observer is scarcely a disqualification. If he has an eye, and keeps it open, it is not necessary that he should have at his finger ends all the facts and dates of a nation's history. Specimens from which you can learn the forms of foreign life may be successfully gathered by one who is himself only a learner. Moreover, first impressions possess an independent interest and value of their own, without respect to their absolute correctness. But enough by way of preface to warn the reader that he must not expect to find here a slice from the Encyclopædia, containing everything connected with the subject. The only value which the picture possesses is, that it is taken on the spot from first hand, lovingly studied, and truly rendered.

I shall introduce freely certain honoured names ; for, on the one hand, I shall have no occasion to say anything but good regarding them, and, on the other, what I shall say is strictly, severely true. I cannot do anything in novels. It is not my line. A painter may either copy a landscape as it lies in nature, or compose one that never existed ; and, for aught I know, there may be a place for imagination in sketches drawn with a dogmatic or practical aim ; but I am not acquainted with it. On the question whether the imaginary in this department can anywhere be good, I do not presume to pronounce an opinion ; but I entertain a decided conviction that everywhere a true narrative of fact is better.

On Friday, 20th September, 1860, I left Nurnberg, in the kingdom of Bavaria, travelling all alone, taking a ticket, in the first instance, for Bamberg, with the intention of making up my mind on the way at leisure, as to where I should go next ; for, truth to tell, a part of the deliciousness of solitary travel consists in the abandon regarding routes and places and times, which becomes possible when you have nobody's convenience to consult but your own. As I gazed somewhat listlessly over my outspread railway map, while the train was sailing along the dull plain in which the learned but sleepy Erlangen lies, my eye fell on the name of Elberfeld. This suggested a thought, and supplied an object. As the week was drawing to a close I had begun to cast about for the means of turning to some profitable account the only remaining Sabbath of my furlough. Elberfeld was associated in my mind with the earlier ministry of Krummacher, with sustained evangelical and missionary work, and with manifestations of revived spiritual life in more recent years. Thither, therefore, on the instant, I determined to direct my course, so as to arrive at my destination on Saturday evening. By an early start from Mainz, on Saturday morning, I could reach Cologne at four o'clock in the afternoon, without the necessity of taking the railway. Down the regal Rhine accordingly I went by steamer, enjoying its varied beauty and grandeur, as much as though I had never witnessed them before.

At Cologne, in company with two friends, Dr. and Mrs. Denham of Derry, whom I had met in the Rhine boat, I stepped into an open cab, in order to go and deposit my effects at once at the railway terminus. After we were seated and about to start, a gentleman, dressed in black, with a white cravat, made a signal to the driver and stepped into the empty seat. This did not take me by surprsse ; for I had observed a similar practice elsewhere on Prussian territory. A traveller sees a cab about to start, or meets one on the way, with not more than three passengers. Forthwith he hails the driver, and, without consulting the persons who have prior possession, jumps in beside them. Arrived at their common destination, the interloper pays his share of the hire and goes about his own business. The practice seems to afford scope for the kindly feelings of the people, and it certainly saves money and horseflesh. I suspect it could not be transplanted into this country. The climate is probably too cold for it.

I immediately entered into conversation with the stranger. In a few moments, and by a few questions, we reciprocally elicited from each other the information that he was a merchant and I a minister —albeit that, as regarded dress at that moment, he looked the Pfarrer and I the Kaufmann ; that his home was in Elberfeld, and mine in Scotland ; that we had both at the same time, about a fortnight before, attended the meetings of the Evangelical Alliance in Geneva, and were both making our way, leisurely and by somewhat circuitous routes, back to our homes. We were strangers no longer. Henceforward we were brothers. The card of Herr Karl Klein of Barmen was in my hand, with a cordial invitation to visit him at his house on the morrow.

Here is a phenomenon that deserves and will repay some careful study. We were diverse in profession, pursuit, fatherland, and language ; in almost everything we were diverse ; but there was one thing common, and that one thing dominated. We had One Lord, One Master, one hope. Christ became the bond of union between Christians. I am persuaded that this link binds hearts more firmly together than either the world or the Church is aware of. The examples of strife between Christians seem to bulk more largely and make more impression than cases of an opposite character. But as there were seven thousand in Israel who had not bent the knee to Baal, at a time when even a true prophet in his despondency deemed

the apostacy universal; so, I believe, there are many thousands in Christendom who are united to their neighbours in love because they are united to Christ in faith, at a time when a scorning world and a desponding Church agree all too well in the erroneous belief that the religion of the age is destitute of power. There is in the religion of the age less of power to melt and weld human hearts into one than there should be; but there is more, much more, than scoffers allow, or faint-hearted disciples dare to believe. I am bound to testify, to the honour of the Lord and for the comfort of the brotherhood, that I have often found both at home and abroad, that the common name of Jesus removed mountains in a moment, and opened for me a broad path sheer into a brother's heart, when on other terms there would have been no access.

Here, too, on these waste sands of time, I mark the foot-print of the God of Providence. I believe I was led by a Father's hand to the spot where a brother was waiting to receive me. If you deny to me a providence in small things, you deprive me of a providence in all things. My creed in these matters coincides with that of Eliezer, slave and ambassador, when he was sent to seek a wife for Abraham's son, "I being in the way, the Lord led me." When an Ethiopian prince was returning from Jerusalem, through the desert, ill at ease and anxious, he lifted up his dark eyes, filled with gathering tears, from the parchment of Isaiah's gospel, and, lo, a speck on the far horizon! It increases apace; it takes the form of a man. A solitary traveller approaches, hails the First Lord of the Ethiopian Treasury, mounts into his waggon, and beginning at that scripture "preached unto him Jesus." There is a specimen of providence. God has said, Seek and ye shall find; the African was seeking in that desert, seeking the life of his soul; and the Spirit of God sent Philip away from his prosperous work in the city, to bear the water of life in his vessel to the thirsty soul in the desert. I don't believe that God ruled over all in those days, and has deserted the world in ours. I refuse to make a choice, as some teachers bid me, between God and the laws of nature. I hold to both. A dark world it would be to me if there were no ruler but the laws of nature; a poor consolation to tell me that the waves will be sure to beat upon my bark in strict conformity with the order of cause and effect; if I cannot look through the storm with glistening eyes and see "my Father at the helm."

In short, I was very happy when I met a Christian brother in a strange land; and my happiness was increased ten-fold by the belief which I enjoyed, that our steps were led on converging paths to the meeting-place by the ministry of the same Spirit who drew the Ethiopian into the desert of Gaza, and sent Philip to meet him there. "Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord" (Ps. cvii. 43).

Arrived in Elberfeld, I made my quarters good till Monday in its best hotel. All comforts and respectabilities; but not so much quiet as was desirable, on account of certain Prussian officers holding headquarters there, and mustering from time to time their bands of landwehr, returning home from their autumn manœuvres.

A crowded train from Cologne, and much bustle in crossing the Rhine by the bridge of boats at Düsseldorf. Between Düsseldorf and Elberfeld we passed near Neanderthal, a place that bulks largely in the transactions of those philosophers who are busy tracing the pedigree of man up to a primeval age. In a cave at that place, in the year 1857, somebody found a skull which has played a distinguished part ever since in discussions regarding the antiquity of the human race. In the altitude of its arch, it seems, this skull is exactly a medium between that of the chimpanzee and that of average European humanity. It is the skull of an idiot, suggests a simple inquirer. No, reply the philosophers, it's the normal type of an ancient race of men. This Neanderthal skull is worth its weight in gold to the Simian philosophers, for they greatly need a middle spot, on which to plant a foot, between the ape and the man. It is a long leap over, and a stepping-stone is welcome. It is as necessary and as useful as Egypt was to the first Napoleon, on his way from France to India, and they seem to pounce upon it with equal zeal. Napoleon never reached India: and possibly honourable gentlemen, notwithstanding the aid afforded by this old German cranium, may never be able to prove to us that we are the lineal descendants of the chimpanzee. I cannot say that my equanimity is much disturbed by the researches of the comparative anatomists. I believe both in God and in man, with a faith that I think no real discovery will, and no pretended discovery should, shake. Let us have all the facts collected, and all the conclusions freely stated; and let time try all. The truth is great and it will prevail.

On Sabbath morning there was a great rain; gentle in its manner, but vast in its quantity. There had been no rain for many weeks, the ground was parched, and the floods were welcome; but in the meantime an unspeakable dulness pervaded the air and communicated itself to human spirits. The heavens were very dark, and men's hearts seemed sad; at any rate mine fell down to zero, as I sat in my solitary chamber on that dreary morning. But it was then and there that, if not for the first time, at least much more vividly than at any former period, the thought presented itself, that when the scorched ground obtains at length its much needed refreshment, the landscape is always dark, never smiling in the sunshine. No man is so foolish as to complain, while the thirsty land is drinking in the rain from heaven, that he cannot enjoy at the same moment the comfort of bright skies overhead. In the spiritual sphere, I suspect the line of experience runs close and parallel. While a Christian is getting what he has often asked from God, a refreshing by the Spirit from on high, I think he is not ordinarily light-hearted and cheerful. I suppose, in grace as well as in nature, the times of greatest refreshment at the root are not times of great brightness overhead. We do not fret under the cloud which hides the sun while it waters the earth; neither should the children of God think that all is going against them in time of sadness. Our Father the Husbandman does not often water his garden while

the sun is shining. From causes known fully only to Himself, the water is more precious to the ground if the sun is veiled during the process. Only thoughtless children would complain that they cannot get the garden well watered from the sky without an interruption of the sunbeams. After long drought over a continent, the day in which rain comes is a dark dull day; in this aspect, God's goings in grace are like his goings in nature.

Rain more moderate. After breakfast made my way to the church, of which Krummacher was pastor. Entered early, long before nine, among the first. Took a seat in the gallery where it approached very near the pulpit. The congregation began to stream leisurely, steadily in. A man, who appeared to be a well-conditioned mechanic, took his seat in the pew immediately before me; and, observing that I was a stranger, addressed some questions to me. Nothing loth, seeing that conversation was permitted in the circumstances, I replied freely. Whereupon I was subjected to a catechising, which I thought more energetic than modest on the part of my new friend. Having learned that I was from Scotland, and that I was a minister there, he asked plumply if I were a Christian. I kept my composure, and answered somewhat meekly in the affirmative. "But are you a real Christian," he resumed, with most business-like coolness, "or only one in name?"

To this question I did not give a categorical reply; but in a somewhat round-about way expressed some of my views regarding the person and work of Christ, and the preciousness of his redemption. Thereupon, he grasped me by the hand, and became demonstrative in brotherly affection, as far as circumstances would permit; for by this time a large portion of the congregation had assembled, and the voices of the entered and the entering, accompanied by the organ, had begun to peal the opening hymn.

I was much interested in this incident: in an unexpected way, it revealed to me several features in the religious condition of the people. This colloquy could not have taken place unless there had been a good deal of positive earnest Christian life in the community; but neither could it have taken place unless there had also been a good deal of rationalistic infidelity in the neighbourhood, sheltering itself under hereditary Christian names, and national ecclesiastic organisations. Alas! the questions of this man, earnestly Christian, though not liberally educated, have a meaning in Germany which they would scarcely have in our own country. To be in the office of the Christian ministry is not in all cases there a security that the person even professes to believe that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. But in many districts of Germany and notably in the Wupperthal, a living faith has sprung up, and a vigorous Christian work is prosecuted. The life that springs up and grows in the midst of death, generally displays both excellences and defects, fashioned by the circumstances. The piety is in these circumstances real and lively; but it is apt to run into a pietism which is neither safe nor winsome. In short, both the substantial excellence and the circumstantial defects which were displayed by my mechanic interrogator in Elberfeld are such as one might be led to expect among the common people, where true spiritual life revives and finds itself surrounded still by the dead forms and dead formations of a past generation. Blessed be God for the revival; as it becomes wider the deformities which belong to the state out of which it sprung will drop gradually off. As the piety becomes more general and more educated, the pietism, in as far as it is injurious, will disappear.

The church was entirely filled, chiefly by men; in the gallery men only; below, both men and women. The minister entered the pulpit when the hymn was nearly finished. The portions of Scripture for the day were read, commingled with praise and prayer, and afterwards an energetic discourse delivered on the crisis of Paul's conversion at the gate of Damascus. By dint of clear speaking on the part of the preacher, and earnest listening on the part of the hearer, I contrived, with a very imperfect knowledge of the language, to bring away almost as much as I ordinarily take up of an English sermon. Any one may observe in his own experience how much the concentration of the faculties which you possess, will compensate for the want of those which you lack, as when the blind take out of hearing and feeling what other people never imagined these senses contained.

There was an interesting admixture of the imaginative and the real in the discourse. From the announcement, Acts ix. 9, "And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink," the preacher deduced the formula, "He saw not, he ate not, he drank not." Thus he is cut off at the three main channels from communication with the world and time. Then, "behold, he prays:" isolated from earth he enters into communication with Heaven; the Spirit possesses and fills his soul. Hungry, thirsty, blind, he comes to God for food, drink, light. Nothing from the world, all from Christ. This man has been emptied, and filled again: emptied of himself, and filled with all the fulness of God. Thus in conversion generally, by means more gentle or more violent, a soul is severed for a time, and in a measure from its relation to earth, that so it may be occupied and filled with the presence of God.

After the morning service, I made my way to Barmen—neighbouring town, or suburb of Elberfeld, as you please to call it, together a population of about 85,000—and found the residence of my friend Herr K. Klein. He introduced me with much kindness to his wife, his eldest son with his wife, and youngest son, a boy of twelve. There I was, plunged suddenly and deep into the bosom of a Christian family in the Fatherland, and that for the first time in my life. I was welcomed with much tenderness, although of me they knew nothing, on the ground of their love to the common Lord, both theirs and ours. I have since learned from Dr. Craig of Hamburgh, and others, that my host is a Gaius in those parts, and "a succourer of many."

The lady understood a little English, and her son more. While we enjoyed a simple but abundant meal, we contrived to get and give reciprocally not a little information regarding the coming of the Kingdom in Germany and in Scotland. After dinner, we

went in company to afternoon worship in one of the King of Prussia's United German churches, where Herr Klein seemed to bear office. At the tea-table, after we returned from church, Frau Klein produced a large English Bible, and selecting a chapter, Heb. xi., requested me to read it aloud. The whole family listened, and followed on their German Bibles. It seemed greatly to interest and please that Christian family to hear the Word which they loved in the accents of a people whom they regarded as brethren in the common faith. After I had finished, Herr Klein proposed to read a chapter in the German Bible, by way, as it seemed, of wedding the two tongues and two people emblematically together in the Lord. I confess that I abandoned myself to the fascination of the scene, and seemed to forget for the time that the world is still a wilderness, and that both a barren land and a dark flood lie between us and our rest. Gravely as well as affectionately, after the manner of his country, my host dismissed me in the evening, with a kiss on either cheek.

Before sending me away my kind entertainers placed me under the charge of a young minister (candidat) of the Church, who conducted me to the house of Herr Grafe, in Elberfeld. This gentleman, as I understand, is one of those who are separated in communion from the Church established ; but it is clear that he and his circle co-operate with the godly men of the National Church in Christian and benevolent works.

A curious example occurred here of the incongruous conceptions that get themselves struck off like eccentric sparks when people attempt to speak in a language which they but very imperfectly understand. A gentleman of the party, of extremely grave disposition and manner, possessed a few English words, and, like most other Germans, took great pleasure in using them. Having picked up from the papers a piece of English news that had not reached my ears, he benevolently proposed to impart his information to me. The Great Eastern had about that time met with an accident. Having lost the power of her rudder at sea, she had run wild for a time, and nearly destroyed herself before the crew succeeded in bridling her again. As the finale of this disaster, my grave German friend announced that of the passengers "all were saved, but thirty were blessed." Thirty had been wounded, and the French and English words, having lost their helms as it were, had fouled each other in the too limited seaway of his memory.

The candidat, having observed, doubtless, in the house that the well of my German was very shallow and unproductive, and being bent, moreover, on drawing out of me, while I was in his power, all possible information regarding the Churches in Scotland ; as soon as we were in the open air, tapped the ground at another spot, in the hope of finding a richer vein—that is, he tried Latin instead of German, for he did not know English. I suppose he must have found the spring here somewhat less intermittent in its flow, for he continued on that tack during the whole time that we remained together. Through an ambiguity in the Latin word "societas," which he employed, I was led into a mistake regarding the occupation he had carved out for me in the evening. I understood that I was about to be introduced to the meeting of a religious society, in the ordinary sense of that term ; but it turned out to be a select circle of two or three families, who met in each other's houses by turns every Sabbath evening, to eat their bread together, and converse on the progress of Christ's cause in their own hearts, and in the world around. I was ushered into a pretty large company, seated round a table on which a supper, plentiful but not luxuriant, was spread. The scene was so diverse from all that I had been accustomed to at home, that I was for a moment startled by the strange method of sanctifying the Sabbath. I determined, however, to keep my mind open, and endeavour to judge the methods of these German Christians by their fruits.

After the meal had proceeded certain stages, pipes and cigars were produced, and every gentleman without exception began to smoke vigorously, while all, gentlemen and ladies alike, maintained their seats at the table. A pipe was politely offered to me, and politely declined. In a short time we had nearly lost sight of each other in wreaths of smoke. In other circumstances I would have marched off, and sought refuge in the open air ; but so much was I interested in those people—in themselves and what they said—that, without even an internal murmur, I endured the physical suffocation in order to obtain the spiritual refreshment that was to be obtained on the spot.

I loved those Christians dearly, but I loathed then, and loathe at this hour, the expensive, filthy, troublesome, unhealthy, and in every way mischievous habit to which the men among them have abandoned themselves. I entertain a suspicion that some of the chief defects that appear in the German character are either caused or aggravated by the universal practice of smoking tobacco. Day labourers may smoke and escape with a smaller measure of mischief, but men who labour with their brain should beware how, for the sake of a pleasant sensation, they change, by the application of a narcotic poison, the physical condition of the delicate instrument of thought wherewith the allwise Creator has endowed his creature man.

Bating this, however, and passing over the custom so foreign to our views of assembling in a large party at supper on the evening of the Lord's Day, the whole tone and substance of the conversation I gladly testify was grave and godly. Whether in its manner their Sabbath-keeping was as good as ours I pronounce here no judgment, but in its substance I should rejoice if such Sabbath evenings were spread over all my own beloved land. The conversation was varied and easy, but its whole volume consisted of things that are glory to God and mercy to men. There was no prescription and no restraint, everyone said what he wished to say, and that was uniformly on the word and the work of the Lord. The conversation was somewhat polyglottish, for Herr Grafe and one or two others spoke English freely.

At that time a very intense spiritual movement was in progress in Glasgow and many other parts of Scotland. My friends had heard of the fact in general, and there was no end to their demand of

details. With unwearied interest they listened to all that I told them of what the Lord had wrought in our land.

I learned from Herr Klein that an institute for the training of missionaries is maintained at Barmen, and brought home a specimen of religious tracts printed by its society. With much interest I discovered on the way that a large proportion of them were translations from the English. It was pleasant to read Newman Hall's tracts and McCheyne's hymns, done into German, that they might serve another tide on the other side of the sea. Most of these tracts I have since given to strolling musicians from the Fatherland, whom I have met in our streets and highways. If the love of Jesus, as it flowed in measures from Robert McCheyne's lips, have found entrance into the heart of one of these wandering minstrels, it will be discovered "in that day" that the *life* went a great way round to reach its object.

WILLIAM ARNOT.

TO THE HOLY SPIRIT.

SPIRIT OF GOD! Almighty One,
Sent from the Father and the Son,
Completer of their work begun,—
Good Spirit, hear and aid.

They did not grudge the costly price,
Christ gave Himself a sacrifice,
Thou grievest, too, when men despise,—
Good Spirit, hear and aid.

Like Christ, Thou countest not the cost,
Strivest, like Him, to save the most,
Like Him, thou yearnest o'er the lost,—
Good Spirit, hear and aid.

Breathe on us, Lord, that we receive
Fresh grace, to make our souls revive;
Bid the dry bones arise and live,—
Good Spirit, hear and aid.

In the turmoil of life be near,
A shield from worldly hope and fear;
In joy to calm, in grief to cheer,—
Good Spirit, hear and aid.

When the heart sinks in heavier woe,
Spirit of peace, Thine aid bestow,
Oh! make it then Thy joy to know,—
Good Spirit, hear and save.

When lingering sickness, night and day,
Weighs down the soul, too weak to pray,
The thought of God its only stay,—
Good Spirit, hear and aid.

When the frame, trembling in disease,
Shakes like the leaves on aspen trees,
And courage fails, and fears increase,—
Good Spirit, hear and aid.

When wakening conscience is o'ercast
By dark remembrance of the past,
Defiled by sin, from first to last,—
Good Spirit, hear and aid.

Giver of penitence, impart
The sacred sorrow of the heart,
Nor spare its healthful, painful smart,—
Good Spirit, hear and save.

Oh! purge and cleanse the inward eye
From listless, hopeless apathy;
Cause black despair to quickly fly,—
Good Spirit, hear and save.

Then take the things of Christ, and teach
Glad tidings to the heart of each,
By Thy divine, effectual speech,—
Good Spirit, hear and save.

Quicken dull faith to see the Lord
And grasp the promise of his Word;
His peace upon the soul be pour'd,—
Good Spirit, hear and save.

Draw us to Christ the Spirit's way;
"Who comes to me," He deigned to say,
"Nowise shall be a castaway,"—
Good Spirit, hear and save.

Give more than peace—if we may dare
To lift our sinful hearts in prayer,
For grace vouchsafed Thy saints to share,—
Good Spirit, hear and aid.

Shine on our souls with gleams of joy,
Visions of bliss that cannot cloy,
Like beams athwart a troubled sky,—
Good Spirit, hear and aid.

But chiefly cleanse the soul to prove
Communion with a Father's love
(Such grace Thou givest, Holy Dove),—
Good Spirit, hear and aid.

That sacred tie, on earth begun,
Knit with the Father, through the Son,
Shall still endure when death draws on,—
Good Spirit, hear and save.

For all in Christ who, pardoned, die,
Inherit from the Lord Most High
A share in his eternity,—
Good Spirit, hear and save.

C. E. PRICHARD.

THE PEST, PROVIDENCE, AND PRAYER.

BY THE EDITOR.

In the month of August, 1845, I was spending a few days in an old mansion house on the shores of the Moray Firth. The oak-panelled walls of the dining-room were hung with pictures of the ancestors of my host, some of whom had played no inconspicuous part in the olden time. The sheen of their breastplates and their serious, determined air, comported well with their history. Right or wrong, they had, with others of the nobility and gentry, espoused the cause of the Covenant; but unlike many who, turning back, proved a deceitful bow in the day of battle, they stuck true to the "blue banner;" fighting, suffering for it, and earning the respect which courage and consistency seldom fail to secure.

Thinking, by way of contrast, of the happy days in which we live—tolerating differences, and granting to others the liberty we claim for ourselves—and how quietly that old mansion, once flashing with the fires and wrapt in the smoke of musketry, now stood among its venerable ash-trees and elms, I stepped out from their shade, one fine morning, to see the plenty as well as enjoy the peace that blessed our favoured land. There it lay all around, in hedged and well-cultivated fields, which, ripening, under God's showers and sunshine, and growing white unto the harvest, promised abundance both for man and beast. But what is this? Yesterday there were broad acres of potato there, with stems erect, leaves of healthy green, and the *shaws*, as they are called in Scotland, so luxuriant that it was not possible to distinguish one drill from another. Changed in one short night, this field is now, so to speak, but the corpse of what it had been. No longer one broad flush of green, every separate furrow is visible, and each plant stands with head drooping to the ground, its stems bent under the weight of leaves that, withered, blighted, blackened, impart to the scene a melancholy aspect, and to the air a strangely fœtid odour. While I, who had been a country clergyman, and was more or less experienced in agriculture, stood wondering at a phenomenon which I found myself utterly unable to explain, the tenant of the farm came up; and him I found as much amazed, and, as was natural in his circumstances, more distressed at the sight than myself. A grey-haired man, he had never seen the like before.

In the days of those Covenanters whose mailed and sombre figures gave an antique and martial aspect to the oak panels of the old mansion, some would have found a ready explanation of this calamity in "the evil eye," the curse or *cantrips* of a malicious witch. But in the northern part of the island "the schoolmaster had been abroad" for more than a century; wolves and witches had both disappeared together—the burning of the last witch and the killing of the last wolf having occurred much about the same time; and so the farmer, though greatly puzzled, sought for an explanation of the matter in other than preternatural causes. "It beats a', sir," he said; "it dings my judgment a'thegither. I'm thinking, though it never waukened me wi' its roarin', that there has been an awfu' wind in the nicht, tossing and dashing the shaws thegither; and that that accounts for sic a bonny field, as this was yesterday, being as ye see it now, the shaws a' wallowed, and the leaves growin' a' black."

This theory might be ingenious, but it could not be true; since, had such a hurricane as it supposed struck the turrets of the old mansion house, howling in the chimneys and roaring amid the trees around, it must certainly have wakened us, and sounder sleepers too. So, dissatisfied with the explanation, I returned to mention the circumstance to my host at the breakfast-table, and discuss its probable causes; and how was our wonder increased on learning from the newspapers the day thereafter, that that same night, perhaps in the same hour, perhaps at the same moment, the potatoe fields of the whole country, had been struck—north, south, east, and west. It was, in fact, what we afterwards became too familiar with—the potato disease; a severe pestilence of its kind, and one on which gaunt famine followed, though not marching with its strides—in Ireland, especially, emptying her cabins, and filling her churchyards. The country did not sit down supinely under this calamity. While much was done to alleviate the sufferings it entailed—Parliament voting ten millions sterling for that purpose—every effort was made to discover the nature of the disease; its causes, and its cure. Farmers tried all manner of experiments, even bringing the potato in its native state from its birthplace on the slopes of Chili and Peru; the Government instituted all manner of inquiries; and philosophers turned all the lights of science on the mystery. The country was as wise at the end of the day as at the beginning. These black spots on the green leaf, these black spots in the root; how the disease came, and how it went; how it was generated and how propagated; what might prevent, or arrest, or, if anything could do so, cure it, were subjects that baffled man's utmost skill. God left us to be baffled and beaten, to feel ourselves as powerless and helpless as a straw borne on the bosom of a stream. But when He had taught us to bow reverently and humbly beneath his hand, and to feel that we were in it for good or evil, He was pleased to take it off. The pest was arrested, though enough of it remains to remind us of our dependence on God: departing as mysteriously as it came, through no efforts on our part, nor power or will but his who says to the sea, "Hither shalt thou come and no further; here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

There was another and earlier pest which I have too good occasion to remember, that also reminds us of these words, "When thy judgments are on the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." It is not the cholera, now again threatening our shores, to which I refer. It raged, and slew many,

in the immediate neighbourhood of my old country parish; where, while trusting to the power of prayer, we did not, as some of our would-be philosophers seem to fancy we would, neglect the use of means. On the contrary, we established a *cordon sanitaire* around our bounds; we appointed a committee of public health; we stopped all beggars, tinkers, vagrants, on the frontiers; we got a medicine chest for the use of the parish; we placed it in the manse, out of which, having learned late on a Sabbath night that a person had come that evening to the village from an infected house in Dundee, I went forth at six o'clock on Monday morning, and summoning the nearest members of committee, had the intruder bundled out of his father's house and the parish too before breakfast. We do not need men who regard themselves as "advanced thinkers," and talk with an air of superior wisdom of the modes of thought of the present day, to tell us that we must work as well as pray. It is long since Oliver Cromwell told his Ironsides to trust in God and keep their powder dry.

The pest I refer to is the Influenza of 1836-37. No place could be more healthily situated than Arbirlot, my old country parish. Disease found no allies there in crowded houses, or a stagnant atmosphere; in marshes, swamps, or the poisonous effluvia of choked drains and cesspools. Arbirlot hung on a slope that declined gently to the sandy shores of the German Ocean. There was wood enough to ornament the landscape, but not to intercept the fresh breezes that, curling and cresting the waves, blew landward from the sea, or swept down seaward from heights loaded with the fragrance of mown hay, or blooming bean-fields, or moors golden with the flowers of the gorse. The habits, as well as the habitations, of my parishioners were highly conducive to health. Well-instructed, decent, and sober, out of a population amounting nearly to 1000 souls there was only one person who was not in the habit of attending public worship; only one old enough to be able to read, who could not; and not one, with the exception of a farmer or two, who was addicted to habits of intemperance. Nevertheless, the influenza of 1836-37, which, I have been told, clothed the Edinburgh churches in all but universal mourning, and made such demands on the leading physicians there, that Dr. Abercrombie was said to have worn out some pairs of horses per day, came down on my parish with the swoop of an eagle. How and whence it came, none could tell: but all of a sudden, and in almost every house, it was there—"the pestilence that walketh in darkness, the destruction that wasteth at noon-day."

For example, on being myself smitten down on a Friday, I sent off a servant next day on horseback to the farm-houses and hamlets, to warn all that there would be no service in the church on Sabbath: and I remember how he reported on his return the same answer from almost every house—this, namely, It is of no consequence! The disease was there; and none could go to church! Nor was it only in this parish that the pest had burst out like a fire. The same had happened in the whole country round, shutting up on that Sunday ten or eleven of the pulpits of the thirteen parishes embraced within the bounds of the Presbytery. It had attacked all classes, all ranks, and all ages; perilling the lives of the young, and slaughtering the old. How it was generated; how it was communicated; what made it a destroying angel, moving on the wings of the wind, and armed with the dart of death; how it smote this house, and, as if it were protected with paschal blood, passed over that, were, and are still, mysteries which eluded the closest inquiry. The deeper men went into the subject, it grew the darker. Well if men of science were thereby taught humility, and those who attempted to penetrate the secrets of disease learned to say, "Who can, by searching, find out God? Who can find out the Almighty to perfection? It is higher than heaven, what can we do: it is deeper than hell, what can we know: the measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea!"

While Cholera, hanging on the wing, hovers over our shores, and threatens to revisit us, it has pleased God to send down on our country a new and strange pest. The first which I have mentioned—like the disease that years ago utterly destroyed the vines of Madeira, and, after devastating many parts of Europe, still lingers, as I saw this summer, among the lovely valleys of Piedmont—fell on the vegetable kingdom. The second pest struck at man directly. Nor can it be reasonably doubted that, but for the superior medical skill, better food, better clothing, better lodging which, as compared with those of former times, we, in God's good providence, enjoy, that pest, the cholera likewise, and also the plague which in typhus fever is ever smouldering in our large cities, would have proved as fatal as any plague on record—as that which, in the time of Pepys and Defoe, for instance, slew 10,000 in one week in London, when the population of the capital was not a tenth of what it is now; or that, called the *sweating sickness*, whose ravages in my native town, then probably a very small one, for it had been repeatedly burnt to the ground by hostile armies, stand thus rudely recorded on an old memorial stone within the shadow of its cathedral tower:—

1647.
Luna quater crescens
Sexcentos peste peremptos;
Disce mori,—vidit
Pulvis et umbra sumus.

The third pest, that with which we have now to do, threatens, not our life, indeed, but one of its main supports. The life of man is sustained either by vegetable, or by animal food. Many tribes in tropical countries live entirely on the first; and the savage races who inhabit the Arctic regions, hunting the whale, the walrus, the seal, the Polar bear, subsist exclusively on the second. Now, in our country, situated midway between the equator and the pole, where we subsist both on animal and vegetable food, this rinderpest, or, in plain English, cattle plague, threatens to break what is to us, therefore, a staff of life. It is not indeed the first plague, nor, so far as its ravages have yet gone, is it the worst, which has desolated our fields and emptied our byres. One different perhaps in its nature, but to the full as deadly in its effects, laid our island waste more than a hundred years ago—such its fatality that almost every cattle beast in England died; one county alone, and

that not a large one, losing 20,000 head. The possibility of such ravages by the rinderpest presents a very gloomy prospect, involving enormous loss to our country, widely-extended suffering, and the utter ruin of thousands of families. Already it has wrought very serious ravages. The number of cows in Edinburgh is now not more than a fourth of what it was when the plague broke out here three months ago; and many expect that every dairy in the city will be cleared out by the new year. The utmost care on the part of farmers to protect their cattle from infection and surround them with everything that could contribute to their health has proved utterly unavailing. Defying all prevention, and as yet resisting all cure, the disease is working dreadful havoc in many districts of the country. Men are at their wits' end. Ruin stares them in the face, and the calamity which, unless arrested, will fall so heavily on the large and respectable class engaged in agriculture, will be felt by the whole community; this being a case in which, if one member suffer, all the members must suffer with it. A serious evil to our nurseries, milk, the very best food for children, will not be procurable either for love or money; and butcher meat, which is consumed to so large an extent by all classes, must rise to a price which will place it beyond the reach of the labouring population, and many more besides. Such being our prospects, winter approaches us with a stern and gloomy aspect—suffering to all, to many bankruptcy and ruin in its train. So serious, indeed, are the circumstances of the country, that we should stand in dread of their issues, but that we believe in a presiding Providence and can trust to the efficacy of prayer.

What has Providence to do with this pest? is a question which some may put; and I might, with more reason, answer thus: Providence has to do with everything; a sparrow falleth not to the ground without the Father. But I can lay my finger on many passages of the Bible which in other ages (and why not in this?) trace calamities similar to ours to the hand and judgment of God. It was of the loss of his cattle, as well as of his children, that Job uttered this sublimest of all human utterances, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Let God give our farmers a sense of his Providence in this calamity, with faith in the efficacy of prayer, and they may (not otherwise) rise to the height of this sublime expression, "Though the flock be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stall, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation." I can give but a sample of the many instances which are piled up around me where the Word of God represents Him as sending such calamities as this plague of the rinderpest. Hence, and on the highest authority, we call it a providential visitation, which may, or which may not, be sent on account of our sins.

As samples take these: Jeremiah xii. 4, "How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither for the wickedness of them that dwell therein? the *beasts* are consumed." Jeremiah vii. 17-20, "Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto their gods; therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place upon man, and upon *beast*." Hosea iv. 1-3, "Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and everyone that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the *beasts* of the field."

It is the fashion with some in these, as in other days, to explain away all, not only that devout Christians, but even devout pagans, held and expressed by such words as Providence and providential. According to them, all events result from certain great, general laws which God has ordained for the government of the world. A man, for example, leaves a warm room without his great-coat, and catches cold; drinks too much wine, and loses his senses; eats too much food, and gets a fit of indigestion; launches recklessly into speculation, and becomes a bankrupt; lives in an ill-drained house, and is seized with typhoid fever, and neglecting the use of the proper remedies, dies. Well, we have men who claim to themselves the title of "advanced thinkers," alleging that there is no more Providence in the most important events in the history of individuals, nations, or Churches, than in these—that the fall of a kingdom, with all its results, is not one whit more providential than that of a stone on the hill-side, which when the rains have undermined it, obeying the laws of gravitation, topples over; and rolling, thundering, smoking, leaping in its descent, at one great last bound buries itself in the depths of the lake.

No doubt many events, which good men once regarded as special interpositions of Providence, can be proved to be the natural and inevitable result of those laws which God has established for the ordinary government of the world. I admit that no rash attempt should be made to trace in the common detail of worldly affairs the special interference of a superintending Providence; sincere and pious Christians having, sometimes, thereby exposed religion to the sneer of the scoffer, and overlooked this canon even of a heathen poet:—

> "Nec Deus intersit nisi dignus vindice nodus
> Inciderit;"

"Let not a god interfere unless some difficulty worthy of his intervention should occur." That God has established great, general laws for the government of the world, on due attention to which our health, happiness, and life ordinarily turn—laws which cannot be observed without benefit, nor violated without suffering—is no new discovery. We hear much, and not too much certainly, of the importance of sanitary measures; but the fact that filth is favourable to the production of disease, while cleanliness promotes health and prolongs life, was as well known to the Jews three thousand years ago as it is now—the frequent washings enjoined by the Mosaic

law, both of their persons and their houses, being sanitary measures as well as spiritual, and religious symbols. Nor did the Presbytery of Glasgow, when they proposed a day of humiliation and prayer on account of the cholera, need a late Prime Minister to tell them to betake themselves to the cleaning of their dirty closes and courts, as a measure not less necessary than prayer. The laugh which his taunt afforded sceptics and scoffers was as silly, as the taunt itself was uncalled for—the Sacred Book, which it was the duty of that reverend body to expound, not only containing the oldest, and what is in some respects still the best, sanitary code on record, but furnishing them with a very pertinent, and what had been in the circumstances not impertinent, reply to the statesman's jibe, "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

Frankly admitting the existence of great general laws, we recognise in them the wisdom and goodness of Him who governs all events, from the fall of an angel to the fall of a sparrow. If fire, for instance, sometimes burned, and at other times froze, like ice; if meat sometimes acted like medicine, and medicine like meat; if the processes of agriculture yielded a crop on one farm, but utterly failed to do so on another; if "the hand of the diligent" made one man rich but left his neighbour poor; if, in other words, certain causes were not followed up by certain results, if the line of sequences could not be depended on, the business of the world would come to a stand—all things would rush into ruin. Admitting this, it by no means follows that, as a man leaves a clock, which he has wound up, to go on in its corner of hall or room, pointing the hours and striking them till the weights have run down, and all is still, and it has run its course, God has left man to run out his term of life, and the world to run on through its cycle of ages under the blind, unmodified, and uncontrolled operation of mere general laws. We admit their existence and see in them the clearest manifestation of the wisdom and goodness, as well as the power, of God. But it by no means follows that, in ways beyond the reach of our discovery and even the comprehension of our limited faculties, ways which we have no language to express, nor intelligence to understand, nor even fancy to imagine, God does not govern our actions and mould our fortunes. How is this truth embodied in the words which we find enshrined in the Bible, and often illustrated in the disappointments of life, and the experience of others as well as Solomon, "I returned, and saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill."

Granting the existence and operation of these laws, and that sincere and devout Christians have often regarded what were their results as "special providences," there are few men who cannot point to certain events in their own life which had an important influence on their own fortune or that of others, and which they cannot but regard as providential. They are not to be explained by the ordinary operation of the laws of nature. Without drawing on books, it may entertain my readers more, and equally illustrate my subject, to relate a case or two of the kind belonging to the writer's individual experience.

Near by my old country parish there rose from the shelving shore a range of iron-bound cliffs, against which, in stormy weather, the sea dashed with amazing fury. Accompanied by a friend, I one day descended these, in search of anemones and seaweed in the pools which the ebbing tide left at their feet. While thus engaged I leaped down on a rock that sloped away into the sea, then roaring and foaming in a strong north-easter. On my feet touching the rock, which was covered, not as I imagined with dry, but with slippery, seaweed, they went out from below me, and I found myself flat on my back, launching away into the sea. All the danger of the position flashed at once into view—the impossibility of swimming, though I could swim, in such a roaring surf; a horrid death by being hurled on the jagged rocks; and the certainty that, though I should get hold of the slippery *tangle*, of its sliding from my grasp, and leaving me to fall back again, wounded and bleeding into the deep. My companion could do nothing, but stood petrified at the sight. Yet I was saved to write this paper, and do some little work in the world by—what I believe, and, looking our modern philosophers in the face, call—God's good Providence. It had been a miracle, had a monster of the deep swallowed up a man in such circumstances, and, making for a sandy bay, vomited him ashore, safe and sound, as Jonah; a miracle, had the sea-birds that soared and screamed over the intruder on their domain, borne him aloft on their white wings to set him down safe on the top of the cliffs. The age of miracles is gone; but not that of the special providence which brings about events where reason can, and religion delights to, recognise the hand of God. In my circumstances, when I was moving off like a ship from the slips into the deep, life only could be saved by the arrest of such a fatal launch. For this purpose I put on the brakes, to use railway language, pressing strongly with my heels against the rock; and, when descending with constantly accelerating motion—my back to the rock, my face to the sky, my ears filled with the roar of death, and my feet within less than a yard of a watery grave—I was suddenly arrested. It so happened that the heels of my boots had been newly shod with iron. Being rough, one of them, instead of slipping over, caught against a small pebble imbedded in the rock; and I have ever regarded it as a special providence that, in this hour of peril, I had in that rough iron the only means which could save life; and that my mind, being kept as calm and collected as it is now, I had the self-possession to remember the rough state of the iron on my boots, and resort to the one only possible means of saving me from a watery grave.

The scene of another case lies in my own country parish, and the dell where a decent widow lived whom I was in the habit of visiting, as paralysis made it impossible for her to attend church. She was tended by a very dutiful daughter, who, working at a flax-mill in the neighbourhood, toiled hard, and contented herself with plain dress and simple fare, that she might help to maintain her mother. Before

leaving the cottage for her work she was in the habit of heaping up the *refuse* of the mill in the grate; and kindling it. She placed her helpless mother in a chair right before the fire; and as this fuel burned away slowly the old woman was kept comfortable till her return. It happened one day that I left my manse, and skirting the walls of the old church-yard, and passing the corn-mill, with its busy sound and flashing wheel, I took my way down the winding dell to the cottage of the old woman, which stood in its garden, embowered among trees. But, having met a parishioner, with whom I had some subject of interest to talk about, I called a halt; and, sitting down on a bank of thyme, we entered into conversation. Ere the subject was half exhausted, the widow rose to my recollection, I felt somehow that I must cut short, and hasten away on my visit. But the idea was dismissed, and the conversation went on. However, it occurred again, and again, till with a feeling that I was neglecting a call of duty, as by an uncontrollable impulse I rose to my feet, and made all haste to the cottage. Opening the door, a sight met my eyes that for the moment nailed me to the spot.

The erection of mill-refuse which had been built from the hearth some feet up the wide open chimney, having its foundations eaten away, had fallen, and, precipitating itself forward, surrounded the helpless paralytic within a circle of fire. The accident took place some minutes before I entered. She had cried out, but no ear was there to hear, nor hand to help. Catching the loose refuse around her, on and on, nearer and nearer, the flames crept. It was a terrible sight for the two Wigtown women martyrs, staked far out in the sands of the Solway Firth, to mark the sea-foam crawl nearer and nearer them; it was more terrible still for this lone woman in her lone cottage, without any great cause to die for, to sit there, and see the fire creeping closer, drawing nearer and nearer to her feet. By the time I entered, it had almost reached her, where she sat motionless, speechless, pale as death, looking down on the fire as it was about to seize her clothes, and burn her to a cinder. Ere it caught, I had time, and no more, to make one bound from the door to the hearth-stone; and seizing her, chair and all in my arms, to pluck her from the jaws of a cruel, fiery death.

Here we recognise the ordinary laws of nature—those of fire, which kept alive by the oxygen of the atmosphere, consumed the refuse; that of gravitation, which, when the fire had ate away the foundation, and left it top-heavy, tumbled it on the floor; that of impulse, by which, when it fell, it was projected beyond the hearth-stone to surround the paralytic with a flaming circle. But by what law of nature was I moved that day, instead of visiting other sick, to turn my steps to the dell and cottage of this poor old woman? By what law of nature, when I lingered on the road, was I moved, without the remotest idea of her danger, to cut short, against all my inclinations, an interesting conversation, and hurry on to the house, which I reached just at the very nick of time,—one or two minutes later, the flames had caught her clothes, and I had found her in a blaze of fire? To look on this as a case of special providence, some may regard as superstitious, and denounce as inconsistent with the spirit and philosophy of the age—as a mere relic of the days of ignorance and darkness. I leave them to their cold philosophy, and "science falsely so called." Be it mine to live and die in the belief of a present, and presiding, as well as personal, God; in the faith which inspired my aged friend to thank Him for her wonderful deliverance, and the boy to explain his calm courage on the roaring deep, in these simple but grand words, "My Father is at the helm."

Edinburgh was the scene of another case which, a matter not of life or death, but of dying peace, I also count providential. A lady belonging to my congregation, a very lovely Christian—whom I knew to be ill, but not in danger—was dying, on a day that I was dragging myself home, weary and worn-out with long hours of work. It occurred to me, on finding myself near the street where she lived, that I should go and see her; but feeling more fit for a sofa than further service, I dismissed the idea, and walked on thinking of the poet's line,—

"The ploughman homeward plods his weary way."

But the idea occurred again, only to be again dismissed. I said to myself, There is nothing very serious in her case. But it came back again and again. Yet I resolved to shake off this feeling, and, walking over it, make my way home; and I had actually passed the opening of the street where she lived, when the impression returned with irresistible force; and, surprised by the circumstance, I retraced my steps, and turned them to her house. How was I astonished to be met at the door with the news that she was dying; and how great was my astonishment and grief also, to find this best and brightest of saintly women in deep despondency. A dark cloud hung over that blessed soul; it was like the obscuration over the Saviour's cross; and I seemed to hear that awful cry, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? There we were—she struggling with death, and I with her despair. It pleased God so to bless the truth I was sent, as I believe, to set before her, so to hear the prayers her afflicted and astonished mother and I offered up, that ere her sun sank in night, it came forth from the cloud brilliant, and to appearance larger than ever. Death in the dark had made no eventual difference to this true and loving follower of the Lamb of God; but the lifting of the cloud, turning her latter end into peace, made a mighty difference to the mourners around her bed, and especially to her eminently devout and pious mother. She who had been left, like many other ministers' widows, to struggle with poverty and privation, had been borne up, as few have been, by her remarkable faith in a presiding providence. That venerable woman saw God's hand in everything. Her Father had done this; and her Father had sent that. And for myself, I wish that I had the same ever-present, magnanimous, holy trust in God's providence, as bore her through a sea of troubles, and made her regard me that day as sent to do an angel's office; to smooth her Jeannie's entrance into a better world—ministering to an heir of salvation.

It is not always, I admit, easy to distinguish the

merely marvellous from the providential, nor the providential from the miraculous; and many things which sincere and pious Christians have fondly considered as special interpositions of Providence, may, I grant, admit of much controversy. But to regard all events as but the result of the common laws of nature, is in effect to shut God out from the government of his own world. To represent Him as standing by, a mere spectator, with his hands, so to speak, tied, so that He can neither interpose to confer blessings nor inflict judgments, is to mock Him with the shadow of a kingly crown, and clip the wings by which, lifting us above the cloudy regions of care and doubt, prayer raises us to the skies. It may be in a way unknown to, and inscrutable by, us, but unless God interposing takes an actual and active part in our fate and fortunes, I see no sense in prayer.

Rushing into regions where man loses himself and reason fails to guide his faltering steps, some, like those of old, who by wisdom knew not God, set forth crude and ill-digested notions which they dignify by the name of philosophy. But however ingeniously it be spun out of their brains, that philosophy must be false which is not only contrary to the plain sense of the Word of God, but is also, and not less, contrary to the universal instinct and promptings of our nature. I could stand on that alone. If the soul is not immortal, why do all men yearn for, and believe in, immortality? If prayer has no real, direct efficacy, why do all nations, civilized and savage, pagan as well as Christian, resort to it for relief; and, as we see in the case of the lowest and most debased heathens, rather than not pray, address their petitions to a stock or stone? It seems as much an instinct for man in want to pray, as for an infant, put to the breast, to suck. And He who inspired the instinct is no more in this case than in that "a man that he should lie, or the son of man that he should repent."

As to the *modus operandi* of prayer, as to how it works, and moves the hand that moves the world, that is a subject into which man with his limited faculties cannot too reverently enter, and about which the profoundest theologians cannot too modestly speak. As Cowper sings—

> God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform;
> He plants his footsteps on the sea,
> And rides upon the storm.

But, as even nature teaches, and his Word clearly reveals, He will have all men to pray; and, to use the words of an inspired Apostle, "no respecter of persons, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." Therefore, while we acknowledge an Almighty hand in the pest which, marching ruthless and meanwhile resistless through the land, is destroying our herds, ruining the fortunes of many, and threatening the comforts of all, let us resort to prayer. Along with the utmost vigilance and the use of the most active means to stop the progress of the plague, and effect its cure, let prayer ascend from all our cities, our scattered villages, and country homesteads. And who can tell but that God, notwithstanding our unworthiness, may repent Him of the evil; and a grateful nation, rising from the ground where prince and peasant had bent before his mighty hand, may soon unite all voices in this grand old chorus: "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness: and thy paths drop fatness. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness; and the little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks, the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy; they also sing."

THE BROTHER'S TRUST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STUDIES FOR STORIES."

THERE was once, says an old legend, a young Italian noble, whose elder brother loved him much; he had moreover saved his life, and had reconciled him to his father when greatly offended with him.

As might have been expected, the youth returned this affection, and after the death of the father these brothers lived together, the younger obeying the elder, and behaving to him in all respects like a son.

Once, on a certain day, however, a long separation came between them, for the elder went out, as if upon his ordinary affairs, and never returned again to his house. His young brother was first surprised, then alarmed. He sought for him, proclaimed his loss; he scoured the country, caused the waters to be searched, and sought in all the recesses of that old Italian city; but it was of no avail; his brother was gone, and none could tell him whither.

No tidings were heard of him for more than six months, till one night as his young brother was knocking for admittance at his own door, a figure in a domino came up, and put a note into his hand, at the same time whispering his brother's name. It was during the time of the carnival, when it is so much the custom for people to wear disguises, that such things excite no surprise. Anselmo, for this was his name, would have seized the domino by the hand, but he quickly disappeared in the crowd; and full of wonder and anxiety the young man read the letter which he had left behind him:—

"Anselmo, I live, I am well! and I beseech thee, as thou lovest me, fail not to do for me what I shall require, which is, that thou wilt go every night down that lane which leads along the south wall of the P—— Palace; ten paces from the last window but one thou shalt find a narrow slit in the wall; bring with thee a dark lantern, and into that slit do thou place it, turning the light side inward that thou be not discovered. Thou shalt be at the place every night at twelve, and thou shalt stay until the clock of St. Januarius striketh one. So do, and one night I will meet thee there. Thy loving brother prays thee not to fail."

That very night the young nobleman went out unattended, in the hopes of meeting with his brother.

He carried a lantern, and proceeded to the unfrequented lane pointed out in the letter. It was a desolate place, in a thinly populated quarter of the city. By the faint light of the moon he counted the windows, and found the slit in the wall, which was deep, and fenced on the river side with an iron grating backed by a sheet of horn; into this slit he hastened to place his lantern, and then began to look about him, and consider why his brother should have chosen such a place for their meeting.

Not far off ran the river, and he did not doubt that by water his brother would come, for it was evident that he feared to show himself in the streets of the city. Anselmo started once or twice during his solitary watch, for he thought he distinguished the splash of an oar, and then an advancing footstep; but he was mistaken, his brother did not come to meet him that night, nor the next, nor the one after; and when he had come to await him every night for a fortnight, he began to get sick at heart.

And yet there was no way but this; he was to watch *till* his brother came. It was his only chance of seeing him; and he went on, without once failing, for eleven months and twenty days.

In order that he might do this more secretly, he frequently changed his lodging; for as the time wore on he began to fear that his brother might have involved himself in one of the political intrigues common in those days, and he felt that the utmost caution was required, lest his constant visits to that quarter of the city should be watched, and lead to suspicion.

A strange piece of blind obedience this seemed, even to himself, and of trust in his brother; what appeared to him the strangest part of the letter was the entreaty that he would always bring a lantern; "as if there could be any fear," he thought, "of my not recognising his step, or as if it could be likely that more men than one could by any probability be standing by that solitary corner." But in those days of tyrannical government and lawless faction, flight and mysterious disappearance were not uncommon. Thus Anselmo watched on, though hope began to wax faint, even in his strong and patient heart.

The clock struck one. "Eleven months," said he, "and one and twenty days!—I will watch for thee the year out." He put his hand to the slit in the wall, and withdrew his lantern; it was dying in the socket. "What," said he, "is the light also weary of watching!" He turned, and a heavy stone hard by his feet was raised from beneath, and up from under the earth came his brother.

"Thy cloak—quick! cover me with it," he whispered. "Hide my prison garments."

"Thy prison garments!" repeated Anselmo, faintly, for he was distraught and amazed.

His brother took the cloak and wrapped himself in it. It was not so dark but that Anselmo could see that his feet were bare and his face haggard. He took the lantern and threw it down, beckoning towards the river.

"Let it lie," he said, to his young brother.

"I am sorry the light has gone out just when it is wanted," said Anselmo, for he was still amazed, and scarcely knew what he was talking about.

"Eleven months and twenty-one days hath it served me well," his brother replied; "nothing else, whether alive or dead, saving thyself only, will serve me so well again."

What a strange thing this was to hear; but the walls of the old Italian city echoed the sound so softly that none awoke to listen, and the two figures, gliding under the deep shadow of the houses, passed away, and were seen there no more.

By morning dawn a vessel left the harbour, and two brothers stood upon the deck, bidding farewell to their native country; the one was young, the other had a wan cheek, and hands hardened by labour; but the prison dress was gone, and both were clad in the usual costume of their rank and order.

"And now we are safe and together," said Anselmo, "I pray thee tell me thy story. Why didst thou keep me waiting so long, and where didst thou rise from at last?"

"That I can tell thee at all, is thy doing," answered his brother: "because thou didst never fail to bring me the lantern."

And then, while the grey Italian shores waxed faint in the sunny distance, and all hearts began to turn towards the new world, whither the vessel was bound, Anselmo's brother descended with him into the cabin, and there told him, with many expressions of affection, the remarkable tale which follows:—

He had, unknown to his brother, made himself obnoxious to the government; and the night of his disappearance he was surrounded, and after making a desperate defence, he was overpowered and thrown into prison. In a dreadful dungeon he lay till his wounds were healed, and then, for some cause unknown to himself, he was given over to the keeping of his deadly enemy: one whose house had long been of the opposite faction to his own. By this enemy he was conveyed to the P—— Palace, and laid in a dungeon, that, as he said, "Nothing it seemed could have broken through, unless his teeth had been strong enough to eat through that wall." Almost every hour in the day his enemy came and looked at him through a hole in the door, his food was given him by means of this aperture, and when he complained of the want of bedding, they gave him, also by means of the hole, a thin mattrass, and two coarse rugs to cover him.

This dungeon contained nothing but one large chest placed against the wall, and half-filled with heavy stones; one of these, he was given to understand, would be tied round his neck should he attempt to escape, and his body would be thrown into the river.

His light in the daytime came through the little slit so often mentioned; but in daylight he could do nothing, for his enemy's eyes were frequently upon him; from twelve o'clock to three in the night were the only hours when all his jailers slept, and then it was dark, and he could do nothing but just feel the strength and thickness of the wall: a hopeless task indeed to break it down with one poor pair of hands!

But, after months of misery and despair, one of the jailers took pity on him, and asked him whether there was anything he could do to help him to endure his captivity better. "Yes," said the poor prisoner;

"I have been a studious man, and if I could now read, it would help me to endure my misery. I dare not read in the daytime, for my enemy would not suffer me to have such a solace; but in the night, if I could have a light in the slit."

The jailer was frightened, and told him not to think of it. Yet, as his prisoner kept urging it, he looked at the height of the slit and its small size, and then, when he had heard the words that were to convey this request for a light, and that they told nothing as to where Anselmo's brother was, he consented to convey them; first getting a solemn promise that he would never attempt to speak to his brother, even if he should find it possible, and, secondly, that he would never betray him.

Whether this jailer felt certain that he never could escape, whether he was not loth to aid in it, or whether he pitied him, and thought no harm could come of the light, is not known; certain it is that he searched the dungeon diligently every night, and examined the iron protection to the slit: it was far above the poor prisoner's head, and when the jailer found it always safe he appeared satisfied. Yet the work of breaking through the wall began the first night of the lantern, and never ceased till it came to a triumphant conclusion.

The great chest, as has been said, was half-full of heavy stones; as soon as the light enabled him to act with certainty and perfect quiet, he laid his mattrass and rugs beside it, opened its lid, took every stone out in turn, and placed it on one of them; he then, exerting all his strength, lifted the chest away, and began to undermine the stones behind it, and under it.

With wonderful skill and caution, he went gradually on; but it took twenty minutes of labour to empty the chest, and twenty minutes to fill it with equal quiet: there remained, therefore, only twenty minutes in which to perform the rest of this herculean labour.

But for the light he must have handled the stones with less certainty, and, of course, the least noise would have caused all to be discovered. How little could be done each night becomes evident, when it is remembered that the stones and rubbish which he displaced had to be put back again, and the chest returned to the same position before the light was withdrawn.

For nine months he made but little progress, and for the next two months the difficulty of disposing of the rubbish daunted him; but the last night, when still far from the surface, though already through the wall, such a quantity of earth heaved in that he swept it down fearlessly upon the floor of his dungeon, and resolved to make a daring effort to escape, and risk all on that one venture. He crept through the hole once more, and shielding his head with one arm, pushed upwards with the other; more and more earth fell, and at last, nearly suffocated, he applied all his strength to the flat stone that it had left bare, heaved it up, and escaped to life and freedom.

Which is most remarkable here?—the trust of the elder brother, who could venture so much on a protracted attention to his letter, or the obedience of the younger to a command which he could not understand?

We can scarcely tell. Yet this story, though widely different in some respects, has one point of resemblance to another narrative far more worthy of credit, but which passes among many for an idle tale, if one may judge by the thoughts that they bestow upon it.

It is the true story of a King's Son, one who saved the lives of many, and reconciled them to his Father whom they had offended. In his wonderful condescension, He called himself their Elder Brother; but after He had long dwelt among them, He one day disappeared from their sight, promising them that after many days He would come again. He sent them a message afterwards, entreating them to watch, and saying "Behold, I come quickly!"

For awhile they did watch; but afterwards it was said in his kingdom which he had left, "Our Lord delayeth his coming, and we are weary of watching, the time is so long. If He had told us the exact day or the exact hour when He would return, we would have been ready, and would have gone out to meet Him with great joy; but we cannot always watch, though He has promised us and done for us so much."

It is a long time now since that message was sent; some dispute its meaning, some say it shall be on this manner, and some on that manner; some have even said, "Those many days must now be drawing near their close."

But, O prisoner, working by night in the light of your brother's candle! O elder brother, who had won such true fraternal love! O friend so trusted in, though not understood, so longed for, though scarcely expected—how differently was your earthly claim admitted—your earthly command obeyed! There was One who said, "Watch, for ye know not the day, neither the hour, when the Son of Man cometh;" and "what I say unto you, I say unto all—Watch!"

But do they Watch?

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

Oh, Jesus Christ, my light of light!
Who lovest me too well
For mortal thoughts or mortal tongue
To measure or to tell,
Grant that this heart of mine at last
May for Thee in return
With like love burn;
And, wholly Thine, to Thee may cling,
And for Thee only yearn.

Grant that nought else within my soul
But Thy love may abide;
Give me to choose it for my crown,
My portion, and my pride.
Cast those all out, take all away,
That Thee and me would part;
Thy grace impart
Till love of Thee hath set on fire
My spirit, mind, and heart.

Thou art my comfort, treasure, joy,
Art health, life, light, to me.
O deign accept me as Thine own,
Who give myself to Thee.
Apart from Thee is nought but pain,
And bitterness, I know,
For me below;
Nought that can satisfy my hope,
Or soothe me in my woe.

In Thee, however, there is rest,
Is joy and peace indeed;
O Saviour, grant that more and more
My heart may on Thee feed.
Be Thou a flame in me to burn,
A balsam soft and pure
My griefs to cure;
For here I still must sigh and groan,
And toil and pain endure.

Let me in daily life adorn
The love that I profess;
And if my steps should wander, Lord,
Restore them, and redress.
May I both speak and do Thy will,
All good works teach and learn.
Quick to discern
Where I have erred, and to Thy feet
Still quicker to return.

Oh, be Thy love in grief my joy,
In feebleness my power!
And when I lay me down to die
At the appointed hour,
Oh, very present with me then,
Lord Jesus, may I prove
Thy faithful love,
That I may enter, glad and free,
Upon Thy realm above!

L. C. C.

OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS; OR, METHODS TO DO GOOD.

BY THE EDITOR.

II.—OUR OBJECT.

The lower animals are not more distinguished from man by their want of sense than by their want of sympathy; less so, perhaps, since some—the dog and elephant, for instance—are remarkably sagacious, and cannot fairly be called irrational creatures. The lower animals have feelings; they have strong feelings, fear, hope, jealousy, envy, hatred, and love. What more, for instance, could any mother do than the hen that, with courage foreign to her usual nature, on observing the hawk in the sky, calls her brood, and, facing the danger, covers them with her wings; or the shaggy bear that, placing her cub behind her, confronts the hunters, and offers her bosom to their spears? But though God has endowed the brute creatures with feeling, they have no fellow-feeling, or sympathy, as it is called. The fat and pampered favourite growls when some poor, gaunt, famished, homeless dog ventures near his heaped and ample trencher. The cattle of our fields browse on, careless of the dying struggles, unmoved by the dying groans, of some fellow of the herd; and so destitute in their natural state do the lower animals seem of fellow-feeling, or anything kin to it, that I have never seen the sufferings of their fellows disturb or interfere in any degree with their ordinary sensual enjoyments. While, in the words of an Apostle, "none of us liveth to himself," they live to themselves: that is one of their most remarkable characteristics; and those, therefore, degrade humanity most, and bring it nearest to the condition of the brutes, who live for themselves, think only of themselves, have no other aim but their own profit and advantage, who, to express their character in one word, are *selfish*.

But selfishness, that base and degrading passion, is characteristic not only of such as God has never endowed with reason, but of those also who, having had, have lost it. Inside those gloomy walls where pity shelters and science seeks to cure insanity, one of the most common and not least painful aspects of the strange and melancholy scene is, that every one there appears to live for himself. There is a community, numbering hundreds, or thousands perhaps, but little, and, in the worst cases, no communion. Each one walks apart. They take no interest in one another. They laugh, they weep; but there is no infection in their grief or gaiety. Each is occupied with his own thoughts, engrossed with his own imagined wrongs, or states, or pleasures. That is one of the most common and characteristic features of the insane; and they therefore degrade humanity, presenting it in one of its most humbling aspects, who, though not bereft of reason, think only of themselves: and, again, to express their character in one word, are *selfish*—who, in the language of Scripture, "look not every man upon the things of others, but every man on his own things."

In regard to this, as to other passions, men enter the world distinguished by original differences. With hearts, like instruments so finely strung that they sound to the slightest touch, some have much more sympathy than others; yet all are by nature, to a greater or less degree, both self-willed and selfish. Who, that knows himself, does not feel that, even where this passion is held in most control by reason, and somewhat cured by grace? And what mother has not discovered it—seen the inborn evil breaking out in the temper of her sweetest child? Like a rose-bud with petals opening to the light of day, and bathed in the pearly dews of morning—gentle, playful, love beaming in its eyes, innocence in its winning smile, and with its sweet caresses, as it flings its arms around her neck, winding itself round her heart, there is no object in the world so beautiful in a mother's eyes as her babe; yet she soon learns that what seemed a young angel just lighted, like a sunbeam, on this evil world, is, in fact, a fallen creature, and may become a serpent to sting the bosom it lies on. See how it will have its own way; how it rebels

against authority; how its little hand is put out to grasp what is another's; how it grudges to share its pleasures with any one else! Let its will be crossed, and its angry cries, its tears, the struggles of its impetuous though impotent rage, show that selfishness is a bad, base passion, common to every human breast.

Therefore, here, on the very threshold of my subject, I wish to say that a change of heart is an indispensable preliminary to the Christian life—its first step and starting point. Without that, with inborn selfishness unrestrained, unconquered by the power of grace, man cannot attain to the end and objects of the Christian life. To say "Christ liveth in me, and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me," we must be able to say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ." To follow the eagle in her flight, we must be furnished with eagles' wings; and to walk in the steps of Him who lived not for himself, nor died for himself, nor rose for himself, nor now reigns for himself, we must be born again, and baptised with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Who would have the manners, must have the mind that was in Christ.

In opening up our subject, the End or Object, namely, for which Christians should live, I may show what that is by showing what it is not. Well, then, It is not living to ourselves.

This, as I have already said, is to be selfish. And such he is whose horizon, unlike the vast rim of the sea or distant range of snow-crowned Alps, has no wider bounds than self; and whose heart, like a man's coffin, is just his own measure; long enough and broad enough to hold himself—with room for no one else. I have said that such people ally themselves, not to angels, for they minister to them who are heirs of salvation, and, making heaven ring to their songs, rejoice over every sinner that repenteth: nor to Christ, for He went about doing good, and made it his meat and his drink to do, not his own, but his Father's will. They ally themselves to the brute creation, among all which their most perfect type perhaps is the unsocial, low crustacean which bores itself a hole in the sea rock; nor ever leaves that narrow home to expatiate in the freedom of the deep; nor of all God's creatures holds communion with any but itself. Not God, not Christ, not others and others' good, but self is, I cannot say the sun—for that is a glorious object—the centre around which their thoughts, desires, fears, hopes, wishes, all keep turning. Like the whirlpool that sucks in straws and sea-weed, tiny boats, and gallant ships, self swallows up all the interests, great or little, that belong to others in its vast devouring vortex. Voracious as a whirlpool, it is insatiable as the grave; and, crying, Give—give—give—takes all, to render nothing back. If such people are ever converted, like David, they will address God, saying, "I was as a beast before Thee."

Selfishness has worse features still. Regarded in the aspect they present to God, the selfish appear yet more hateful; their ruling passion assumes a yet darker character. It shuts God out of the heart; and turning the soul, once his bright, holy temple, into that dark, dreary, atheistic spot in the universe where He is not, it is to be regarded as the greatest impiety. It thrusts God from his throne, and places man in his room; the true object of every selfish man's worship being himself. Now, for myself, I would rather be a Papist worshipping the Saints, some of whom are stars in heaven—even a blinded Pagan, in stocks and stones, worshipping forms within whose cold breasts no foul passions ever burned, than be the man who is his own God. In his case how foul the temple, and contemptible the divinity? What a contrast to his feelings those of the holy patriarch, as, addressing God, he said, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Many, I know, regard selfishness as a mere defect in disposition, no serious or grave offence; but this living to oneself is not only one of the greatest sins against nature, allying us to the beasts that perish—not only one of the greatest sins against our fellow creatures, shutting up our bowels of compassion from them—not only one of the greatest sins against Jesus Christ, who, living and dying for others, says, "If any man will be my disciple, let him take up his cross, deny himself daily, and follow me,"—and not only one of the greatest sins against God, whom it denies and, in a sense, dethrones—but is the seed and sum of all sins whatever. For though sin, Proteus-like, assumes many forms, selfishness is the parent and bitter root of all. Trace sin up to its source, whether in earth or heaven, and it will be found so. The pride that ruined the angels, and cast them from their celestial seats; the ambition that fired our first mother's bosom, and led to the crime that wrecked this fair world and ruined our happiness, may both be traced to self. To the passion which makes our own will man's supreme rule and our own gratification his highest good, we may therefore apply, with the slight change of a single word in each case, the words of Paul and John, these namely, "the love of *self* is the root of all evil"—"if any man love *self*, the love of the Father is not in him."

Observe further, that one who, selfishly inclined, lives to himself is not only unlike God and God's Son, the Father who gave the Son, and the Son who, willing to be given, gave himself for us, but is unlike any of God's works. What has the Creator made that exists for itself? Not the sun—bright image of Divine beneficence, he burns to warm, and shines to light the worlds that roll around him. Not the sea—image of Divine fulness, which, furnishing food and a home to innumerable myriads, teems with happy life; and extending its blessings to lands the furthest from its shores, hangs their skies with the clouds that temper the torrid heat, and supply the rains which clothe their hills with forests and their vales with fields of corn. Not, as I will show, the meanest plant that grows—the lichen, for example, which casts its grey mantle over the aged ruin; or appearing but a dusky stain, colours and clothes the rocks. Doomed to decay, like everything that lives on earth, it dies, and turned into dust, becomes a few grains of soil. These, accumulating in the course of time and washed by showers into some fissure, by and by form a suitable seed-bed. Into this, swept by the tempest,

or dropped by passing bird, an acorn falls, which germinates; and fed by the lichen dust, grows; and sending out its roots for nourishment, rises at length into a stately oak. This offers a home to the birds of the air that build among its branches, and sheds its fruit to feed the boar and other beasts of the forest. It lives not for itself. Nor dies for itself; for when at length its stately trunk falls, groaning to the woodman's axe, it gives strength and body to the ship that, manned by patriots, thunders on the deep in freedom's battle, or, bearing a flag of peace, and bound on a holy mission, carries to distant shores and savage homes the peaceful heralds of the Cross. And what thus characterises even the meanest of God's works on earth must characterise the highest—which I take to be a renewed, redeemed, sanctified man, one bought with the blood and baptised with the Spirit of Christ. He therefore has, and can have, no pretensions to regard himself as a true Christian who, whatever his Church, or creed, or condition, eaten up of selfishness, lives only, or chiefly, for himself. Unless the same mind be in us that was in Jesus Christ, we are none of his.

Baptised in the Spirit as well as in the blood of Jesus, Christians would not live to themselves though they could; and, on the other hand, there is a sense in which even the selfish could not though they would. Such is every man's influence either for good or evil within the domestic and social circles in which he moves. By way of illustrating that remark, let me tell what happened when a lighthouse was finished which stands eleven miles out at sea in sight of the windows of my old country manse; and in which, whether seen standing erect on its rock by day amid the raging billows, or shining like a star through the gloom of night, to guide ships off the reef and on to their desired haven, always seemed the very type of one who, as a Christian, fills a like blessed office, and rests on a like sure foundation. This, the Bell Rock Lighthouse, is exposed on every side to the full sweep of stormy seas; and with such power do they hurl themselves against it, that, rising on its sides, they often wrap it in a sheet of foam—sometimes send the water in flowing cataract clean over its lofty summit. Now the first storm that tried its strength, entirely shook the confidence of its keepers. What alarmed them was not that the waves running up to the very summit wrapped its sides in foam, and them in darkness; but that the tower when struck by some giant billow, as if struck also with terror and anticipating destruction, trembled from top to bottom. In terror themselves, they hasted with the tidings to the architect, who, to their surprise, received them as "tidings of great joy." He doubted no longer the stability of the fabric. When struck on one part the whole building felt the shock, every stone seemed to sympathise with another, just because every course was firmly fixed to every other course, and the tower, though built of many separate blocks, was bound together as if it were a monolith, one single stone—to use the language of the Psalms, was "compactly built together." And all are thus bound together; to this extent at least, that every man makes his character, his life, his habits felt by others; exerting an influence on all around him either for good or evil.

Indeed the influence which, through the law of sympathy, we exert on others, those above and below, as well as those beside, us, is involved in the very idea of society; and be it a Church, or nation, or family, that community is, as a community, in its most perfect state, where this sympathy is most felt by all its separate members. Hence the answer of the Greek sage to a question often discussed, this namely, "Which is the best form of government?"—an autocracy with all power vested in one person; or an aristocracy where the power of government is divided among a few leading men; or a democracy where, often swayed hither and thither by fitful gusts of sudden passion, the multitude rule?—The best government, said Plato, is that under which the meanest citizen can suffer no wrong, but all the rest will feel it.

This noble utterance of heathen lips, another form of the inspired expression "no man liveth to himself," enunciates a grand principle which runs through the Divine government, and forms the very life and soul of practical Christianity. What saith the Scriptures? "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." And to what a great extent are the evils that now afflict society due to the neglect of this principle?—traceable to this, that people, forgetting the duties they owed to others, have lived to themselves. For long years the upper classes, if not, as in many other countries, treading the lower under foot, treated them with neglect; and, though mistaken, as events are proving, fancied that, separated by a great gulf from the vulgar throng, they might move in their higher spheres, living to themselves. Making money or enjoying its pleasures, the middle and wealthier classes left the poor, unpitied and unhelped, to struggle on, and at length sink by thousands into degradation and destitution—they also refused to be regarded as their brother's keepers, thinking that they could safely indulge their selfishness. Alas! even Christian churches, I am sorry to add, fostering unseemly jealousies, and wasting their strength on wretched quarrels, also lived for themselves; often subordinating the high claims of souls to the petty interests of a sect.

"Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" He has done so. How have our sins found us out? By the drunkenness that is our national disgrace, by the gross ignorance, the brutal manners, and godless habits of great masses of the people; by prisons full of criminals, and workhouses full of paupers; by the burdens which indolence entails on industry, and crime on virtue; by the prostitution that walks, and the drunkards that reel, along our streets; by the vast numbers, amounting in London alone, for example, to a million and a half, who never enter a house of God, God is teaching us that the laws of the moral are as sure as those of the material world—those that govern the tides of ocean or the seasons of the year; and that, since no man liveth to himself, one of these moral laws is this, that, if we neglect the duties we owe to others, whether they be-

long to our family, or our neighbourhood, or to society in general, not they only, but we ourselves shall suffer for it in the end. Crimes committed against, as well as benefits bestowed on others, like bread cast on the waters, come back many days hence.

And now, though it anticipates what properly belongs to another branch of the subject, I would here answer the question which, prompted by a feeling that they have lived too much to themselves and missed the grand end of a Christian life, some may be ready to ask, in the words of that grand old cry, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Well, every man and woman on this earth have their mission; and having to seek, not only our own salvation and welfare, but the salvation, welfare, happiness, and advantage of others also, there is none who may not adopt the words of Nehemiah, saying, "I have a great work to do!" Divine grace is equal to it, if you go about it wisely—"My grace shall be sufficient for you," says God. Now you have a post in this life assigned to you, keep it; a field of labour, cultivate it; a sphere of usefulness, public, or private, or both perhaps, fill it with light; opportunities of doing good, improve them—remembering that as there is not one within reach of your voice, who sleeps beneath the same roof, who works in the same shop or field, who worships in the same church, who is embraced within the wide or narrow arms of the same social circle, over whom you may not exert an influence for evil, who may not be the worse of your company, so there is none who may not be the better of it, over whom you may not have an influence for good. Your influence may be small, but so is the candle which burns in a cottage window; yet at what a long distance is it seen, and how large the sphere it fills with light? I know a man, for instance, who at the close of each day's work, turned his steps to the prison, and with his Bible on his knees, or on his knees on the floor, spent the evening hours in its gloomy cells; seeking to instruct the ignorant, and reclaim the criminal, and raise the fallen. The judgment day shall show how many he restored, penitent and pardoned, to the bosom of God; but it is certain that, alone and single-handed, he rescued and reformed four hundred criminals; restoring them, honest and well-doing men, to the bosom of society. What life-boat, pulled by strong hands through roaring breakers to sinking ship and drowning men, ever made a rescue like that? Yet that was the work of a man in humble life; without name, or influence, or rank, or more than ordinary talents; but with love to men such as burned in the heart that was pierced and broken on the Cross of Calvary. Now, before he dies, let every Christian go down, as it were, to the shore to pluck the drowning from the flood—in some poor sinner whom he is blessed to save, let him find at least one gem to shine and sparkle in his heavenly crown.

Here, ingratitude may be the chief return the large and loving-hearted meet for their labours of love; but be assured that though man forgets you, your Master will not. It is they who glorify God, who shall enjoy Him; they who deny themselves, who shall not be denied; they who labour on earth, who shall rest in heaven; they who bear the cross, who shall wear the crown; they who seek to bless others, who shall be blessed; nor is there a prayer you offer, one good word you drop, a work of mercy you undertake, a tear you shed for sinners, a loaf you carry to a poor man's door, a cup of water, even a kind look given to human sorrow, that shall be forgotten. All are recorded in the Chronicles of the Kingdom, and shall be acknowledged in the presence of an assembled universe, when, unnoticed and unknown no longer, you bend your head for the blood-bought crown, and Christ, as He places it on immortal brows, says, Thus it shall be done to the man whom the King delighteth to honour! That day will show that the true way for a man to live was not to live to himself but to others; that, paradox as it sounds, the way for a man never to be forgotten is to forget himself. He will be no loser by that. The sun is not less resplendent, for all the light he sheds when he sinks in the golden west; nor the sea, when she roars along the shore, less full, for all the showers she gives; nor the rose, the lily, or the jessamine less fragrant, for all the odours they fling on the passing breeze; nor the earth leaner, but fatter, for the cattle that tread its pastures, and the harvests that are borne from its fields; and even so it will be found that they who have lived most for others have lived best for themselves. The God whose glory, not their own, they sought shall not forget to glorify them; and, rewarding what they did for others as done to himself, their Judge shall say, "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of them, ye did it unto me." May their character, as thus painted by the poet, be ours!—

> Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
> More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.
> * * * * *
> Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
> And even his failings leaned to virtue's side;
> But in his duty prompt, at every call
> He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all:
> And as a bird each fond endearment tries
> To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
> He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
> Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

THE CONFESSIONS OF KING SOLOMON.

One who reads the Book of Ecclesiastes carefully, must be struck, I believe, by the comparative absence of anything that would indicate that he was reading the confessions of a repentant *Israelite*. Acknowledgments of the vanity of all the works and sorrows of men, no less than of their delights and joys; the recognition of an eternal law of duty abiding for ever, while all things else change, or seem to change; warnings to the young to profit by the experience of one who has struggled out of the "evil nets" into which they are rushing blindly,—this we have abundantly. But this might come, we are tempted to say, from a heathen moralist. This is not the language of one who is conscious that he belongs to a peculiar

people, who rests his hopes upon the covenant which God has made with his fathers. We look for the belief in the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in one who was called to be the ruler of Israel, for some sign that the sure mercies of David were not forgotten by his son,—that he, the Preacher, remembered that he was the heir of the glorious and wonderful promises that were made to his father. We are compelled to confess that we can discover nothing of the kind. The sadness with which we read those confessions of a wasted life is mingled with wonder when we reflect that this was he whose youth must have been passed amid the minstrelsy of the Temple, and to whom the songs of the sweet Psalmist of Israel must have been familiar things. There is a strange contrast between the language of the father and the son. The shepherd-boy, whose early years were spent in hardship, and war, and danger; who had no certain dwelling-place, and encountered hunger and nakedness, and perils of water and of robbers—perils of his own countrymen, and of false brethren; who wandered as an outlaw in the wilderness of Judah, and sought refuge in dens and caves of the earth; to whom a crown brought nothing but a heavier burden and a deeper sorrow; whose old age was darker than his youth, and whose grey hairs were brought down with sorrow to the grave by the evil life and miserable death of the son whom he most loved;—he never lost, even for a moment, his trust in the perpetual loving presence of the God in whom he had believed. The Lord was still his shepherd, his shield and defence, his strong tower and his rock. "Goodness and mercy," he said, "had followed him all the days of his life." He felt sure that the same "rod and staff" would be with him in the "valley of the shadow of death." The last utterance of his failing strength is full of the recollections of his youth, speaks of the same power of perceiving and enjoying the Divine beauty of nature, its wonderful loveliness or terror, as that of which the Psalms are full. The old man, whose life is fast passing away, feeble and cold and dying, has a vision of "the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain." (2 Sam. xxiii. 4.) Whether this glory is to be realised in his own house and his own kingdom he knows not, yet he can depart in peace, believing that it is no deceitful dream, no mocking, transient brightness. There is an "everlasting covenant;" that is "all his salvation and all his desire."

What the life of the son was, how it led him to scepticism and scorn, is known to us all. The child of peace, the beloved of the Lord, living in security, triumphing almost without an effort over his rivals, crowned with all gifts of mind and spirit, living in the midst of a more than kingly magnificence, says nothing of the everlasting covenant, makes no acknowledgment of, utters hardly a prayer to, his Father in the heavens. The highest truths do not go beyond the recognition that there is, in spite of all appearances that contradict it, a righteous and Divine order, or the belief that it is the *duty* of men to "fear God and keep His commandments."

It seems almost a truism to infer from this contrast the blessedness of a life of trial and suffering, the danger of one of unbroken prosperity and ease. And yet here, as in so many other instances, a truism is only a disregarded truth, one which does not cease to be true, but which we do not choose to acknowledge as we ought to do. This is the great lesson of all experience. "It is good for men that they should be afflicted," for thus "they learn the statutes of God." (Ps. cxix. 71.) It is because this is the tendency of suffering, that it comes so largely into the discipline by which the children of God are perfected, so that "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." (Heb. xii. 6.) There are no times so likely to lead men to trust in the Everlasting Arms as those in which the arm of flesh fails them utterly; none in which they can learn so truly that their strength is in "quietness and confidence," as those in which they find that the reed on which they have leant has broken beneath their hand, and pierced it. And we, who live in easy circumstances, and to whom, in the common course of things, our daily life brings no hardships or dangers, have great need to remember how very close an utter godlessness may lie to that outward regularity. If we set our hearts on the treasures of earth, or its joys, or put our trust in princes, or in any child of men, we shall discover, sooner or later, that these idols of our souls come between us and God. Our perceptions of the truths which we profess will become ever fainter and dimmer. What wonder, if our lives are so utterly unlike what Christ's life was, that we should cease to understand his gospel, and have therefore but a formal and shallow belief in it?

But the history of the Preacher has a more definite and a deeper meaning in it. It shows us that the special tendency of the life which he had led, a life, be it remembered, of intellectual activity, as well as one full of the pride of life and the pleasures of gratified desires, is to tear up by the roots a man's hereditary faith, and all the hope and confidence that are bound up with it. Those hopes, the clear, undoubting trust, the unclouded apprehension of the truths which he has been taught in childhood, are treasures which it is easy to cast aside—difficult, almost impossible, to regain. The man who, by scorning the image of God in himself, or in his brethren, has lost the power of perceiving the brightness of that image manifested in the Only-begotten of the Father, will find that all the words and phrases which expressed his faith in the Incarnation become empty technicalities to him. They will seem the dreariest fragments that could be gathered by men who had no human hearts in them, out of the *débris* of bygone controversies. And so, again, with other truths. The practical living denial of a Father in heaven, who wills that we should be pure as He is pure, and perfect as He is perfect, will be sure to end in a mist and darkness of vision through which the whole faith in the possibility of a regenerate life will seem the most unreal of all chimeras. Lose the clue of the desire to do the will of God, and you are lost in the labyrinth of human systems. The "double-

minded man," the man whose life is a contradiction and a lie against his knowledge, is "unstable in all his ways." (James i. 8.)

And yet it may be that, even here, there is a remedy for the evil. In God's storehouse there are many remedies. The book of Ecclesiastes tells us how one, over whom the disease had gained the greatest power, was delivered from its thraldom. The cure was not rapid. It could hardly be *that*, when the corruption was so deeply seated. It might not seem so complete as that which those who minister to a soul diseased expect to see following all at once from the application of their infallible panaceas; but it was God's work of healing, and therefore the true one, and there was hope. Of the discipline by which it was accomplished the book tells us clearly. We see, even early in the course, signs that life is struggling with death, even where at first we discerned nothing but hatred and scorn. The thought that "wisdom excelleth folly" (Eccles. ii. 13), that there is a Divine light, alternates strangely enough with the accents of hopelessness. It was something to recognise that the calm enjoyment which at one time seemed to him the highest end of life, must come from God; better still, to acknowledge that "God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdom, and knowledge, and joy." (Eccles. ii. 24—26.) Even the vanity of human purposes, the vexation of all human spirits, led his mind, at last, beyond the thought of an unchangeable Nature to that of an unchangeable God. "I know this," he said, "that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him." (Eccles. iii. 14.)

We may be quite sure that one who had lived the life that Solomon had, who had been hailed as the builder of a Temple, and the protector of a Faith; whom priests and Levites served and flattered, but had not the courage to reprove, would hear from them many excellent words on the duties of religion, the importance of the worship of the sanctuary. It may be that these thoughts of God that were rising in his mind after his long wanderings in the mire of sensuality, and his enlarged experience of all that the religious consciousness of mankind could devise for its own alleviation, led him of his own accord to think of the solemn services in which he had once taken so prominent a part. Might he not once again become as one of those humble worshippers, and behold God's power and glory as he had seen them in the sanctuary? What *did* he see there? What did he learn from the established worship of his country? Alas! there also he found a hollowness from which his whole heart revolted, which was more intolerable than his own indulgence in luxury or pursuit of wisdom. "The sacrifices of fools" who "considered not that they did evil;" men who were "rash with their mouths" and "hasty with their lips;" a "multitude of words" which were not the overflowing of a full heart, but the utterance of a fool's voice, proclaiming the emptiness of his soul; vows which men need not have made, and which, when made, they did not keep, dreams and vanities;—this was what he saw in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of the holy city. (Eccles. v. 1—6.) There was no strength or comfort in this. It was far better to remember that God was in heaven, and his worshipper on earth, and so to let his words be few.

It is impossible, I think, to look on the connection of the parts of the fifth chapter as accidental. The thought of the "oppressions that were done under the sun" recurs again, and follows immediately on the words of indignation with which he had spoken of the hypocrites and formalists. They, we must believe, those self-same boastful worshippers, were the men from whom proceeded the "violent perverting of judgment and justice." They went from the sacrifice of fools to judge unrighteous judgment—to receive gifts, and to drive wise men mad. They sought to grasp for themselves the "profit of the earth, which was for all," and loved silver and abundance. All this was wretched enough; but as he looked deeper, he saw something that seemed like a law of compensation, some faint signs at least of a Divine retribution: the rich oppressor was clearly not one whit better for all his riches,—gained nothing by his treasures but the "beholding of them with his eyes." (Eccles. v. 11, 12.) The labouring man did not suffer so much as might at first appear. He might have more freedom, more tranquillity and health and enjoyment, than the ruler who trampled on him. Yet, after all, this was an unsatisfactory solution of the problem. Unless it led the way to something better than itself, it could not prevent the recurrence of the old feeling, that all society was corrupt, "that vanity and an evil disease" pervaded it altogether, that an equal darkness covered the beginning and the end of life. (Eccles. vi. 1—5.) What it did teach him was to feel with and for the sufferers, to know that "sorrow was better than laughter," that it was "better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting" and of mirth, to admire the patient in spirit, while he owned the power of the wrongs of society to cause madness in the heart even of the wise. (Eccles. vii. 2—7.) That was, we may well imagine, a wonderful step in the life of this king, who had gathered "silver and gold, and men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men;" who dwelt in his kingly palaces, with gardens and orchards and pools of water to minister to his enjoyment. Yet such a change is not singular in the spiritual history of men. The history of the monastic orders brings before us many examples of it. There may be that now in the hearts of men which is more analogous to it than we imagine. Men, after wasted years and riotous living, come to themselves again, and with their faith all unsettled and doubts unremoved, are content to work for and among the sufferers from the world's wrong, or from the evils that seem to come on men from time and chance. They are tempted at first, as the Preacher was, to ask many questions. They seek to know "why the former days were better than the latter." Then they remember that to ask this is to inquire unwisely. (Eccles. vii. 10.) It is better to go on in their work and labour of love; not to "withdraw their hand" from *that*, however they may despair of solving the problem of the universe. One thing they are learning to believe;

the house of suffering and the patient in spirit teach them this : that "he that feareth God cometh forth of them all." (Eccles. vii. 18.) We may hope (this is the blessing which the Preacher's confessions leave with us) that they will go further. It may be that truth will yet dawn on them more brightly, and that they will walk in its light. It may be that they will one day hear the words, which to them will come with the fulness of a surprise that they cannot have for him whose faith has been clear and unshaken, who has consciously been serving Christ in ministering to his poor : "Forasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

We have seen that the work of healing is advancing rapidly ; there is life struggling against death, hope against despair. But there are (how untrue the book would be to all human experience, if there were not !) relapses into the old state. Once again the answer he is in search of seems far off, and exceeding deep, so that he cannot find it. He is compelled to renew that analysis of the reason of things, and of the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness, in in which he had so often been baffled. (Eccles. vii. 11—25.)

And there is a terrible significance in that which now forms the hindrance. He is thrown back by the dark visions of remembered sins. What had been once is acted over again in the chambers of memory, and he thinks of one "more bitter than death," whose heart was as a snare and net ; and her, and those like her, who rise up before him, it may be, from the darkness of the grave, he remembers, not with infinite shame and infinite compassion, but only with scorn and railing, with bitter words, which remind us of all that is most hateful in the sensualist poets of Greece or Rome (Eccles. vii. 26) ; and therefore he treads the old circle once again, and the mists become thicker, and the blackness gathers. One truth, indeed, he bears away with him. The evil was his own choice, not God's creation. "God made men upright ; but they have sought out many inventions" (Eccles. vii. 29) ; but as regards his hope and steadfastness he has gone back. That thought of scorn, that bitterness, in which there is a loathing of evil, but no true repentance, has undone the effect of the works of sympathy and help. Doubts once again rush in on him. Their course is stemmed for a time by the thought that it shall be well with them that fear God, not well with them who fear Him not. Experience shows him how true this is in the long run in life. In spite of all anomalies there is a Divine government ; the evil-doer is not happy,—the sufferer may be ; the calm and contented life of one who fears God and loves man presents the picture of a perfect blessedness. But then death comes, with its cold crushing equality—the great leveller, and therefore, as it seemed to him, the greatest of all anomalies. All things alike to all, "one event to the righteous and the wicked, to the clean and to the unclean, to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not"—this was an evil that went through all things. This put "madness in their heart." Their love, and their hatred, and their envy perish with them. "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither all men go." (Eccles. viii. 12 ; ix. 6.)

It would be untrue to say that these doubts represent the permanent faith either of Solomon, or of any other Israelite. It would be equally untrue to assert that the life and immortality which were brought to life through the Gospel, came before his mind with the same unclouded brightness as that in which they are seen by one who believes in Christ, and knows that he is a child of God. But he did rise out of the doubts and the deadness and coldness in which they had plunged him. The faith in a Divine order, in a righteous retribution, grew stronger and stronger. Nothing was wasted, nothing lost sight of in the book of God's remembrance. No evil deed went unpunished. That he had found out long ago the ways of the young man's heart, which seemed so full of delight, led him to the days of darkness. The old age of the king, who had lived in the selfishness of the pleasure-seeker (the old age, Solomon must have said to himself, which is in store for *me*), was in itself a judgment, an augury he could not ignore, of one which lay beyond it. The evil days had come, the years were drawing nigh in which he must say, "I have no pleasure in them." The power to perceive, and the power to enjoy, depart with the gathering of the years. "The keepers of the house tremble, the strong men bow themselves, and the daughters of music are brought low, and fears are in the way." And then comes the end : the loosing of the "silver cord" of life, the breaking of the "golden bowl" of sense, the drying up of the "fountain" and the "cistern" from which it had been so often filled, and then "the dust returned to the earth as it was, and the spirit returned to God who gave it." (Eccles. xii. 1—7.)

But then there was a Divine recompense also. No righteous or loving deed, done with a righteous and loving heart, should be without its fruit. His mercy to the poor and afflicted had taught him that. The bread might be "cast upon the waters," but after many days it should be found. It was idle, and therefore sinful, to wait for special occasions of doing good, to watch for some great calamities before making any effort to relieve the sufferers. It was idle to waste a life in observing the clouds and regarding the wind. The clouds would "empty themselves when they were full of rain." The tree would "fall to the south or the north," as the wind should blow it. It was the work and the blessedness of a man to be doing good perpetually, and trusting the issue of it to God ; in the morning to "sow his seed," and in the evening not to "withhold his hand"—and then in due season he should reap. That was true, whatever else might be deceitful. His spirit also returned to God. (Eccles. xi. 1—4.) There, in that presence, stript of all disguises, receiving each of them a righteous judgment, should every work and every secret thing, whether it be good or evil, be brought to light. The Divine order was not confined within the time-limits of a human life. Death did not destroy it, was not the great anomaly. How or in what way he knew not, but all that he had felt and known of the blessedness of God's servants, of the curse in which they in-

volve themselves who turn aside from Him, acquired an infinite depth and power for him. He had dug deep, had gone through all the crusts of sensuality, doubt, perplexity, misery, despondency, but he had come at last to a rock, and out of that rock flowed the water of life. He was content not to answer the questions which had haunted him. He turned in utter weariness from the many books and the much study in which he had expected to find an answer. Now he was following a Divine light; it was a Divine voice that he heard proclaiming to him and to all men, "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." (Eccles. xii. 12—14.)

This may seem to us, as I said, a very inadequate result, unworthy of a devout Israelite. It falls far short of the faith of David. It is still further distant from that of a believer in the Gospel. We should be tempted to look on one who declared solemnly that the experience of a long life had taught him to acknowledge the sovereignty of God and the eternal law of duty as speaking the language of a heathen. For such a one we should have little hope, it may be a harsh condemnation.

I give thanks that the record of this book teaches us to suspend, if not to reverse, our judgment. I believe that the old man who, when his strength and his wisdom were failing him, took refuge in this hope, and rested on this truth, was better, stronger, wiser, safer,—if you like to introduce the idea of safety,—than he whom the Queen of Sheba came to visit; who poured forth that wonderful prayer at the dedication of the Temple. For great as the truths were which he proclaimed, and marvellously as he rose to the perception of their harmony with each other, there was a subtle danger in all that eloquence and skill of speech. The very act of worship might soon pass into a display of his own wisdom, not the acknowledgment of an Infinite Wisdom, by which he was seeking to be taught. The *intellect* analyses truth, and may come to look on the truths as its own creations, or they may seem unable to bear the search, and vanish like the cloud-wreaths of the morning. And so that which seemed firmly grasped will slip away from us. Because we never knew the truths in their power, because they were things for us to talk about and boast of, we suffer the due reward of our transgressions when we find even our acts of worship full of vanities and dreams. It is a gain and blessing unspeakable when we are able once again to hold one truth firmly, and to feel that that is real, divine, eternal. Better to know that in its power than to profess a whole creed with the carelessness of a pleasure-seeker, or the keenness of a controversialist.

And the blessedness of thus apprehending any one article of faith is, that it must needs lead on to others. The words, "Fear God, and keep his commandments," were the simplest of all precepts, and yet one who fixed his heart on them, and strove to live in them, would find himself led perpetually into new regions of truth, new convictions of sin, new forms of holiness. To fear God, not at stated times and in solemn worship only, but evermore; at morning and at noonday and in the evening; speaking or acting; in secret thoughts and unrevealed desires; not with the false fear of a slave or hireling, but with the true loving fear of children; to feel that his commandments are "exceeding broad;" that no man is free from them; that they give freedom, and set a man's heart at liberty,—what might not these thoughts teach to the humbled and contrite heart? Would they in the end leave him so far behind? Would there not be growth, from faith to faith, and grace to grace; a perpetual increase of light, shining more and more brightly unto the perfect day? May we not hope that it was so for the Preacher? May we not hope that it is so for those who, as he did, have turned from the true wisdom that is of God to the harlotry of sense and selfishness, and then find themselves in doubt and perplexity, and then turn with true sympathy to works of love and mercy, and then seize on one great truth, and live on it and in it? May we not hope that it will be so for ourselves, so far as our temptations of the sense or of the intellect have been like his?

Certain, at any rate, we may be, that this is the Divine method of recovery. The simplest words which we were taught in childhood, the acknowledgment that we have a Father in heaven, that we are justified by faith, that we are reconciled by the blood of Christ,—any one of these, if we grasp it firmly, will sustain us safely, and by it we may escape from the abyss of doubt in which we have wandered—from the destruction which lies beyond it. E. H. Plumptre.

WRITTEN FOR A SICK BOY.

BY HIS FATHER.

Come, Expectation, come!
In thy full radiance clad;
Come in thy soothing loveliest guise;
Come, thou fair angel, from the skies,
My mournful heart make glad.
May I recline
Beneath thy shrine,
And round my joyful brow thy peaceful emblem twine.

My fancy flies away
Before thy sacred tread;
My meditation, from this room,
Hears unappalled the solemn doom,
And soars above the dead.
And though a tear
By chance appear,
Yet I can smile, and say, "My hopes do not end here."

Come, Expectation, come!
Hence shall I ne'er be hurl'd.
With humble hope of sin forgiven,
I raise my dying eyes to heaven—
I look beyond this world;
I turn my eye
From vanity,
And gaze on scenes of bliss supreme, which never die.

Drawn by G. J. Pinwell. Engraved by Dalziel Brothers

"And though a tear
By chance appear,
Yet I can smile, and say, My hopes do not end here."

True friendship's genial power
Survives the transient day ;
Its memory ne'er is obsolete,
Still it is sweet, 'tis passing sweet—
'Tis never gone away.
Nor does the shade
In memory fade,
When in the tomb on earth the form is laid.

This world is empty, vain,
And volatile, and fleet :
I haste to endless heavenly joys,
Where never rust nor moth destroys,
Where we again shall meet.
Borne on Faith's wing,
I rise, and sing—
Grave ! where's thy victory ? Death ! where's thy sting ?

Come, Expectation, come !
How sweet thou art to me !
Blest herald ! now I own thy sway,
Since glory beams with heavenly ray,
And shines my fears away.
When time is done,
Life's but begun—
Then may I joyful say, "My God ! Thy will be done."

B. W.

THE BIBLE

"Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."—2 Peter i. 21.

THAT is the Scriptural way of stating the great doctrine, that the Bible is inspired ; that the Bible is the Word of God. And you remark the grand simplicity and directness of the statement. The Confession of Faith has done well, in that it has followed the example of Scripture in this matter. It tells us, that "Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the Books of the Old and New Testaments : all which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life." There are matters, as you know, in which the Confession of Faith sets out Christian doctrine in very minute detail : but in dealing with the vital doctrine of the Inspiration of God's Word, it has wisely imitated the breadth of statement, the simplicity, the directness, of God's Word itself.

"Given by inspiration of God," says that venerable standard of our Church : using, I need not tell you, the very words of Scripture. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," says the great Apostle Peter. No doubt both these texts were written at the first with special reference to certain portions of God's Word. St. Paul wrote that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," at a time when the Old Testament was all that was understood by "Scripture:" and St. Peter's words do particularly refer to the prophets, and what they foretold. But it needs only to be said, that these things are in their spirit written of the entire Bible ; and are so to be understood by us. And this being so, observe how general, simple, and large the statements of both Apostles are. Equally so are all the statements the Bible contains as to its own divine authority and origin. It would be well if all Christian people always dealt with God's blessed Word in the same reverent, teachable, earnest spirit. This is not the place for metaphysical subtleties or logical quibbles. It is far too grave, solemn, and vital a thing for these. And abundant experience has made it very plain, that no good comes of going into exact details ; or of trying to set out the *rationale* of what transcends our reason,—the way in which the Holy Ghost worked upon the brain—upon the heart and soul of men, so as to make their utterances or their writings in very deed the Word of God. Let us hold by this, and we shall be safe : that the Bible is indeed the Word of God : that it is God's message to us : that it contains truth without mixture of error : that it is the only infallible rule of faith and of life : that it contains everything needful for salvation : that nothing is to be added to it, and nothing taken from it. The Holy Spirit speaks to us in Holy Scripture : we can understand *that :* let us hold by *that :* how He does so is not revealed, and so we cannot tell. We will not go into those unprofitable and soul-wearying questions into which some would lead us, and which have occasionally been handled by men whom we must regard as orthodox, in a manner as mischievous and vexatious as they ever have been by the most unsound of theologians : we will not be led into questions of degree and method of inspiration : we recognise no difference between the inspiration of this part of Holy Scripture and that. All Scripture is equally to be trusted to. All Scripture is equally God's message to you, and me, and all. We believe it all. We accept it all. In whatever mode God was pleased to inspire the writers of the many books which make the Bible, the result is that the Bible is God's Word, containing God's truth : and we may rely on all it tells us. As for the way in which this comes to be, we never can speak of it in words more certainly true as stating a theory, and probably we never can come nearer to the conveying of an intelligible idea, than when we keep by the safe and true statements of Scripture itself ; and say, with St. Paul, that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God ;" or with St. Peter, that "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

We are all well assured that the supernatural influences of that Divine Spirit do still, in every Christian man and woman, weave in with the natural workings of soul and mind, of heart and head. When the Blessed Spirit helps us to pray, He avails Himself of our natural faculties : of our memory, of our percep-

tion of things which may befall us, of our capacity of feeling, trusting, and loving. And thus, of the great number of prayers which we may humbly trust are every day prompted by the Spirit of all prayer, each differs, doubtless, from all the rest: each bears the impress of the nature, of the heart and mind, of the human being that offers it. The prayer is the prayer of the Holy Spirit: but it is also the individual and characteristic prayer of this man, of that woman, of that little child. Now, you know, it is exactly so with that higher, grander, and less lasting communication of the Holy Spirit which God has vouchsafed to the few among his servants, as with those commoner gifts of the same Divine Being which are not for one age, but for all time, and not for Apostles and Prophets only, but for all saints. It is exactly so with that rarer gift which we call Inspiration, as with the sanctifying, comforting, prayer-prompting communications for which ordinary Christians ask and look, day by day. You know how the inspired writers of the Bible retain their individuality; and how, amid a singular central resemblance that makes us know a verse of the Bible when we hear it, even if we are not familiar with the words, and that testifies to the common origin in the mind of the same Divine Spirit, we still mark each writer's idiosyncrasy: the whole tone of thought and feeling, and even the turns of expression, which are characteristic of him. St. Paul does not write the least like St. John: St. Luke writes quite differently from either, and St. Peter from all three. And yet, do you not feel, that there is a something which belongs to them all: and that belongs to each and all of the many men that wrote the Bible? One breath has breathed upon them, one hand has touched them all! Moses, Job, David, Isaiah, John and Peter, Luke and Paul—there is a something that they all have, and that no uninspired writer possesses one trace of. No one who knows the characteristic atmosphere of those pages, the fresh breeze that breathes upon us as we read our Bibles, will ever be mystified or perplexed by what you may find men say and write as to the identity of the genius of Shakspere for instance (to take the highest and first reach of man's own head and heart), and of David, of Isaiah, of St. John, of St. Paul. O brethren, it is a different thing here altogether! Not that any sane person would put the case, as an ingenious American writer has, that David and Isaiah needed God's help to write, while Shakspere could do without it: not that any sane person doubts that all intellect and all genius are the gift of God: but that the inspiration of God's Word—God's Word that contains no error, that teaches nothing that is wrong, that could not possibly be imagined to exert upon men's hearts any influence but a healthful and good one, that speaks with authority upon all the solemn realities of time and eternity—is millions of miles away from mere human genius—often groping in the dark, often blundering into fatal error, often exerting an influence the most baneful on those whom it influences at all, and at its very best drawing the better part of what light there is in it from the pages of the Bible however indirectly or unconsciously. In a certain loose way, we may speak of the inspiration of the poet, the orator, the painter: and it would be mere pedantry to quarrel with a phrase so well understood in the main. But never forget, that differing not in degree but in kind—differing essentially, vitally, altogether—is the true, holy, divine inspiration of the men who wrote the Bible; and concerning whom the great Apostle Peter certifies us, that "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

And we are to distinguish, likewise, between the supreme inspiration thus described, and the ordinary and still-continuing gifts of the Holy Spirit. I believe, most sincerely, that many pages have been written by good Christian people, under the direction, and under the warming, elevating influence of the Holy Ghost. I believe that many a word has been wisely and kindly spoken in a moment of difficulty and perplexity, after an instant's silent prayer for the blessed Spirit's guidance—spoken so wisely and kindly just because the blessed Spirit quickened the memory, warmed the heart, prompted the right word at the right time. I believe there is no blessing that we are more sure to get from God, if we heartily ask, than the inestimable communications—help, guidance, light, warmth, comfort, peace—of the blessed Holy Spirit. I will say, indeed, that there seems to me something more than an error in taste in the usage of a small sect of excellent Christian people, whose members are accustomed to preface many very unimportant statements they make, by saying that "the Spirit moves them" to say such and such things. It may be that they are indeed moved by the blessed Spirit: but without a special miracle they cannot be sure that they are: and it was well said by a most acute divine, that if any man were quite sure that the Spirit did move him to say anything, he might begin his utterance by saying, "Thus saith the Lord." In the main, if we ask the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we shall receive it. But any one who knows something of the prejudices, the biases, the passions, the sinfulness and foolishness of human nature, will be cautious of believing that any word or deed is truly prompted by the Holy Ghost, unless that deed, or word, be in very strict accordance with what we know for certain of his blessed mind from the more sure page of the written Word. But, returning from this digresssion, let me ask you to fix this in your minds: that there is a vital difference between those ordinary communications of the Holy Spirit—which convey no infallibility, which do not make it sure that he who receives them will never fall into error, or even into sin—and that higher and rarer gift of the same blessed One, which gives God's authority and God's infallibility to the words spoken by man. I firmly believe, when I am told by one of the noblest and most single-hearted of all living philanthropists, that she never would speak in circumstances of difficulty or perplexity without a moment's prayer for the Holy Ghost's direction,—I firmly believe that the wonderful wisdom, fitness, and readiness with which she has many a time spoken comfort to the despairing heart and light to the perplexed, were indeed dictated truly by that blessed and wisest Director; but still there is a wide and broad difference between that guidance

which you and I may get for the asking (God be thanked), and the true inspiration of those few among our race concerning whom St. Peter tells us that "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

And now, having said so much as to the nature of the inspiration of the Bible, let me suggest to you some thoughts upon God's Word generally.

The Bible, remember, is the Word of God. It not merely contains the Word of God, as in some sense all things do—for "the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork: day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge" concerning Him: and a great theologian has made man's bodily frame tell us plainly many things as to the wisdom, goodness, and power of its Maker: the Bible not merely contains the Word of God: it is the Word of God. It does not give us some grains of Divine truth, some messages really sent by God to man, amid a great mass of statements proceeding from man's own wit and fancy: it is—all—God's truth and God's Word. It is the flower and crown of all God's revelation to man: everything that we can read, or fancy we read, on the pages of Nature or Providence, we find far more plainly stated in the Bible; and we find a vast deal more. We find, there, things most needful unto salvation, about which earth and sea and stars are dumb. We find the message of salvation through a crucified Redeemer: we find how we may get the pardon of sin: we are told of that kindly blessed Spirit, of whom is everything pure, and true, and good, and kind, that can be found in human being! Oh, sweep the heavens, and scan the earth; look at trees and flowers, and beasts and birds: but what word will you find of such saving, cheering, priceless truths as these!

Even the lesser characteristics of the Bible are noteworthy. The very language of this blessed Book is such as wonderfully suits its claims to be God's message to all races and tongues. The Bible bears translation into other languages as no other book does. It is at home, and at its ease, in all languages. You never feel, reading your Bible, that you are reading a translation. You know how stiff and awkward most translations are; and how vain is the endeavour, in most cases, even when made by the greatest genius and skill, to transfuse into any translation the spirit of the original. Take that most famous of all the mediæval hymns, the world-renowned *Dies Iræ*. Turn it literally into English. The whole spirit, and unimaginable grace, power, pathos, and sublimity of the Latin words are fled. And I have seen translations of it which truly made it ridiculous. Then I suppose all scholars are agreed that no translation can convey to you the tone and spirit of Plato, of Homer, of Æschylus. But it is little to say that our Bible has all the freedom of an original: more than that, the very spirit of the Hebrew words or the Greek, glows, melts, rouses, calms, in the English. David, Moses, Job, Isaiah, St. Luke, St. John, St. Paul,—they speak to us as they spoke to those who first read them, no whit of their power or character gone: and those of you, who know these holy men only from your translated Bibles, may be well assured that you know them as they were. You hear it said, that there is no more remarkable miracle of skill than the language of our English Bible; which is indeed the standard of perfection in our tongue. But there is something more in this than the industry, tact, scholarship, of the translators. Surely it is, that when the Holy Ghost moved holy men of old to write God's message to all human beings, He moved them so to write it,—in such tongues, and in such words,—as would bear, as human words never did, to be rendered into the mother-tongue of every being who has speech and reason. The same Divine Spirit who at Pentecost made the unlettered fishermen into the most accurate and wonderful scholars, giving them the power to go to any tribe on the face of the earth, and speak to its men and women freely in the tongue they knew best, and loved best; surely He gave a gift of tongues as wonderful as even *that*, when He made the holy men He inspired,—writing far from one another in time and space,—writing in all circumstances and in the most diverse styles,—yet cast their thoughts into such words as would go naturally and kindly into the speech of every human being?

And then, how this wonderful Volume suits all men, in matters more vital than its language! Said St. John, as though feeling how signal a testimony to truth is afforded by the fact that it is capable of being received by all sorts and conditions of men,—"That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Is it not so with the Bible? *It* does not suit this age or that, this race or that; it suits all ages and all races and all men. There are extraordinary national differences in ways of thinking and feeling: and extraordinary differences in such things between the people of different times and ages. An eminent writer has put it on record, that after long study of early Greek philosophy, he was obliged to leave off with the conviction that, in those days, common sense had not been invented. And, indeed, it is quite certain, that what the people of one century have esteemed as profound wisdom, the people of another century have rejected as absolute trifling and nonsense. In like manner, writings are thought admirably wise and weighty in Germany, which our ablest divines have held in utter contempt; and we all know that statements have been regarded as logical arguments in France, which people here would esteem as of no weight whatever. Then you know what difference there is in feeling, and the expression of feeling, between different races,—between the wild demonstrations of oriental grief, with its rent garments and its dust scattered on the head, its shrieks and cries, and the quietness of grief in this western part of the world, with its composed face, its few words, its silent tears. You can compare, too, the silent enjoyment of peace and rest and holy communion, with which a good Christian here covers his face and muses at the

holy table, with David's manifestation of the like spiritual elevation by that frantic dancing before the Ark of God. That which would seem to us exaggerated and ridiculous, seems all quite fit and natural to people of a more demonstrative race. And yet, this wonderful Book, dealing as it does throughout just with religious faith and feeling, suits man wherever you find him: comes home alike to eastern and western nations: never gets out of date: never is outgrown by the increasing intelligence of educated men: contains not a sentence that even those who like it least can call nonsense: and expresses no feeling in which all Christian people cannot sympathise;—or if its spiritual elevation does sometimes transcend our sympathy, then we know that the fault is our own, and that the feeling is one with which we ought to sympathise. And if we be believers in Christ in any good measure, how this blessed Book, inspired by One who knows us and understands us thoroughly,—how it suits all our moods, all our circumstances! In every state of thought and feeling, we find what we want in the Bible. There is not a thought or feeling that can arise in a believing heart, but what you can express it in some verse of some Psalm. If we are joyful, sorrowful, hopeful, desponding, weary or cheerful, turn over the pages of David, King and Psalmist, and *there* are the very words to set out what we feel! "I have just one book," said the poor disappointed genius: "but that book is the Best!" May God grant that each one here, in every season that may come, may find that the inspired volume is indeed all *that* to himself!

And just remember, too, what is the secret of the Bible's so coming home to all. It is not a question, here, of those intuitions of moral truth, which, when we read or hear them, make us say, "Now *that is* true;" or even say, "We have often thought *that* ourselves, though we never heard it expressed before." It is quite true, that pages which bear such things *will* make their way to many minds and hearts: but it is on a different footing altogether, that God's Book makes its appeal to us! The Bible comes home to all, because it treats of great facts which we never could have found out; yet which, when told, commend themselves, not to sensibility, not to taste,—not even to intellect merely, but to our conscience and heart; to our deepest and most solemn convictions of what is divine and right and true! It tells us that we are fallen, sinful creatures,—that our whole life is error, sin and shortcoming: and if our conscience be enlightened by God's Holy Spirit, we know *that* is true. It tells of salvation through Christ; of repentance to Israel —yea, to all—and the forgiveness of sins; and if we have in any measure been enabled by God's grace to commit our souls to the blessed Redeemer, then we know *that* is true. It tells us of the sanctifying and comforting communications of the Holy Spirit: and if we have ever heartily sought these, then we know *that* is true. It tells us that this is our pilgrimage: it tell us Where is our home: it explains the never-ceasing worries of this life, and the blank insufficiency of all things here, by saying that this is not our rest, and by bidding us seek our rest in the Saviour: and oh, how solemnly true the assurance, and sound the counsel! And through these things it comes to be, that wherever man is a poor sinful creature, anxious, careworn, sorrowful, disappointed, dying,—the Bible comes home to him as nothing else can! Therefore it is that the little volume is the first prized possession of childhood, and old people have it in their hands to the last: therefore it goes into the soldier's knapsack: therefore the aged statesman and judge could read it like a little child: therefore you find it under the pillow of the dying, wet with tears. Therefore its blessed words we wish should be the last read by our weary eyes, and heard by our ears soon to be deaf for ever. It is not genius, with its touches of nature, that does this: it is something higher. It is that in these words we have Almighty God's authoritative message to us, for our salvation: it is that, "Holy men of God spake" them "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost!"

It sounds almost strange to us, in this Protestant country, to say, as if it needed to be said, that this inspired Book is safe to be put into the hands of all. It is not to be shut up in libraries, in the seclusion of its original languages: it is to be scattered broadcast over the land, translated into the tongue in which every man can read it best. Of course, we know, that there have been those who declared that this ought not to be done: that the Bible is a most dangerous book to be put in the hands of all comers, because it may be so terribly misunderstood, and indeed has been so terribly misunderstood. And true it is, that the Bible has been misread and misunderstood. It is like every good gift of God, capable of being abused. Even God's law, St. Paul tells us, was good, only if man used it lawfully. And no one with the most moderate knowledge of history will deny, that some of the cruellest, wickedest, and foolishest things men ever did, they have pretended to justify on the authority of the Bible. The savage inquisitor, with his rack and his faggots: the Puritan, sometimes, with his sour face, his ridiculous name, and his outlandish phrases: the infatuated slave-holder, with his bloodhounds and his whips: each of these has quoted Scripture for his purpose; nay, it was with a garbled text of the Bible that the Devil thought to tempt our Saviour to presumptuous sin. But it does not need to be said at this time of day, that the abuse of a thing is no argument against its use: and though a man who has already made up his mind, and who reads the Bible with the purpose of finding that the Bible approves his views, may easily persuade himself that it does,—yet let us be sure that he who goes to God's Word in a teachable spirit, desiring honestly to find in the Bible not what he might like to find, but what God has said there; and praying earnestly for the illumination of that Blessed One who inspired the Bible at the first, and is still its best interpreter; will never be suffered to mis-read its meaning in anything vital. And though this Book has its difficulties—especially to people who seek for them—yet it sets out the way of salvation through Christ, and of holiness and comfort through the

Blessed Spirit, in words that the most unlettered and the youngest may understand. There is many and many a page of God's Word which needs no note or comment to make its essential meaning plain and clear to a simple and docile heart. The Bible does not need the Church to explain it or to make it safe. It is a vital doctrine of Protestantism, that God's Word is to be given to all, and read by all. As is well said in the Confession of Faith, "All the people of God who have right unto and interest in the Scriptures are commanded in the fear of God to read and search them." And yet more explicitly is it said in the Directory for the Public Worship of God, that "besides public reading of the Holy Scriptures, every person that can read is to be exhorted to read the Scriptures privately, and to have a Bible."

I have much more to say concerning the Bible; and I trust, by God's permission and help, to continue this subject at another time. Meanwhile, one word as to the great theme of which the Spirit moved holy men of God, so far apart many of them from each other, to speak in these books which form the written Word of God. "Moses wrote of Me," said our blessed Redeemer: "The Scriptures," said He, "are they which testify of Me." True of the Old Testament, how much more manifestly so of the New! Yes, Christ Jesus our Lord, and God's glory in our salvation through Him, is the great pervading theme of God's Word. Other themes, a host of others, are touched incidentally. You have maxims of the shrewdest worldly wisdom: but oh, the great and ultimate thing is pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace! And when we read our Bibles, we may read them indeed for guidance in each detail of the pilgrimage on earth; but let us read them mainly for guidance to the Home in Heaven!

A. K. H. B.

THE LITANY PARAPHRASED.

FATHER of all, Eternal, God alone,
Whose footstool is the earth and heaven Thy throne,
Source of all good, and Fountain of all light,
Our Guide by day, our Guardian through the night,
Miserable sinners, we
Humble, contrite, bow to Thee;
Bow the heart and bow the knee.
Mark each sigh, regard each tear,
Hear us pray,—in mercy hear!

O God the Son, who didst redeem the world,
When from their thrones the powers of ill were hurl'd;
Who on the cross Thy precious blood didst shed,
To bruise beneath Thy feet the serpent's head,
Miserable sinners, we,
Who from wrath to come would flee,
Turn with confidence to Thee;
For us Thou wert content to bleed,
Plead our cause,—in mercy plead!

O Holy Ghost, who dost inform the soul,
Cleanse the foul heart, th' impetuous will control,
Confirm the weak, the falt'ring saint uphold,
And, breathing courage, make the coward bold,
Miserable sinners, we,
Feeling our infirmity,
Cry for help and grace to Thee:
Help us in the hour of need,
Lead us, oh! in mercy lead!

O, everlasting Father, Spirit, Son,
Holy and blessed, glorious Three in One,
By whom alone we live, and move, and are
Thy work, Thy purchase, and Thy daily care,
Miserable sinners we,
Deeply contrite, turn to Thee,
Turn in all humility.
Lord, accept our humble prayer,
Spare us, in Thy mercy, spare!

Our sins, O Lord, remember not
Nor those our fathers did of old;
Blot from Thy book of record, blot
All that against us might be told!
Vengeance belongs to Thee, and Thou the guilty wilt repay,
And we deserve Thy wrath; yet, Lord, Thy rising anger stay!
Spare us, good Lord, in mercy spare
Thy people whom Thou didst redeem,
For whom Thou didst in mock'ry wear
The purple robe, the thorny crown,
And Thy most precious blood did stream,
While Thou upon the cross didst bear
Shame, agony—all, but despair;
Didst willingly Thy life lay down,
Complete Thy great compassion's scheme,
And all the sons of men from Satan's power redeem.
We are Thy sheep. Alas! we strayed; but now would to Thy fold return.
Accept, forgive, O Lord, nor let Thy wrath for ever burn!

From all ills, without, within,
From the worst of evils, sin;
Oh! from Satan's craft and pow'r
In temptation's bitter hour;
From Thy wrath which we provoke,
From Thy judgments' heavy stroke,
From the gloomy pit below,
Place of everlasting woe,
Thou, of grace and strength the Giver,
Lord of mercy, us deliver!

From all darkness of a mind
Prone to sin, by nature blind;
Oh! from pride, from self-conceit,
Base hypocrisy, deceit,
Envy, hatred, malice, all
Unbecoming those who call
Thee their Master, who above
Dwellest, Prince of Peace and love,
Thou, of grace and strength the Giver,
Lord of mercy, us deliver!

Oh! from lust's unholy fires,
From those sensual desires
Which, indulged or fed within,
Drown the soul in deadly sin;
From the world's delusive cheats,
From the flesh and its deceits,
From the snares unnumbered
Satan doth around us spread,
Thou, of grace and strength the Giver,
Lord of mercy, us deliver!

In the wild, tempestuous day
When the vivid lightnings play,
When Thy awful thunders roll,
Striking terror to the soul,

When Thy judgments are abroad,
Plague, and pestilence, and sword,
Join'd with famine hand in hand,
Ministers at thy command,
Making desolate the land,
Thou, of grace and strength the Giver,
Lord of mercy, us deliver!

From the rebel's truthless heart,
Dark conspiracy's base art,
Mean sedition's evil word,
Whisp'ring treason 'gainst his Lord;
Oh! from out the iron hand
Of such troublers of the land,
From their evil spirit too
Prompting evil things to do,
Bringing swift destruction on
Peace of others and their own,
Thou, of grace and strength the Giver,
Lord of mercy, us deliver!

By that mystery of love,
Thy descending from above,
In the lowly virgin's womb
God incarnate to become;
By Thy pure and holy birth,
Bringing down from heaven to earth
Peace,—thus herald angels told
Shepherds watching round the fold,
While, a stall Thy dwelling made,
In the manger Thou wast laid,—
Thou, of grace and strength the Giver,
Lord of mercy, us deliver!

By Thy condescending will
The law Thou madest to fulfil,
And, in circumcision, shed
First thy blood for quick and dead;
By that sacred hour when Thou
Didst 'neath Jordan's waters bow,
And the Baptist o'er Thy head
Words of truth and blessing said,
As, descending from above,
Came the Spirit like a dove;
While, aloud, the Holy One
Claim'd Thee His beloved Son,
Thou, of grace and strength the Giver,
Lord of mercy, us deliver!

By that strange, mysterious scene,
When, self-humbled, Thou didst deign,
In the wilderness' wide waste
Forty days and nights to fast,
That, in nature's weakened hour,
Thou might'st feel the tempter's pow'r;
By the victory Thou didst win,
Tempted, suff'ring, without sin;
By the weapon sharp as bright,
Which, well wielded in the fight,
Put the enemy to flight,
Sharper than a two-edged sword,
God's own true, eternal word,
Thou, of grace and strength the Giver,
Lord of mercy, us deliver!

By the woe that o'er Thy soul,
Like a troubled sea did roll;
By Thy tears, Thy groans, Thy sighs,
Offspring of Thine agonies,
When those earnest prayers were made
In Gethsemane's deep shade;
By Thine agony profound,
When there fell unto the ground
Sweat-drops, like great drops of blood,
Preluding that greater flood,
Which should soon a fountain be,
Cleansing all who look to Thee,
Thou, of grace and strength the Giver,
Lord of mercy, us deliver!

By Thy cross, where Thou indeed
Didst, a spotless victim, bleed;
By Thy passion, when *that* cry
Told Thy deeper agony,
Left alone to bear the load,
Yea! forsaken e'en by God!
By Thy death, when o'er the sun,
Ere one half his course was run,
Darkness brooding chang'd the light,
Nature mourning, into night,
Thou, of grace and strength the Giver,
Lord of mercy, us deliver!

By Thy burial in the grave,
Mighty though Thou wert to save;
By Thy conquest over death,
When, returning from beneath,
Thou didst come again to tell
Vict'ry over death and hell,
And the trembling earth did own
Thee her God, and Thee alone;
By Thy going up on high,
"Captive led captivity,"
While the heavenly host around
Chanted this triumphant sound,
"Lift your heads, eternal gates,
See, the King of Glory waits!"
Thou, of grace and strength the Giver,
Lord of mercy, us deliver!

In the day when dangers press,
In the hour of our distress,
When our sorrows melt in tears,
When all round us dark appears,
Wave o'er wave comes rolling on,
Comfort fails and hope is gone;
Yes, and in the prosp'rous day,
When no trouble blocks our way,
When from hour to hour we glide
Onward, with a fav'ring tide,
While the world its gifts imparts
Bidding for our foolish hearts,
Pow'r and riches in her hand,
On a dangerous height we stand;
Oh! when we are perill'd so,
Or by pleasure, or by woe,
Thou, of grace and strength the Giver,
Lord of mercy, us deliver!

When, as falter nature's pow'rs,
Weary days and nights are ours,
Ceaseless pain the body wears,
Conscious guilt the bosom tears,
Sins, a heavy burthen, press,
Merit sinks to nothingness;
When the voice of conscience rings,
Speaking faithful, bitter things;
When, time fast contracting, we
Hasten to eternity;
When the panting, ebbing breath
Tells us 'tis "the hour of death!"
When the body to the grave
Goes,—the soul to God who gave!
In that hour of utmost need,
Lest the powers of hell succeed,
Thou, of grace and strength the Giver,
Lord of mercy, us deliver!

When resounds that trumpet dread,
Summoning the quick and dead,
Saint and sinner, all to meet,
All, before *His* judgment seat,
Who *once* came in humble birth,
But *now* comes to judge the earth,
"With Him his reward," to give,
Some to die and some to live,
These, in bliss with Him to dwell,
Those, to second death in hell.
Oh! when comes that awful hour,
When He takes to Him his pow'r,
Or to punish, or to save
All the tenants of the grave,
Reigning over all alone,
All alike constrain'd to own
Irresistible his sway;
In the solemn judgment day!
Thou, of grace and strength the Giver,
Lord of mercy, us deliver! AMEN!

CHAS. H. BINGHAM.

IN THE LIFE OF OUR LORD.

THE CHARGE OF SABBATH BREAKING.

Mark i. 1—31; John v. 1—47; Matth. xii. 1—14; John ix. 14; Luke xiii. 10—17; Luke xiv. 1—6.

It was a common saying among the Jews, that whoever did any work on the Sabbath Day, denied the work of the creation. The saying was grounded on the fact that one principal end of the Sabbatic institute was, by its continued and faithful observance to preserve a knowledge of, and a faith in, the one Living and True God as the Creator of all things. As being a most explicit and expressive embodiment in outward act and habit of the faith of the Jewish people, that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and the sea and all that in them is, it was chosen by God as a fit and appropriate sign of the peculiar relationship towards Him into which that people had been brought—the peculiar standing which among other nations it was to occupy. "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm: therefore, the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath Day." (Deut. v. 13—15.) "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever." (Exod. xxxi. 16, 17.) "Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them. Hallow my Sabbaths; that ye may know that I am the Lord your God." (Ezek. xx. 12, 20.)

There was no rite, nor institution, not even circumcision, by which the Jews were more conspicuously distinguished from surrounding nations, and marked off as the worshippers of Jehovah, the creator of the ends of the earth. Their Sabbath keeping was a perpetual and visible token of the connection in which they stood to God, and of the great mission which, under Him, they were set apart to discharge. But how was the Sabbath to be kept so as to serve this end? Looking back here to the original statutes, and to the earlier practice of the Jewish people, you will find that there was but one positive injunction given; the cessation from all manner of work. The rest enjoined, however, could not be the rest of total and absolute inactivity. The work from which they were to cease could not be every doing of the human hand. Obviously it was the work of men's ordinary occupation or trades, the work by which the hours of common labour were filled by those engaged therein. There is, indeed, one prohibition, the only one, in which there is a specification of the kind of work to be desisted from, which would seem to point to a narrower interpretation of the original command. When Moses had gathered all the congregation of Israel together at the base of Sinai, and the people were about to enter on the construction of the ark and the tabernacle, knowing with what hearty enthusiasm they were inspired, he prefaced his instructions as to the manner in which they should carry on the work, by saying, "Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord; ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations on the Sabbath day." They did not need to be told to kindle no fire for any ordinary culinary purposes. A double portion of the manna fell upon the day preceding the Sabbath, and they were to seethe and bake the whole of it, so that no preparation of food on the Sabbath was required. Issued under such peculiar circumstances it seems not unreasonable to believe that the particular object of the Mosaic injunction was to check the ardour of those who might otherwise have been tempted to carry on the mouldings and the castings in gold and silver on the Sabbath as on other days. It certainly never was understood by the Jews of after generations that they were prohibited by Divine command from having a fire burning in their dwellings, for whatever purpose kindled, on the Sabbath Day.

When we turn from what was prohibited to what was imposed, we find a blank. One or two specific injuctions were indeed laid upon the priests. The daily sacrifices were to be doubled, and the show bread baked upon the Sabbath was to be renewed. That there was no Sabbatism in the Temple became in this way a proverb. But for the people at large there were no minute instructions as to how the day was to be spent. It could not have been made imperative on them to assemble for public worship on that day, for during the times of the Jewish theocracy there was no place but one—the Temple—for such worship, and the meeting there each seventh day was impossible. It was not till after the captivity that synagogues were erected all over the land, in which weekly assemblages for worship did take place; but that was done, not in obedience to any Divine command. It would seem, indeed, to have been the practice of the Jews, from the beginning, to gather round their prophets on the Sabbath Days, and to avail themselves of such means of religious instruction as they could command. Parents took advantage of the rest to teach the law unto their children. But there were no peculiar religious observances prescribed. The day was spent in rest, in thankfulness, in gladness; spent to a great extent as the festival days of other countries were spent. Dressed in their best attire, indulging in better fare, it was to feasting rather than to fasting that the Sabbath was devoted. But, as the faith of the people grew weak, and their allegiance to their Divine Sovereign faltered,

they grew neglectful of the Sabbath, and began to profane the day by breaking in upon that rest from all the ordinary occupations of life which should have been observed. Thus it was that, among other distinctive marks of their peculiarity as a consecrated people, the only worshippers of the Great Creator, this one became obscured and well-nigh obliterated. In the latest years of the Hebrew commonwealth prophet after prophet was raised up to testify against those defections from the faith, among which that of neglecting and profaning the Sabbath occupied a conspicuous place. After the captivity, on the restoration of the Jews to their own land, the same lax habits prevailed. "In those days," says Nehemiah, "saw I in Judah some treading wine-presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath Day: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals." (Nehem. xiii. 15.) Nehemiah did more than testify. Alert and decisive in all his movements, he had the gates of Jerusalem shut when it began to be dark before the Sabbath, and kept them shut till the Sabbath was over. It is in the light of his sayings and doings that we are to interpret the utterance from the lips of Jeremiah. "Thus saith the Lord; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath Day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath Day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the Sabbath Day, as I commanded your fathers." (Jerem. xvii. 21.)

A singular change came over the spirit and habits of the Jewish people after the restoration from the Babylonian captivity. Previously, in the days of the kings and prophets, they were ever and anon showing a tendency to idolatry; subsequently no such tendency appears. Previously they had been neglectful of many of the distinctive rites and ceremonies of their faith; subsequently they became strict and punctilious in their observance of them. Great national calamities—the persecution under the successors of Alexander the Great, the wars of the Maccabees, the aggression of the Romans, the ascent into power of the Idumean family of the Herods, the establishment of the schools of the Rabbis—all conspired to intensify the natural pride and religious bigotry of the Jews; which, as they had nothing but the old laws and traditions to cling to, clung to them with all the more tenacious grasp. The sect of the Pharisees arose, and carried the popular sympathy along with it. Everything regarded as purely and peculiarly Judaic was exaggerated. Punctilious observance of the old ritual was the one great merit compensating for all defects; whilst around the simpler statute-law of Moses there arose an oral or traditional law, growing continually in bulk and overshadowing the primitive Mosaic institute. It had been a less evil had the original enactments of that institute continued to be rightly and liberally interpreted. Instead of this, the narrowest and most rigid interpretation was the only one allowed; and upon each statute as so interpreted additions and explanations were heaped, of such a character as to turn more and more the keeping of them into a mere matter of external routine and outward performance. So fared it with the old, broad and benignant law as to the Sabbath. Its primary injunction, "thou shalt do no manner of work," was falsely held as aimed at all kinds of work whatever; no less than thirty-nine kinds or classes of work being specified as involved in the prohibition. It was ruled thus that grass should not be trodden on the Sabbath, for the bruising of it was a species of harvest work; that shoes with nails should not be worn, as that was the carrying a burden. To what absurd excesses such a spirit of interpretation conducted may be gathered from the single instance of its being actually laid down in the Mishna that a tailor must not go out with his needle near dusk on the eve of the Sabbath, lest he should forget and carry it with him on the Sabbath. In all this there was not only a wrong rendering of the Mosaic precept, but beyond, and much worse than that, there was the erection of a false standard of duty, a false test of piety—the elevation of the outward, the positive, the ceremonial, over the inward, the moral, the spiritual; the putting of the letter that killeth above the spirit which maketh alive.

Now let us see how, born and brought up among a people filled with such prejudices, Jesus regulated his conduct. He knew that healing the diseased on the Sabbath Day would be regarded as a breach of the Divine law, would shock the Pharisees, and run counter to the convictions of the great mass of the community. Did He abstain from effecting cures upon that day? He might easily have done so, as no applications were made to Him. Much as they desired to have the benefit conferred, the people shrank from bringing their diseased to be cured on the holy day. Jesus had only to meet their prejudices by doing nothing. But He did not choose to be thus silent and acquiescent. No less than seven miracles are recorded as wrought by Him on the Sabbath Day, some of them among the most conspicuous and memorable in his ministry:—1. The cure of the paralytic on the occasion of his second visit to Jerusalem. 2. The cure of the demoniac in the synagogue of Capernaum, when opening his ministry in Galilee. 3. The cure of Peter's wife's mother, the same afternoon, in the same city. 4. The cure of the man with a withered hand, a few Sabbaths afterwards, in the same city. 5. The cure of the man born blind, who sat begging in the porch of the Temple at Jerusalem. 6. The cure of a woman who had the spirit of infirmity for eighteen years. 7. The cure of the man with a dropsy who happened to be present at a feast given on a Sabbath Day in the house of a chief publican, an invitation to which Jesus had accepted. Not one of these was effected in answer to any application made. They were all spontaneous, done of Christ's own free will and motion. Nor was there, in regard to most of them, any urgency, requiring that the healing should have been done that day, if done at all. Jesus might have chosen another day rather than the Sabbath to walk through the crowded porches of Bethesda. The impotent man had lain too long there to make a day earlier or a day later of much moment to him. It was the same with the blind

beggar of Jerusalem: and these were the two instances of cures upon the Sabbath Day which drew most public notice and were attended with the most important results. But Jesus was not content with simply relieving the sufferers on these occasions. He did himself, or He bade his patients do, what He was well aware would attract the eye and draw down upon it the condemnation of the priesthood. How easy had it been for Him at Bethsaida to have cured the man in passing, and told him to lie quietly there till the next day, so that no one should have known anything of the cure. But He told him to take up his bed and carry it through the streets, obtruding thus on the eye of the spectators an act which seemed to be an open and flagrant breach of the command delivered by Jeremiah, "Thus saith the Lord; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath Day." (Jerem. xvii. 21.) In curing the man born blind He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the man with the ointment, and said unto him, Go wash in the pool of Siloam; both which acts, the making and applying of the ointment, and the washing in the sacred fountain, were deemed to be desecrations of the Sabbath. It thus appears that He not only voluntarily selected the Sabbath as the day for performing the cures, but wrought them in such a way, or accompanied with such directions, as forced them into notice, and involved others as well as Himself in a crime thought to be of the deepest dye,—involving in fact the penalty of death.

The paralytic of the porches and the blind beggar of the wayside could both indeed plead in their justification the command of their healer, and Jesus took upon Himself the full responsibilities of their acts. In meeting the first challenge of his conduct as a Sabbath-breaker, Christ was content, as appears from the narrative in the fifth chapter of St. John's Gospel, to rest his defence on his Sonship to the Father—a sonship that might seem to entitle Him to claim and exercise a liberty of action to which no other might legitimately aspire. But, putting that Sonship aside, had Christ's act in healing, and the man's act in carrying his bed, been violations of the Sabbath law? This question was left unsettled by our Lord's first defence of himself against the accusation of the Pharisees. It served to bring the matter out, not as one of Christ's peculiar character, position, and rights, but as one having reference simply to the true interpretation of the existing law, when it was an ultraneous act of the disciples on which the charge of Sabbath-breaking was founded. One Sabbath Day He and his disciples were walking through some cornfields in which the grain was already white unto the harvest. The disciples being an hungered, began to pluck the ears of corn, to rub them in their hands, and eat. In doing so, there was no violation by them, as there would be with us, of the rights of property. The old Jewish law ran thus:—"When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn." (Deut. xxiii. 25.) The law and practice of Palestine continue to be this day what they were so many thousand years ago. We travelled in that country in the spring. Our course lay through it before the ears of corn were full, but nothing surprised us more than the liberties which our guides took in riding through the fields and letting their horses eat as much of the standing corn as they pleased. We felt at first as if we were trespassers and thieves, but were relieved by finding that it was done under the eye, and with the full consent, of the owners of the crops. There was nothing wrong, then, in what the disciples of Jesus did. But it was done upon the Sabbath Day, which was thought to be unlawful. And there were men who were watching—dogging the steps of Jesus and his disciples, perhaps to see whether in their walk they would exceed the distance to which a Sabbath-day's journey had been restricted. So soon as those lynx-eyed observed what the disciples were doing, they inform the Pharisees, who go to Jesus and say, "Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath Day." They were but expressing the popular belief which they had helped to form. It had come to be generally believed that plucking and rubbing in the hand ears of corn was work that the Sabbath law condemned. Jesus threw a shield of defence over the act of his disciples by referring to the conduct of David, esteemed to be a model of Jewish piety. Once when he and his men were an hungered, he had not scrupled to break the rules, to violate the sanctity of the Holy Place. We may believe that it was on a Sabbath Day he did so. Doubly appropriate, therefore, was the reference to it; but it was not essential to Christ's argument that the act was done upon the Sabbath Day. What, by his allusion to the case of David, Christ mainly desired, was to establish the principle that the pressure of hunger vindicated the setting aside for the time of the strictest even of the Temple regulations. But these regulations, and the whole Temple-service which they sustained, were held to be of such superior importance to the Sabbatic law, that when both could not be kept, the latter had to give way. A vast amount of what elsewhere would have been accounted as Sabbath-breaking went on every Sabbath Day in the Temple. If the Temple, then, carried it over the Sabbath, and hunger carried it over the Temple, as free of fault as David and his men were—as free of fault were Christ's disciples. Whatever their hunger was due to, it had come upon them owing to their connection with Him; and if up there in Jerusalem the Temple towered above the Sabbath and threw its protection over its servants engaged in its work, here in the fields of Galilee was one greater than the Temple, throwing his protection over his disciples as they followed Him. They, too, must be acquitted.

But it is not enough that the act of his disciples be in this way vindicated. Our Lord seizes the opportunity to let the Pharisees know that they had mistaken the spirit and object of the ceremonial law, and particularly of the Sabbatic institute. "But if ye had known," He added, "what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." Jesus quotes here from the book of Hosea (ch. vi. 6) a saying which more than

once He repeated. It was not a solitary one. Much to the same effect were the words which the first of the Prophets addressed to the first of the Kings: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (1 Sam. xv. 22.) The wisest of the Kings responds to the words of Samuel in the proverb, "To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice." (Proverbs xxi. 3.) Isaiah and Jeremiah put words of the same import into Jehovah's lips: "I delight not, saith the Lord, in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. Cease to do evil, learn to do well." "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices; but this thing commanded I them, obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you." (Isaiah i. 11, 16; Jeremiah vii. 21, 23.) There is something singularly impressive in hearing such emphatic testimonies to the comparative worthlessness of sacrifices and offerings, of all merely ritualistic observances issuing from the heart of the old Jewish ceremony; spoken at the very time when all those statutes and ordinances of the Lord defining so minutely, and prescribing so peremptorily the formalities of Jewish worship were in full force.

And Jesus, in quoting one of these testimonies, and applying it to the case of his disciples' conduct, puts Sabbath-keeping, so far as it consisted merely in abstaining from this or that kind of work, in the same category as sacrifice, regarding it with part of that formal and external mode of honouring and serving the Supreme which ought never to stand in the way of any work of need or of benevolence. Had the Pharisees but listened to the voice of their own prophets they would have understood this; but, deaf to that voice, they had drawn tighter and tighter the bonds of the required Sabbatic service, narrowing and narrowing the field of what was allowable on the seventh day, till they had laid a yoke upon men's shoulders too heavy for them to bear. From this yoke, at all hazard to himself, Jesus will relieve his countrymen, proclaiming in their ears the great and pregnant truth, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." The Sabbath is but a means to an end; that end is, man's present comfort, his spiritual and eternal good. Wherever, therefore, the keeping of the Sabbath in the way prescribed instead of promoting would frustrate that end, it was more honoured in the breach than in the observance. It was never to be regarded as in itself an end. Apart from the physical, social, moral, and religious benefits to be thereby realised, there was no merit in painfully doing this one thing, or rigorously abstaining from that other. The Sabbath was made to serve man, but man was not made to serve or to be a slave to the Sabbath. And just because it was an institution which when rightly used was so eminently fitted to minister to man's present and eternal good, the Son of Man, who came not to be ministered unto but to minister, as Head of our humanity to render to it the greatest of all services, and to take all other servants of it under his care and keeping, would show himself to be Lord also of the Sabbath.

In was in this character that Jesus acted on the Sabbath which so closely followed the incident of the walk in the corn-fields. In some unnamed synagogue he sat and taught. A man whose right hand was withered stood before Him. Had he been brought there to serve the purposes of these watchful enemies who wished, not simply to have his own acts to bring up against Him (for these as the acts of a prophet might be regarded as privileged), but to get from Him a distinct categorical reply to the question, whether it was lawful for any man who had the power of healing to exert it on the Sabbath Day? So soon at least as they saw his eye fastened upon the man with the withered hand, and before He did anything, they interpose their question, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath Days?" The question is met by an appeal to their own practice: "What man shall there be among you that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath Day will he not lay hold on it and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep. Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath Days." But they shall not only have its lawfulness asserted, they shall see the good done before their eyes. Jesus bids the man with the withered hand stand forth. But ere He cures him He turns to the Scribes and Pharisees and puts in his turn a question cutting deep into their deceitful hearts: "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath Days,"—as I am doing—"or to do evil?"—as ye do in suspecting and maligning me—"to save life,"—as I do—"or to kill,"—as ye are doing who are already meditating my death? There is no answer to this question. They stand speechless before Him, but unconvinced and unrelenting.

"And Jesus looked round about on them with anger." The meek, and the gentle, and the patient one! What was it that filled his breast with such a glow of indignation, that it broke out in this unwonted look of anger? It was the sight of men, who, laying hold of one of his Father's most merciful institutes—that which for man and beast, and the whole labouring creation, provided a day of returning rest, amid whose quiet the reflecting spirit of man might rise to the contemplation of its higher ends and its eternal destiny—instead of looking at the primary command to keep holy each seventh day, as it stood enshrined among those precepts which enjoined a supreme love to God and a corresponding love to man, and allowing this one positive and external institute to receive its interpretation from those immutable moral laws among which it was interposed, had exalted it into a place of isolation and false importance, attaching a specific virtue to the bare outward keeping of the letter, magnifying to the uttermost the minutest acts of bodily service; finding therein the materials which the spirit of self-righteousness employed for its own low and sordid purposes, an instrument which it would have used for defrauding the poor and the needy

and the diseased of that help which the hand of charity was ready to render;—such was the source of that anger with which Jesus looked round about on the Scribes and Pharisees.

But soon the eye, full of the expression of anger as it rests on them, turns as full of pity as it rests on the man who still stands expectingly before Him. Jesus says to him, "Stretch forth thine hand." One can fancy the man replying, Which hand is it that you bid me thus stretch forth? Is it this one that hangs lifeless by my side? Oh, if I but saw its wrinkled flesh filled up, if I but felt the power that once was in it restored, too gladly would I do your bidding; but mock me not by telling me to stretch forth a hand from which you see, and I feel, that all power is gone. Had the man thought so, spoken so, felt so, he might have carried his withered hand with him to the grave. But he did not so think, or feel, or act. He is spoken to by one of whom he believes that He can give the strength to execute the command He issues. It is in that faith he acts, and, paradoxical as it may seem, let us say, that if in that faith he had not made the effort, he never would have got the strength; and yet if he had not got the strength he never could have made the effort. And is it not thus that the Divine Redeemer still addresses us? Stretch forth thy withered heart to love—thy withered hand to serve—such is his command. Fixing an eye on Him, who has already fixed his eye of love on us, let us make the effort, and in the very making of the effort we shall get the strength.

Wm. Hanna.

MORE POINTED WORDS HEARD AT KING'S CROSS.

[*To the Editor of the* Sunday Magazine.—Dear Sir,—Since you were good enough to publish the notes which I sent you of a sermon heard at King's Cross, I now beg your acceptance of a fuller outline of a second address by the same speaker, which I heard on a succeeding Sunday at the same place. His text on this occasion was Amos vi. 13, "Ye which rejoice in a thing of nought."—Yours, &c., —— ——]

The Prophet who spoke these words addressed his fellow-countrymen, the Jews, in Jerusalem. He rebuked them because they rejoiced in a thing of nought; that is, in a thing which was worth nothing—mere rubbish, or lumber, as we should say. They rejoiced in it—that is, they loved it as if it were their greatest treasure, and they were as happy in the possession of it as a man can be in the possession of an invaluable property.

I dare say you are thinking that those Jews must have been perfect fools,—nay, that they must have been insane, for only a lunatic can, for instance, pick up a flint from the street and joyfully jump about with it as if it were the costliest jewel in the world. Well, they were fools, and their joy was really little better than insanity. Still, if you had lived among them and witnessed their ingoings and outgoings, I am assured that you would not have found them greater fools than most people are in our days.

For the "thing of nought" in which those Jews rejoiced was what many in our times would be far from calling a bagatelle. Nay, I am afraid that most of us would look upon it as a very valuable and desirable object. For you would be altogether wrong if you supposed that it was really rubbish or lumber. On the contrary, if you read the description which the Prophet gives of it, many of you will be astonished to find that he could bring himself to call it a thing of nought, a worthless vanity. Indeed, it was not merely one thing, but consisted of a great many things which throughout all ages have been looked upon as highly valuable. Take, for instance, what the Prophet points to in the eleventh verse, the "great houses" or palaces in which the Jews lived. They were splendid mansions, built in the best style, with magnificent colonnades, lofty balconies, and superb gardens. They were sumptuously furnished, for the Prophet speaks in the fourth verse of the beds of ivory upon which the people slept; and the rest of the furniture was, no doubt, in keeping. Their cellars and store-rooms were also well supplied, for the Prophet in the sixth verse mentions the wine which the inhabitants of those palaces drank in bowls. It was a merry life that was lived there, for in the fifth verse we read that the people chanted to the sound of music, and invented for themselves musical instruments. And nothing was spared to make their life as comfortable as could be, for we read that they anointed themselves with the chief ointments, prepared from the costliest spices and the most aromatic perfumes. So that, in fact, there was everything which a man could desire, who said to his soul, "Take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry."

Now I presume that many of you are saying within yourselves, "Why, the Jews were quite right in rejoicing in these precious things, and the man who could call them things of nought was a fool." And so he would have been, were it not for one circumstance which made them really worthless. It was this: those superb mansions, with their treasures and pleasures, were all to be destroyed within a short time, and all the people who inhabited them were to be killed. The people did not believe this, but it was a truth notwithstanding. The Prophet knew it was a truth, for God had told it to him, and he, accordingly, told it to the people. "The Lord God hath sworn by himself," he said; "I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces: therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein. And it shall come to pass, if there remain ten men in one house, that they shall die." This, certainly, was a terrible prospect, and well might palaces which were doomed to such a fate be called "things of nought." And that that fate would come upon them was beyond any doubt, for the God who cannot lie had not only said so, but sworn it by Himself.

Now you will ask, what could be the reason of such a fearful judgment, and what could have caused God to have such an abhorrence of those palaces? Is it a

sin to live in a great house? And is God an enemy to music?

Not at all, my friends. You know that David, the king, built a fine palace for himself, and that the Lord was by no means displeased with it. And you also know that that same David was a great musician, playing the harp and singing psalms, by which he pleased the Lord and his people very much. Nor is there anything wrong in sleeping on ivory beds. We read of Abraham, our father in faith, that he was "very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold," yet he was called God's friend, and the Lord promised him that he should be "the heir of the world." And when Solomon, the king, prayed the Lord to give him wisdom, the Lord not only gave him what he asked, but also what he had *not* asked, viz., riches and honour, so that there was no man in the world who possessed such immense wealth as he, nor was there a king who lived in such a magnificent palace. In a word, one may have all these things and yet be a man after God's heart, for none of these things is bad in itself, since it is God who made them, and Scripture says that "every creature of God is good" (1 Tim. iv. 4). And, on the other hand, one may be poor, and at the same time an enemy to God, as was shown by that unhappy wretch Judas, who had no palace to live in, and slept in no ivory bed, and yet was the greatest traitor that ever lived under heaven.

Nor is it in itself a wrong thing for a man to rejoice in these things. As it is human nature to be sad in adversity, so it is human nature to rejoice in prosperity, and God finds no fault with that, for He himself created human nature to act in this way. When Abraham and Solomon were so abundantly blessed by the Lord as to become wealthy princes, they must have rejoiced; and quite right too, for God had given them all those blessings for the very purpose of making them glad. And Jacob, the patriarch, was a poor man when he left his father's house, but when, after twenty years, he returned home as a man of great property, he said, with joy in his heart: "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which Thou hast shown unto Thy servant, for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands." Indeed, he would have been ungrateful if he had not rejoiced, and the Lord would undoubtedly have been displeased with him. I have no doubt there are fathers and mothers in the midst of us who understand this; for when a father comes home with a present for his child, he expects to see the child's face shine with joyful surprise, and he rejoices at the prospect of making the child happy. But if the child does not rejoice, the father is sorely disappointed and grieved, the whole thing is spoiled, and the father thinks within himself,—"If I had known this before, I should not have done it." Now, just in the same way does God expect his children to rejoice when He blesses them with the benefits of his love. And if the inhabitants of Jerusalem had rejoiced in their palaces in that grateful spirit, giving God glory for his mercy, and praising his name with their musical instruments, the Lord would most assuredly not have rebuked them on account of their rejoicing, nor would He have destroyed them together with the houses in which they lived.

But, alas! here lay their fault. They rejoiced in their wealth and greatness, not as a gift of God, but as a fruit of their own skill and ability. Now that they had acquired palaces and gardens, and all their hearts desired, they thought they could do without God, and help themselves. So they rejoiced in these things as their all in all, and they rejoiced *not* in God. "Have we," they said, "not taken to us horns by our own strength?" "We are like strong bulls of Bashan, whose powerful horns knock down everything that comes against them! What have we to fear, or whom should we dread? We are the masters of the world now. Look at our great houses, our splendid parks, our numerous servants, our magnificent dresses, our silver and gold!" In short, they spoke as Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babel, spoke many years after them, when, walking in his palace, he exclaimed, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?"

Now, when a man whom God has blessed begins to look upon his blessings in this light, they unavoidably become a curse to him. God at once withdraws his countenance from him, and if he refuse to listen to God's serious admonitions and warnings, God at length becomes his enemy. For surely such ungrateful pride and shameful exaltation was not the end which God had in view when favouring man with the gifts of his liberal hands. God sends us the blessings of this earth to draw us closer to Himself in cordial love, not that they may be set up as a barrier or bulwark between Him and us. But the latter becomes directly the case when we begin to rejoice in the gifts more than in the Giver, and bestow all our heart's pleasure upon the former, leaving the latter alone, as if we had nothing to do with Him at all.

Suppose a father wishes to gladden his son's heart. Knowing that this son is very anxious to get a walking-stick, he presents him with a splendid one. Of course the boy accepts it with great joy, and his father is pleased to see him rejoice. But what would be the impression upon the father's mind if he heard his son speak within himself in this way:—"Oh, I am glad I have got this fine stick, for not only am I able now to knock down everything and everybody, but also to defend myself in case my father should try to punish me." Of course we cannot help smiling at the absurdity of the idea. But nothing short of such absurdity is the conduct of every man who, instead of rejoicing in God because of his loving-kindness, rejoices in his benefits while he turns his back upon the Great Benefactor. To return to my parable: of course the father, hearing those words from his son's lips, would take the cane from him and perhaps break it to pieces upon his back. Why, in exactly the same way did God deal with the Jews. He made their palaces to fall to pieces over their heads, and bury them under the ruins. "It shall come to pass, if there remain ten men in one house, that they shall die," said the Lord.

Sin, my friends, is a destroyer of everything,

and pride especially so. It turns God's beautiful creation upside down, and makes it the reverse of what it was intended to be. For, valuable as a palace in Jerusalem was as a gift of God, it had now become totally worthless, and the Prophet was perfectly right in calling it a thing of nought. This was the work of pride. It had turned the very token of God's kindness into an object of God's abhorrence, and rows of costly buildings into a heap of rubbish.

And so it turned Paradise into a wilderness, and this beautiful earth into an abode of death and mourning. For the dwelling-place which God appointed for man when He created this world was finer than the most splendid palace, and well might we have rejoiced in it as the work and mirror of our Father's love, and of his wondrous power and wisdom. But alas! we made the creature our god, and abandoned Him who had made us; and so this whole world, with all its marvels and treasures, has turned into a thing of nought. It will perish with all its glory, it will pass away like a shadow, it will be burnt up with fire and go into destruction. And a Prophet greater than Amos cried, "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

But now let me tell you of an important truth, viz., that Christ came into the world, and is the one truly valuable treasure in the midst of all the things of nought here below. If any object is worth rejoicing in, Jesus is that object, for without Him every joy is sure to end in weeping. This world of ours is a palace which will fall to pieces. We may be sure of that, for God has certified it on his word; and as surely as Jerusalem was destroyed, though nobody believed the prediction, so surely will this world turn to desolation, though everybody laughs at the idea. A man who rejoices in nothing but the delectable things of this world, is indeed like a lunatic who laughs and sings all the day believing himself to be the Prince of Wales. But Jesus came into this world of ours to build up a new palace, which remaineth everlastingly, and will prove as much more glorious than the old one as heaven is more glorious than the earth. Now if we want to rejoice with a true, wise, enduring joy, which will not turn to mourning, let us rejoice in Him. Let us gather round the manger at Bethlehem; let us flock round the cross at Calvary; let us assemble round the open grave in Joseph's garden, and rejoice with an exceeding great joy. For He is that great unspeakable gift of God, to which all the other gifts are as nothing, and from which alone they borrow their value.

Now I fancy I hear some of you saying, "If it be a folly to rejoice in palaces, that folly cannot be ours, for we live in poor small cottages, or in dark, narrow rooms; and if some of us have beds, they are not of ivory most certainly."

Still, my friends, you may be fools for all that, and you may be foolishly rejoicing in a worthless palace, though it be not exactly one of stone. Take, for instance, your own bodies. The human body may be called a palace indeed, for it was created to serve as a dwelling-place for the human soul, which was appointed as a king over this creation. And no royal mansion, however skilfully and splendidly built, is so beautifully and wonderfully made as this. Its form is often majestic, its functions are often astonishing, and the enjoyments which it is capable of are innumerable. A handsome man or a beautiful woman is undoubtedly an object which it is pleasing to see, and corporeal beauty is in Scripture numbered among the gifts of God which one may thankfully rejoice in. But how many a beautiful young girl places all her heart's pleasure in the charms which her mirror tells her she possesses, thinking all the day of nothing else than the future bliss which she believes her graces are sure to gain for her some day! And how many a young man allows himself to be driven mad with passion for the beauties which he admires on the face or in the form of a young woman! And how many a strongly-built, healthy man jests with death and eternity, feeling as if he could never die! And how many a one seems to live only to serve his own belly, spending his earnings mostly in eating and drinking, and his free hours in the public-house or in places of worldly dissipation! Such persons rejoice in their bodies in the same way as the Jews rejoiced in their palaces. To them, indeed, it may be said, "Ye which rejoice in a thing of nought!" How shortly will their pleasure last! What is corporeal beauty but deception? What is bodily strength but a reed? What are the belly and the food but things which will be put to nought? Ten—twenty—fifty years hence! and we shall all of us have returned to the dust!

Do you hear the whistle of the railway engine? Such is our life. It is heard one moment, and the next it is heard no more. He is indeed rejoicing in a thing of nought, who rejoices in this life without rejoicing in the life to come. A poor man has no palace, but still he may wish to have one, and that wish may so completely engross all his thoughts and desires, as to induce him to labour day and night, having neither an eye nor an ear for anything but what will bring him in a few shillings or pence. Such a man is doubly poor, for not only is that which he has, but also that which he hopes for, a thing of nought. What will be left to him to rejoice in, when death one day turns that which he has into rubbish, and that which he hopes for into smoke?

Last Sunday I saw a fire-insurance bill stuck up on the paling over there. It reminded me of a friend whom I met the other day, whose house was burnt down with all his furniture. I found him quite at his ease, and as happy as ever. "Why," I asked, "have you not lost your house, and all that was in it? How, then, can you be so contented?" "Well," was the answer, "my house and furniture were insured, you see. It was an old, unhealthy building, and I shall now have one that will be ten times better."

A few hours later I visited another friend who was in a dying state, and I found him also happy and cheerful. "How is this?" I asked. "Are you not afraid to leave this body, and to enter the dark valley of the shadows of death?" "By no means," was

the answer, "for I know that when my earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, I shall have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

"This man's house is also insured," I thought; "and no doubt his insurance is the better of the two."

This man was a Christian. He had through faith given himself up to Jesus. He had come to believe that Jesus had died for him, bearing his sins in his precious body on the cross. He had come to believe that God had forgiven all his sins for Christ's sake, and that consequently, saved by grace, he might call God his Father, and look up to heaven as his inheritance. This made him so rich in Jesus, that he withdrew his heart from the world and its sins, to rejoice in God his Saviour. In this joy I knew him for years. He was a common mechanic, a blacksmith. He had just his daily bread and nothing more. But I never witnessed a man who rejoiced more in everything belonging to this life. His few rooms were trimmed up with nice comfortable little things, of his own make and invention, and it was a pleasure to see how he enjoyed them. He cultivated a snug little garden behind his house, and it was a luxury to see him work in it. He played a little upon the flute, and it was delightful to witness the pleasure he took in this recreation. But it was evident that all these rejoicings of his were but so many reflections of one great joy that, like a bright sun, shone in his heart. I remember one day, some years ago, finding him in his room playing a tune. Our conversation turned upon the source of his happiness. "How could I possibly," he said, "sit down in peace at my fireside, or walk with pleasure through the streets, or play a merry tune, if I were not certain of my everlasting happiness? Can a man truly rejoice in a cup of tea, or in a flower, if he believe it possible that some years hence he may be in perdition? Such a man is a fool—nay, he must be a madman. As to me, sir, I can only rejoice in all these things because I rejoice in the name of Jesus. I know He loves me; and I love Him—not as I ought to, it is true, but I love Him as my merciful and faithful Saviour."

Dear friends, that man is now in his heavenly palace, and he will be found there when all the palaces of this world are lying in ruins. He understood the meaning of those words of Scripture, "God meeteth him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness." And there is another verse of Scripture which all of us should remember, as it is the key to the knowledge of all true joy: "Delight thyself in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desire of thine heart."—So be it.

SINAI AND CALVARY.

HARK! from Mount Sinai's flaming brow,
The long-blown trumpet's quivering sound!
Beneath, the sons of Israel bow,
With trembling hope, with awe profound.

Jehovah speaks—blue lightnings fly,
And peals of heavy thunder roll
Their awful voices through the sky,
While nature shakes from pole to pole.

"I am the Lord!"—a thousand peals,
Still louder, sound one vast "Amen!"
Louder than when, on bloody wheels,
Huge Moloch shakes the Hindoo plain.

"I am the Lord—thy God alone,
Alone possessed of power divine:
Bend not to any other throne,
Obey no other law but mine."

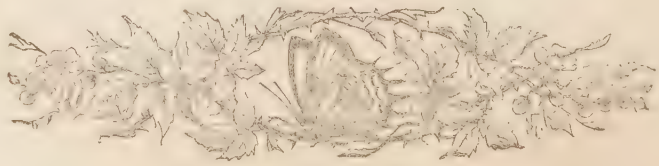
That law, Jehovah! O how broad!
Who can the arduous path pursue?
That holy law, O righteous God,
Includes thoughts, words, and actions too!

"Cursed is the man," I hear it say,
"That keeps not, while he lives, the whole;
For in the last great judgment day
One failing sinks the guilty soul!"

But, hark! from yonder purple hill
Sweet accents float upon my ear—
Christ's Last Words through my bosom thrill,
And gently dissipate my fear.

Dear Jesus! to thy cross I fly,
On thy almighty love I fall;
Be thou my Advocate on high,—
My Life, my Righteousness, my All!

BENJAMIN WILSON.



HERE AND THERE IN THE EAST.

FAMILIAR NOTES MADE ON A SCIENTIFIC JOURNEY.

I.—IN THE DESERT.

Having descended the mountain pass of Pi-hahiroth, you see a hilly plain before you. No tree or shrub, not even so much as a blade of grass, is noticeable. Your eye only discovers two inhabited places. The one lies immediately on your left hand. It is the Castle of Ajroud, alongside of which the pilgrims' road proceeds eastward. The other lies at a distance of twelve miles on the right. It is Suez, with its flat roofs and minarets. A long blue strip of water, forming the eastern boundary, cuts the plain. It looks like a river, having borders, which at some spots are sandy and flat, at others rocky and high. It also seems to flow in the midst of a broad valley, for as the ground on this side slopes down towards the bed of the channel, so it rises on the opposite: the soil there gradually ascending towards the long extensive mountain-chain which serves as a boundary for the high Arabian desert. On the south side of that plain the broad Jebel Attakah lifts its colossal frame. With its promontory it touches the blue water-line. A series of hills projecting from it and bending to the north, forms the western limit of the plain. But it is only an optical illusion which makes you take that blue sheet of water for a river; it is the Red Sea itself. This sea, having become smaller and smaller while flowing from the promontory of Attakah to Suez, shrinks near the town to a breadth of scarce two thousand feet. Farther on, north of Suez, it continues over a length of three miles with a tongue which measures three thousand feet in breadth. On approaching, you observe that the water is, as it were, a plaything for natural phenomena. The ebb usually makes it go down from three to six feet. The wind, with a powerful blast from north-east, oftentimes sinks it to a lower level still. Then little islands lift up their heads, as if peeping through the rents of a torn sheet, and broad oblong ridges make their appearance. This phenomenon is observed not only below but also above the town at the tongue, and frequently the Arab is seen stepping or wading from sandbank to sandbank to get from one shore to the other. Even north of the tongue the peculiar inclination of the soil for forming sand-hills is prominently noticeable. They rise from the level of the plain to a greater or smaller height, and were consequently so many elevations under the water-mirror, supposing the sea extended in former times as far north as the tongue. The vestiges of that extension are still visible. Nature, even after so many centuries, has not been able to efface them, active as it has been in chasing up clouds of sand in order to widen the isthmus, that great bridge from sea to sea for the nations of three continents. The sea still re-occupies for a short period that lost territory, when in the winter season the south wind flogs the tempestuous waves. Then the water again covers the barren soil, and its billows roll over a vast area.

Migdol, Pi-hahiroth, Baal-zephon, Etham—here my feet are treading the ground, which as the scene of God's great deeds, inspires awe. I take the Book. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-zephon. Exactly before it (*i. e.*, opposite Baal-zephon) shall ye encamp by the sea" (Exod. xiv. 1, 2). When Pharaoh hears this, truly he will only follow their track to have them in his power, like sheep for the slaughter, for on all sides the wilderness will have "shut them in." In my imagination I see a cloud of dust approach from Etham, threatening death and perdition; illuminated by the rays of the evening sun, it reflects the glittering of the sharp and glossy murderous metal. It is Pharaoh! The hearts of the defenceless, who see no escape, shrink away with fright and despair. Some cry to Jehovah: some scold his servant. But Moses stretches forth his hand, and wonderfully the Lord of nature commands nature's powers. The ebb drags off more water than usual. The force of the north-east wind, bursting on with a sudden gust, chases the stream before it. Behold! a sandbank, broad and spacious, appears between the watery borders. That is your bridge, and at the same time your bulwark, poor sheep! The Divine Shepherd will lead you like a flock over it. And the millions descend. Densely crowded together, they hurry towards the opposite shore. The morning dawns, and—they are safe! Safe? No, not yet, for the Egyptian, driven to madness by his rage, follows them, breathing out threatenings and slaughter. But too soon he cries, Victory! For on a sudden, thick clouds pour down streams of water; the thunder roars terror; flashes of lightning blind the eyes, so that in one moment the palpable obscurity turns into dazzling sunlight and into the darkest night again. Once more Moses stretches forth his hand to the sea. Jehovah commands; Pharaoh and his host are no more.

With this scene before my mind I should have liked to ascend to the top of that huge mountain over there, Jebel Attakah. Like a broad-shouldered giant it stands before me. It raises its top higher than any of the mountains by which, in a frequently interrupted row, it is linked with the mountain of Cairo. Its mantle is dyed with a stronger red than its neighbours. Its appearance is gloomy; its countenance serious-looking and majestic. It stands there built up from the beginning by the Creator's hand, to serve one day as a monument, as it were, of a deed too grand to be immortalized by a monument of human make. I should have liked, while seated on its top, to read that glorious song which Moses composed at the place, to inspire the rescued ones with his sublime thoughts and holy feelings. It would then have been to me as if the choruses were rolling

again across the waves on the rocky walls of the Attakah; as if the mountain once more were shaking with the echoes of hundreds of thousands of voices praising the name of Israel's great Redeemer!

II.—SINAI.

THREE huge long-shaped masses, called Jebel el Deir, Sinai, and Humr, form the mountain range which is lying before me. With high, steep walls, they slope down into a not very broad, green plain, called Wady er Rahah. This wady, with its continuation called Wady esh Sheikh, severs, on the north, this group from the high plateau called Jebel el Fureia. Across the plain the path leads towards an incision which separates the middle one of the three masses from its easterly neighbour. In this cleft, called the Wady Shovaib, lies the convent. As early as thirteen hundred years ago the Emperor Justinian built it on the spot where Moses saw the burning bush. He desired to provide the hermits of the "holy mountain" with a common dwelling, and the pilgrim with a hospitable abode. And still the convent of St. Catherine reposes in this quiet dale, surrounded by high walls, which present the form of an oblong square. On the north side of the convent a garden slopes down towards the valley. This garden, too, wears a substantial stone belt. The pilgrim cannot enter it. The builder, who, as it seems, was as cautious as he was indefatigable, put the door of the sacred fortification at a height of thirty feet, but placed no steps leading up to its threshold. The peaceful visitor is hoisted up by means of a windlass, and—on a sudden he finds himself in the midst of a cluster of neat buildings and little chapels. A score of Greek monks live here, who leave nothing untried to make the traveller forget the difficulties of his journey. So here he reposes under the fresh green of noble trees; here he breathes in the fragrance of the blossoms of the orange and the citron; here he refreshes himself with a draught of the purest water.

Is it the many-coloured paintings that shall rivet my attention? No; what I am seeking here is the two tables of the law. Is it the altar with its rich tinsel that shall attract me? No; the altar which I am here thinking of is that at which Moses stood before the face of Jehovah. Up there, on the top of the mountain, on the east side of which the convent is lying, is the temple of legislation. Steps facilitate the ascent, which can be performed within an hour. I see the ridge of the mountain forms a plateau. I do not think it is longer than six or broader than two miles. But that plateau is shut in. There are walls on both sides, and while on the northern side high rocks pierce the sky, the noble granite cone called Jebel Mousa rises, on the south side, to a height of seven hundred feet. What a strange sight! A valley on the ridge of a mountain, and this valley again hemmed in by huge rocks; and in this valley again another mountain! and the whole so quiet and full of majesty! Oh! certainly, this must have been the sanctuary of Jehovah. The granite cone must have been the altar. No doubt I have found the spot which the holy record refers to when it says: "The Lord came down upon the mount Sinai, on the top of the mount." (Exod. xix. 20). From this spot Israel heard those peals of thunder, saw those flashes of lightning. From this spot the sight was presented to the people, "that mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke," because the Lord descended on it in fire. From that spot came the power which made the people see and feel "that the whole mount quaked greatly," while all hearts trembled. And here, in these lofty regions, where the Sinai cone ends in a square of eighty feet, Israel received its institutions from the Lord its God.

Nor could any spot be fitter for such a holy scene. For though the top of the mount is more than seven thousand feet above the level of the sea, yet it is not quite visible from below. The view is limited on more than one side. You cannot here enjoy a boundless panorama. When you allow your eyes to rove over the near objects you everywhere meet with granite, which also here and there appears in the character of syenite and porphyry. The core of our planet here shows its original constituent parts; no secondary formations are noticeable nor any marks of transitive rocks. Nay, the whole of the Sinai mountain is on nearly all sides surrounded by huge masses. The Jebel Deir seems to be placed as a watchman on its right hand. On its left the Jebel Humr seems to shelter it by its gigantic frame. And farther on southward the high-shouldered Om Shomer stands at a respectful distance, as if representing the retinue of a king among the mountains. It is the highest of all the granite giants of this district. It takes a day's journey to reach its foot from Sinai. It consists entirely of granite. The stone, which at the bottom is red, turns whiter and whiter the nearer it approaches the top, which completely resembles a chalk hill sharpened into a pointed cone. And wherever your eye turns, it discovers nothing but rough crags, sharp ridges, high pinnacles, black columns,—a wilderness of rocks, gloomy-looking and grave and threatening! Yes, this is the characteristic and speaking frame-work which was created to encase the grand spectacle of the legislation which should be represented before the whole world. As this granite, so also the law consists of a substance as old as creation, firm, solid, immoveable. But here in Sinai it spoke terror; thunder was its voice; it carried the lightning like a sword. It did so because it had to curb a generation of slaves recently freed from their yoke, and to train them as the offspring of great ancestors for a great destiny.

But the heart of Jehovah is a father's heart. He only screened it behind the clouds of Sinai to reveal it all the more gloriously on the top of Calvary. Still, even on Sinai, it once revealed itself in all the peculiarity of its tender feelings. I turn my eyes towards the northerly part of the mount of legislation. There I see a group of rocks and crags, which ends in a steep, smooth mountain-wall. The Arabs call this place Suffafeh—tradition calls it Horeb. So here it was that Elijah had his magnificent vision, when, fleeing from the rage of the idolators, he took refuge in this sanctuary of the law. Near the foot of Jebel Mousa, exactly opposite Horeb, behind a little

chapel which bears his name, his cave is shown. "And after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire a still small voice." That still, small voice, after the awful wrestling of nature, in which the Lord appeared, was, as it were, the prophetic whisper from the lips of Him who one day was to silence the thunders of the law for his friends, and to inspire them with his gospel. I once more look round over Sinai, and it strikes me forcibly that upon all those chapels and cloisters the cross is seen. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." My visit to this place, where the law was given, enhances not a little my desire to visit the land where He lived, who gave us grace and truth out of his fulness.

III.—JAFFA.

I WAS very desirous of seeing the inside of the town. How different is the reality from what it appears to be. Seen from a distance, the town still keeps up the signification of its old name, Jafo—*i.e.*, Beauty. How beautifully does it rise from the sea-side, with all the charms of an amphitheatre! How pleasing, too, for the eye is its appearance when seen from the land-side, —with its solid, high-built wall peeping out above the tops of the trees, with its buildings rising above that wall, and crowning the top of its hill! How splendid is its gate, (the only one it has,) seeming to be built indeed to invite one to enter.

Full of expectation I yielded to that silent invitation. I walked through the town in all directions. What was it I saw? Crooked or angular, narrow and unpaved streets. The heavy rain which had fallen

Jaffa.

recently had turned them into as many muddy sewers. Nor do the houses make up for the streets. It is true there are many of them, but they are crowded into a mass, without the slightest architectural beauty, without any symmetry whatever—clumsy square blocks, large and small, as if thrown down at random. I now saw the flat roofs closely before me. They consist of a mass of sand and chalk dried in the air. If in the rainy season there should be a leakage, the rents are repaired by moving a heavy stone roller to and fro. According to the law of Moses (Deut. xxii. 8), the roofs have battlements. Though the law lost its authority long since, yet the present custom still pays homage to the old institution of Divine wisdom. When seeing these battlements from a distance I took them for walls, but now I saw that they very much resembled the work of bees in their hives, showing a conglomeration of little cells. The battlements are constructed of tubes made of burnt clay, and are very much like our ginger-beer bottles when deprived of their neck and bottom. They are in a horizontal position, piled one upon another and fastened with lime, turning one of their openings towards the street, and the other towards the roof. They form a curious-looking fence round the flat roof; light, so that the house is not too heavily burdened; airy, so that the fresh sea wind can freely pass through; transparent, without exposing the inhabitant to the gaze of the public. No wonder the women of Jaffa prefer these flat roofs to their close parlours. They seat themselves or lie down behind these tubes, through which they see everything, without being seen themselves.

Of course I wanted to see the house of Simon the tanner, and I did see the place which Mahommedan tradition points out. But I am not quite sure that it it is the real spot where once the first of the Apostles knelt down and prayed. Of this, however, I have no doubt, that on the slope of this same hill which descends to the sea the house must have stood. The Apostle must have had the same view which I had. What an im-

pression must that view have made upon him who had hitherto seen no greater sea than the Lake of Tiberias or the Dead Sea! What a boundless water-plain! What a vast, immeasurable extent of the clearest blue! What a solemn host of rolling waves, at the same time playing like sportful little lambs! What a splendid stripe of silvery foam, which the rolling breakers pencil alongside the shore both north and south! That sea must have told him great truths in unison with the vision which he here beheld. As it is the greatest gulf of our globe, so it is the only one which has three continents for its boundaries. The Apostle saw it covered with ships, coming and going from and to all parts of the world. He stood there with the representatives of all the nations before his eyes, and with a Gospel on his lips which was to be preached to all nations, to every creature! He knew the Master often said that all the nations should be brought in, but—thus he thought—how difficult will it be to persuade those Gentiles to go in through the door of Judaism and to allow Moses to lead them to Christ! What a contrast between the unlimited sea and his limited opinions! And such a contrast there certainly was in his own bosom: the contrast between love, which longs to save all, and prejudice which has only room for few. It saddened his heart to think of so many who would exclude themselves through refusing to be made clean by the law of Moses. He fell down in the dust to pour out his heart before his Saviour. He prayed for the coming of His kingdom to all the heathen. Then he saw the vessel descending from heaven, and heard the voice, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." God be praised! His mind now, too, saw an ocean before it, vast as the Mediterranean, embracing three continents!

Well mayest thou, Jaffa, be the harbour for Christian pilgrims of heathenish extraction! On thy shore they must put their first footstep when visiting the Holy Land, remembering how it was here that for the first time the door of salvation was opened to the whole of heathendom.

IV.—THE PLAIN OF SHARON.

When going out of the gate of Jaffa, you see on your left-hand side, between you and the coast, the cemetery of the Mahommedans. It is a green, somewhat hilly field. Each grave is built over with a white plastered framework of bricks, to a height of one foot and a half. On your right-hand side you notice the market-place, nearly under the east wall of the town. I saw rustics from the neighhourhood, with their camels and donkeys, which were peacefully lying down, enjoying a welcome repose after having carried a heavy burden in the heat of the sun. There was a great bustle and thronging of people. I saw all but naked children, veiled women, peasants who inhabit fixed dwellings, vagrant Bedouin, townspeople, Turks and Arabs. Many of them were busily engaged in buying and selling; while others, seated down in groups, smoked their pipes and looked at the scene in silence. But what above all drew my attention, was the merchandise which was offered for sale. I saw here the productions of the country in all their variety, much better than I saw them at the bazaars of the town. Large heaps of the choicest fruits covered the ground, and formed the prettiest ornament of this picturesque market-scene.

There is a great difference between an English and an Oriental garden. In the latter there are no footpaths to divide the area into elegantly-shaped parts; no trees and vegetables to relieve each other; no flower-beds, or shrub-plots where, by means of painted sticks, the plant is propped and adorned. The Oriental gardens are just green enclosures containing trees. These are not classed, but planted pell-mell. Such a garden is just a field with trees. Little care is taken of them; they are left entirely to the care of the sun and the earth, as they are the children of both. To horticulture the Arab is a stranger. Neither he nor the Turk have a conception that there is such a thing as a science of rearing fruit, which knows how to distinguish the fruits in their genera and species, and teaches the rules by which they can best be cultivated and ennobled. Happily most trees can help themselves, especially in the neighbourhood of Jaffa, where the soil is moist. The water which here wells up is gathered in pits, and used for moistening such trees or garden fruits as are in need of it during a certain period of the year. For, from April to September there falls not one drop of rain, and even the dew ceases. The only refreshment which the plants obtain during that season comes from the fogs which hang over the fields in the morning. In this way the trees grow, requiring next to nothing save protection. Accordingly, to provide them with this is the chief care of the owners of the gardens. And to this end they use the Indian fig, the *Cactus opuntia*, which here grows to a height of from fifteen to eighteen feet. A row of these powerful trees with their broad prickly leaves forms an impenetrable hedge.

The way from Jaffa to Jerusalem goes across a green plain, through which a ridge of hills winds. We passed this ridge, and what a charming landscape, peopled with cows, donkeys, and sheep, lies before us! Little lambs are leaping round their mothers; while other lambs, which already are deprived of the young animal's first and highest enjoyment, are bleating incessantly, as if imploring the commiseration of cruel man, who has so unmercifully separated them from nature's refreshing nourishment. The shepherd, insensible to their pitiful expressions of distress, walks in the midst of them, keeping the weaned little creatures at a distance from the fountains after which they are thirsting. His long staff in hand, he carries his sceptre as king of the flock. It is a spring scene which calls many a well-known and lovely passage of Scripture to my memory.

I found myself in the green pasture of Yazur, a village at four miles distance from Jaffa. Its aspect is charming; it rests in quiet and peace under the shade of olive trees, which bend under the weight of old age. Beautiful, too, look the gardens surrounded by cactus hedges. But here again the houses are miserable. I rode through the place, but nothing worth looking at was visible—not even one vestige of the age of the Crusaders, in which this village obtained some notoriety.

We passed three or four small villages. The country now loses in charm. We enter a district where the grass will not thrive, being oppressed by a small prickly plant. But on a sudden, in the midst of a cultivated patch of ground, two villages rise, viz., Safiriyah, on the left, and Sarafend, on the right-hand side. The latter drew my attention by the antiquity of its name; but, save the name, there is nothing antique about it. Its palms and olives are not able to screen the miserable appearance of its houses, nor the cactus-hedges the poverty of its gardens. On the wayside there is a watering-trough. Tradition asserts that the Holy Family here rested on its flight to Egypt. Soon the country again resumes its barren aspect, but, as it seems, only to surprise us all the more by the luxuriant fertility which it will show by and by, for we approach Ramleh, which shone into our eyes from the far distance. Ramleh not only makes you forget the miserableness of the villages, but it also puts the beauties of Ludd in the shade by the size of its buildings, the cupolas of its roofs, its lofty minarets, and especially by its high tower, which stands as a unique phenomenon in the Holy Land.

The view from this tower is very grand. The Plain of Sharon in all its breadth lies before your amazed look. No object of any importance escapes the eye which from this elevated place roves over the wide extent of country. Here you have a map, drawn on the widest possible scale, exact in its smallest dimensions, and coloured in each of its parts with a natural hue. Meanwhile the sun was hasting to bathe its golden head in the great sea. Radiant with his long-stretched beams, which were rebuffed by the high mountains, he adorned the rocks with the charms of crimson and purple, and made the waves of the Mediterranean glitter with gold and silver; and richer and richer became the charms which he threw over hills and valleys, plains and pastures; and longer grew the shadow of the tower, stretching itself forth like a giant across the fields of nature and the graves of men.

V.—FROM RAMLEH TOWARDS JERUSALEM.

So we were in Ramleh, the old town of Arimathea. We took up our abode in the Latin convent. We were told it had room enough for our company, and found indeed that our company might have lost itself in the extensive premises. The convent is a cluster of buildings. The main building has two storeys; it encloses a square open yard. From a vaulted passage, which is open towards the side of the yard, one enters the apartments. They are all, the small as well as the large, tidy, and furnished with everything belonging to a bed-room, the looking-glass alone being wanting. This article is deemed superfluous in a hotel for pilgrims, whom it behoves not to think of such a thing as making their *toilette*, and who do not practise shaving, as everybody in the East allows his beard to grow. The roofs are flat and smooth. Steps unite the higher-situated roofs with the lower ones. Thus the covering of these premises forms a spacious and pleasant walking-place. As the convent is high, the view from the roofs is magnificent. This is all the more to be appreciated, since the building has no windows nor a garden within its walls. I saw only one or two small gardens hid between the other buildings of the convent. In one of these was a palm-tree forty feet high. The superior, a German, with whom I talked till late in the night, told me a great deal about this old town which can only have an interest to those who believe it. It is possible that Joseph's house once stood where the convent now is, and that Nicodemus' house was next to it; but it is equally possible that neither was the case.

I walked through the town, which has lost all the glory of old Arimathea. It could not fetter me. I longed for the free fresh air. And when at length all was ready for departure, how cheerfully did the morning smile upon us when we got without! The air was uncommonly clear. There was not the slightest motion noticeable in the atmosphere. The smoke of the villages of the Fellaheen and of the camps of the Bedouin rose up perpendicularly, forming loose pillars with fantastic looking capitals. These airy pillars contrasted in a striking manner with those huge masses of stone, which were lying just before me, stretching from the north to the south—Judea's and Samaria's everlasting hills. It seemed as if the atmosphere was willing to purify itself to the utmost, for it was as if the mountains came to meet us, contracting the real distance of twenty miles within the narrow compass of only three. And over those mountains the dew was hanging, weaving veils round their heads. Lower down, however, their dress was beautifully variegated. The rising prince of the day had, as it were, taken up a pencil, which he dipped now in green and yellow, now in brown and grey, at the same time taking away the sharp edges of the tints and making them mingle in soft transitions. Gradually the sun swallowed the dew, taking it back as his property, and now the mountains showed themselves in their own peculiar lineaments. I saw them in the form of gigantic terraces, one range after another, higher and higher still; but I saw no sharp crags, no prominent pointed needles; I only saw curved ridges, declining from the centre, like the wings of a bird when it allows them to sink a little, and sometimes also inverted basins and long-stretched flats like immense roofs. And fresh and invigorating was the air which I inhaled under the enjoyment of such a picturesque sight, while proceeding onward to Ludd, the Lydda of the Bible.

In deference to its biblical celebrity, we went a considerable way out of our road to visit Ludd. The town had on the previous evening shown itself in such picturesque beauty as excited our desire to see it. It was as if it said to us in an inviting voice, "Do not pass me by." And even while we were approaching it, it continued its illusory appearance, which was enhanced by the charms of the unique morning. Quiet and enchanting looked the place, with its cupolas and turrets. Its prominent ruins seemed to try to temper the fascination of the scene by seeming gravity. Palms lifted their majestic forms. Olive groves relieved by the cool green of their leaves the white hue of the roofs and minarets. The

country alternately rose and sank; earth walls, upon which the cactus blossomed, enclosed the pastures; cultivated fields, which, seen from a distance, formed so many coloured stripes, covered the country round about. But great was the disappointment which we experienced on entering Ludd. We found ourselves in the midst of poor, miserable dwellings, separated from each other by narrow closes. These closes are very peculiar. In the middle of such a close runs a trench or ditch, a foot and a half deep, and three broad. Of course, during the rainy season, the water flowing down into these ruts softens the unpaved ground and turns it into a black pulp. This is the road for the beasts of burden; but while on both sides of the trench enough of room is left for two men to pass each other, it is different in the case of the animals. One may imagine what a continuous source of quarrel must be the meeting of two donkeys or camels from opposite directions. The question then is, not which is to go to the left or to the right, but which is to climb up to the passengers' footpath to make room for its fellow being!

The only object worth noticing at Ludd is the ruins of the old church of St. George, which must have been a splendid building. The western part of it is turned into a mosque, while another part is now and then used by the Greek Christians. After having inspected this monument of the piety of the old Christians and of the Vandalism of the Mohammedans, we continued our way, which led across fields covered with the fresh green of the wheat-crops, and adorned with olive and other trees. It was not long, however, before the soil became more stony and hilly, and the nearer we approached the mountains the more our way went over a succession of elevations and depressions. While proceeding towards the south-east I saw, on my left-hand side, Nebalat and Ono; straight before me, Jimzu. The latter is a place mentioned in the Bible under the name of Iim (Josh. xv. 29). I recognised it as such on first sight. It is built on an elevation which looks like a rock, but is in fact a cluster of rocks, covered with the green of the corn-fields, across which dark-green olives cast their broad shades. The cactus-leaves shine like oval-shaped mirrors in the rays of the sun. We ascended this height. Loose stones cover the road, which does not go through the village. Still I rode into it, but found no other remains of the people who once built and inhabited the place, than a very old olive-press, and an oblong, partly subterraneous vault.

From this place our journey was to Annabeh, which lies three miles farther on. At a small distance on my left-hand side I saw Berfilga, situated at the entrance to the mountains. We did not take our route to the Holy City by that way, but descended into the valley, which on the maps is noted as Mey Hu Omeir. The governor of Ludd, however, said to me that he never heard it called by that name. From here, on the south side, rises the ridge upon which the village of El Kubab is built. On the east side of this village there is a large wood, enclosed with stone walls and cactus hedges. Here we took a little rest, the sun being in the zenith.

TREES.

A FEW WORDS SPOKEN TO CHILDREN.

Children are fond of pictures, and they like to listen when pictures are explained; and our heavenly Father has given us a most beautiful and glorious picture-book, and the explanation which he gives of it is still more beautiful and glorious. The picture-book is the world, which He has created. The sun, moon, and stars, the fields and trees, the flowers and plants, the lion and the lamb, the eagle and the swallow, the mountains and rocks, rivers and seas —all these are so many pictures, beautiful to look at, but still more beautiful to understand. For they all mean something, and tell something, which is very important and blessed for us to know. Now, God explains his pictures. He does it in his Word, and He does it especially by his dear Son Jesus Christ. Jesus often speaks of his Father's works and explains them to us; and He shows us how all things point to Himself, who is the great gift of God to us.

Now, I want this morning to speak to you about trees, and what the Bible says they mean.

I.—THE TWO MOST REMARKABLE TREES.

Which are they?

The one stood in the garden of Eden, the other stood on Mount Golgotha. The one was in the midst of beauty and plenty, everything around it smiling and joyous; the other was between two malefactors, a place of ignominy and shame. The one was the occasion of sin, when Eve and Adam, listening to the voice of the tempter, transgressed God's law, and thus sin and death came into the world; the other is the source of salvation, where Jesus Christ, in obedience to his heavenly Father, laid down his life for the lost sheep. The one tree reminds us of man, seeking his own life, and honour, and pleasure, and losing all; the other tree reminds us of Christ, laying down his life, enduring pain and agony, and suffering shame, and thereby gaining life and glory, not merely for Himself but for all who love Him. Dear children, these are the two most important trees in the world; the tree in Paradise, and the tree of death on Calvary: the tree with beautiful leaves and inviting fruit, in the garden of Eden, and the Cross, with the suffering, bleeding Saviour. *Christ his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree.* The tree in Paradise man ought not to have touched, but to Christ on the cross all sinners are invited. Christ lifted up draws our hearts to Himself. Now, there is much more told us about these two trees in the Bible, but this is the beginning and most im-

portant of all to us: one tree reminds us of sin and death, and the other of salvation and life. By touching and eating of one, a righteous man became a sinner; by taking hold of the other a sinner becomes righteous.

II.—ALL MEN COMPARED TO TREES; GOOD AND CORRUPT.

Jesus compares all men to trees; some are good and bring forth good fruit, some are evil and bring forth evil fruit.

David made this comparison when he wrote: that the righteous is like a tree, planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. A good tree means a tree that has life. If we believe in Jesus, our hearts are rooted and grounded in him. Jesus loving us and teaching us, comforting and helping us when we are unhappy and sad, reminding us of God and heaven when we are forgetful and selfish—this is meant by the rivers of water, that keep us alive and fresh. Christ's words and promises and commands, all kind friends who love God and speak to us about him, all God's dealings with us in health and sickness, are the waters which he sends to the tree, that is rooted in Christ. Now, you don't see the root of a tree, but you see the branches and leaves; and so no man can look into your heart and see whether you love God and Jesus, but we can see your faces and your conduct, we can hear your words and notice your doings. And when we love God secretly in our hearts and are kept in the love of God by the rivers, which I told you of, then we are kind and gentle, diligent and careful, unselfish and loving. Our words and our works are leaves and fruit showing the heart is right with God.

But did you ever read what John the Baptist said: The axe is laid unto the root of the tree: every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Strange sight it would be: a forest and every tree in it with an axe to its root! Ah, dear children, these words are solemn and true, and therefore listen to me when I tell you how we may by God's grace be good trees, pleasing to God and planted by Him to remain before Him for ever.

III.—THE FIG-TREE CURSED AND A SYCAMORE-TREE BLESSED.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was full of love and kindness. His kindness knew no limit. People, whom others despised and forgot, He remembered, and showed love to. He was fond of little children, and took them into his arms and blessed them. He fed the multitude, for He knew they must be faint and exhausted. When Peter cut off the ear of Malchus, Jesus immediately touched and healed it. He did not like to see suffering and want. He did not like to see God's good creatures wasted; so he commanded the disciples to collect the fragments of bread. Now how strange is it that this loving Jesus should have on one occasion used his power to destroy and to wither. You remember the story. "And he left them and went out of the city unto Bethany and he lodged there. Now in the morning, as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig-tree in the way he came and found nothing thereon but eaves only, and he said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig-tree withered away." That fig-tree is a picture of man, who has been taught from God's word about sin and salvation, about God's love and Christ's grace, about repentance and faith,—who has had father and mother and teacher watching him, loving him, instructing him,—and who does not obey God, seeking and serving Him, and brings forth no fruit unto God and the Church. It was a picture specially of the Jews, who had the Bible, the Sabbath, the Temple, and who had Jesus himself in the midst of them,—but they received Him not. They were proud, and did not acknowledge their sin. Their hearts were not broken, and yet they pretended they were good, and loved the Bible and prayer. But, as I told you before, the good tree is a man whose heart is rooted in the Saviour.

If the fig-tree is a picture of the proud Pharisee, let me show you another tree, which Christ blessed. The Saviour was drawing near to Jericho, and a great crowd followed Him. Jericho means the city of fragrance; palm-trees, balsam and rose-trees flourished there. But Jesus was looking in one direction, as if something very important and beautiful was attracting his notice. It was a sycamore tree. Now a sycamore tree is a very common humble tree; but this tree bore a very extraordinary fruit on its branches. What was the fruit it bore? Strange to say, it was a man—Zaccheus. He was a publican, or tax-gatherer. These people were generally wicked, and never went to a place of worship. But this man was anxious to be good,—that is, to know and serve God. And he had heard of Jesus, that He called sinners to repentance, and that He received them to help and love them. Now he felt that Jesus was such a Saviour as he wanted, and he was anxious to see Him. But being a little man and there being a great crowd, he climbed up into a sycamore-tree, there to watch and see Jesus. And the Saviour knew it, and gave to Zaccheus more than he expected; for He said to him, "Zaccheus, make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house."

Little children who cannot read, or little children who are only beginning to learn, or older children who want to know more about the Saviour, there is always some one near you who can teach you and tell you more about Jesus. That is the sycamore tree you must climb up to see Jesus. All sermons, and Sunday Schools, and good books are sycamore-trees to help little Zaccheus to get a glimpse of Jesus. And then Jesus comes with the heart to abide there, and Zaccheus becomes a good tree, for the worst tree can be changed into a good tree. Jesus died for the bad trees, that they may through Him become good.

IV.—THE VINE.

If a person who had never seen and known trees was shown a fir tree or a poplar, a chestnut tree or oleander, and afterwards the vine, which in spring looks little better than a wooden peg, what would he think? He would expect something of the large stately trees, and despise the vine. But we know

that the vine bears a noble fruit, and from the grapes we get the wine, which strengthens and gladdens man. Now Jesus is the Vine. God, the Father, planted Him. At first He had no comeliness; He was a root out of a dry ground, and men passed by with contempt. He was born of a poor woman. Mary was so poor, that when she brought the child to the Temple she could only offer a pair of turtle-doves as a sacrifice. He was brought up by Joseph the carpenter in a despised country town. He chose for his disciples fishermen. He was rejected by the scribes and priests, and finally nailed to the cross. He was not known and honoured by men: but God knew Him, and acknowledged Him. He raised Him from the dead, and now is He the Vine, and He will fill the earth with his glory.

Zaccheus, the thief on the cross, Mary Magdalene, and all who come to Jesus in repentance and faith, become branches in Him. They abide in Christ, and Christ's words abide in them; and then they bring forth much fruit. The children of Israel were astonished at the clusters of grapes that the spies brought from Canaan: they were so large and beautiful. And when we hear of Christ's disciples, and their lives, we also are astonished. When we hear of Paul, and what he did and suffered—how he was scourged, and stoned, and imprisoned—and how he endured all things willingly for the sake of Jesus and to do good; when we think of Stephen, dying for Christ and praying for his enemies, that God might forgive them; when we think of the children of God, some of them very poor, and still happy and hopeful, rejoicing in God and heaven; of the sick who for years are confined to their room, in pain by day and night, and yet thanking God for his goodness to them, and for the prospect of blessedness above; when we think of God's people, young and old, their patience, meekness, purity, love, and peace;—we are just looking at the clusters of grapes which *Christ the Vine* bears.

Apart from this Vine we can do nothing. We must first come to Jesus, and then we can follow Him. We must first become humble and lowly, like Zaccheus, and receive Jesus in our heart, and then Jesus and we are one, and we bring forth fruit. Paul describes the different kinds of fruit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

V.—SHADE AND FRUIT OF THE APPLE-TREE.

A wanderer travelling in the East under the scorching rays of the sun, weary and faint, his limbs tired and his tongue parched, came to an apple-tree with large branches. "Ah," said he, "this is delightful! Here is shade to shelter me from the heat of the sun, and here are refreshing apples to quench my thirst and keep me from fainting." So he sat down, and was glad; the shade was welcome, and the fruit was sweet to his taste.

The words in which the Bible tells this story are these: As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is Christ among the sons of men. When we feel oppressed by our sins and the displeasure of God, which he has expressed against all transgression of his law, Christ is our Shelter, because He died the just for the unjust, and in Him all our condemnation is taken away. When we hunger and thirst after God, Christ's love and Christ's words alone can satisfy us. We sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet unto our taste.

ADOLPH SAPHIR.

A CHARACTER TO BE AVOIDED.

IT is hardly possible to describe the hypocrite, just as it is hardly possible to draw a life-like portrait of one who is never seen without a mask. It is easier to say what he is not than what he is, as it is the sad characteristic of his life not to be what he tries to make you think he is. The embossed ornament swells out on one side in the same proportion as it is depressed on the other, and the more solid it looks without, the more hollow it is within; so the inside of the hypocrite is exactly the reverse of his outside. If this is not always the case, it is because he is not even consistent enough not to sin against his own sin.

Hypocrisy is so prevalent among mankind, that it is not an easy matter to say of any one among the children of men that he is not a hypocrite. If he be not one to-day, or was not one yesterday, he may be one to-morrow. Hypocrisy is the never-failing companion of transgression, as smoke is of flame. Since Adam's first transgression it has run in our blood, and has made our heart not merely a deceitful thing, but of all things the most deceitful (Jerem. xvii. 9). It is said that no art is innate; but the art of sewing fig-leaves together and making aprons of them is an exception to this rule. We are all of us born masters of that trade, and need no one to teach it to us. Even such a good man as St. Peter, though he was full of the Holy Spirit, was one time found "dissembling" at Antioch, for which his fellow-apostle, St. Paul, justly blamed him (Gal. ii. 11—13). It must be an obstinate poison which the serpent pours into our veins since even the heavenly Dove could not fully expel it from such a man as the first of the Apostles. Indeed, only one Man ever lived on earth who never was a hypocrite, wherefore He was called *The Truth* (John xiv. 6), *The Faithful and True One* (Rev. xix. 11). Of the rest of mankind He, who never lies, testifies that every one is a liar (Rom. iii. 4).

Still a distinction should be made between things which differ in principle, though they may bear some resemblance to one another. Hypocrisy is connected with respect to appearance, but respect to appearance is not necessarily hypocrisy. The fact is, that as everybody lives upon higher credit than he is really worth, we find it next to impossible to

get on in society without some regard to appearance. This is almost necessary to prevent our being misunderstood. If we at every given moment showed ourselves in the actual character or mood of mind in which we then happened to be, we should often be taken for worse than we really are. Moreover, we do not always wish to continue as we are. Many a time we really hope to be better to-morrow than we are to-day, and as we can see neither the necessity nor the good of representing ourselves in a character which we hope to change by dint of self-improvement, we draw upon our future excellence, and allow our friends to enjoy the representation of virtues which it will perhaps cost us many a painful struggle to become actually possessed of. There is, perhaps, not much harm in this sort of thing, provided we are really in earnest, and take care that the money be in the bank the moment the cheque is presented.

Let me try to illustrate this matter.

Suppose Mrs. A. is sitting one afternoon with her husband at the window of their front-parlour, chatting in a pleasant and confidential way. On a sudden Mrs. B. comes up the steps. Now, Mrs. B. is one of Mrs. A.'s friends; they are really fond of one another, only Mrs. B. is a little garrulous, and just as it is easy to get her down upon a chair, so is it difficult to get her up again. Mrs. A. looks at her husband despairingly. "There she is! What are we to do? How very awkward! Our afternoon will be spoilt. I know what she is coming about. We'll hear all about her bad servant, who absconded with her silk dress the other day. Could you not, dear——" But Mrs. B. enters, with a smiling face, and after having kissed her friend, cordially shakes hands with the husband. Now, what *is* Mrs. A. to do? I will tell you what she did; she returned the smile and the kiss. "How do you do, Mrs. B.? Happy to see you indeed. Sit down. And how are Mr. B. and your children?" &c., &c. This certainly was not a cheque for which there was capital in the Bank at the moment. But before ten minutes had elapsed it was really paid down. Mrs. A. was soon quite pleased with her friend's visit, and regretted having yielded to her first impression. Their conversation even became very cordial and confidential. Would it have been so, if she had told her friend at once that she was not happy to see her, and that her visit was disagreeable? Let us not forget that outspokenness may sometimes be the effect of heartless indifference, and that respect to appearance may sometimes be dictated by friendship. Certainly it would have been better if Mrs. A. had felt cordial towards her friend from the first moment she noticed her coming. But this not being the case,—and who, acquainted with human nature, can wonder?—what was she to do but make the best of it? Some may aver that there is some moral value in continuing in a wrong way through sincerity, but I praise the person who at once turns to the right way, even though the first step or two cannot be well taken without an appearance of feigning.

But the hypocrite is a person who does not at all want to step over to the right way, and yet tries to make you believe he has done so. Beware of that man. His life is a continuous endeavour to make Him a liar who said that it is impossible to serve two masters. Not content with the profits of vice, he tries to gain those of virtue in addition. He is the most selfish, greedy, and covetous creature under Heaven, aiming at two rewards from two different masters for only one life's service. He is the greatest of fools at the same time, trying to make himself believe that there can be a spot where two straight lines, which run in an opposite direction, may meet.

There is no being in the universe whom the hypocrites do not try to cheat.

1. *They try to cheat Men.*—They know that man is not a searcher of the heart, nor a trier of the reins—that he looketh not on the heart, but on the outward appearance. And upon this they speculate. They never forget that their conscience is not yours, and so they approach you with a bearing as if their own conscience knew nothing more about them than yours does. They only take care that what you hear them say and see them do are right, however bad may be what they are thinking and aiming at. Thus Joab spoke quietly to Abner, with his hand meanwhile on the hilt of his sword, to smite him under the fifth rib (2 Sam. iii. 27). Beware of such men. After careful observation you may easily know them from your true friends. They are often found overdoing the show of friendship; and it cannot be otherwise, for their friendship is not truth but art. You will sometimes find them kissing you, as was the case with Judas. Or they will, with a flourish of sentimental, passionate exclamations, offer you their assistance or protection, where there is not the slightest call for either, as Absalom did when he stole the heart of the people first, to steal his father's throne afterwards (2 Sam. xv. 4).

2. *They try to cheat God.*—For though they rely upon the fact that man is not like God, searching the heart and trying the reins, yet they think, or at least hope, that God may be like man, looking only on the outward appearance. So they "flatter him with their mouth and lie unto him with their tongues," and while thus they "draw near to him with their mouth and honour him with their lips," they suppose that He does not observe that their heart gives praise to the devil and that their soul "goeth after covetousness." They deal with religion as with merchandise, and with God as if He were a huckster, paying Him, morevoer, with counterfeit coin, and dealing in false measures. You may also easily discover hypocrites by their uncalled-for over-doses of devotion. This could be seen in the case of Saul, the king of Israel, who spared the best of the sheep and oxen of the Amalekites, to offer a sacrifice which God did not want. If they are Romanists, you will find them even more popish than the Pope; if they are Protestants, even Calvin and Luther were not so orthodox as they are. Still, you will find that their godliness is worth little, but is as frankincense, a pennyworth of which emits a cloud like a mountain. They also show an extraordinary tenderness of conscience in all cases in which honesty and rectitude cost nothing, and in which neglect would be as little injurious as observance

would be useful. This was seen in the conduct of the Scribes and Pharisees, who paid tithe of mint, anise, and cumin. They appear greatly scandalised at other people's trespasses against the letter of the law, and, with an air of holy indignation, require that justice and righteousness be done, in order that God may receive the honour due to his name; but while thus they are straining out a gnat in public, you may find them the next moment swallowing a camel in secret. Beware of these people, wherever you should discover them, as they are hidden traps of the devil to make you stumble and fall on your way some day. For as they try as much as they can to identify themselves with religion in your eyes, so they may shake your faith in religion itself when one day they come to light as servants of Satan. And come to light they must, for the God whom they try to cheat cannot be deceived. He will pluck off their mask, when the measure of their iniquity is full. Commonly, this takes place before death stays their earthly career, for, adroitly as they may have adjusted the sheep's skin, yet, from certain plaits and seams, it is first suspected and at last discovered that it is not their natural covering. Still, some may succeed in escaping the eye of man, although they will experience in eternity with the greater horror that they never could deceive the eye of God. For a fearful judgment will fall upon the head of those who have done evil, even though good may have come out of it; but their lot will prove tolerable in comparison with the everlasting woe of the hypocrite, who used good for the purpose of doing evil with it.

3. *They try to cheat the Devil.*—Though they are his children, they do not like the relationship; neither do they grudge him the fire which is prepared for him and his angels. So, while earning his wages here on earth, they try by means of services performed to another Master, to secure to themselves a place in Abraham's bosom. But they will find that Satan is not such a fool as they take him for, and that, though he tries to upset everything in the kingdom of God, yet he is possessed of a sufficient sense of order in his own kingdom, to take care that his followers find their proper places.

4. *They try to cheat Themselves.*—But for that they could not exist. Self-deception, to a certain extent at least, is as essential to hypocrisy as self-examination is to sanctification. Human nature is too much framed upon the principle of self-preservation, to admit of a man continuing to walk in a way which he is assured will end in everlasting destruction. The hypocrite, by means of some logic or other of his own, reasons himself into the belief that, if he has no *certainty*, he has at least a *chance* of coming out safe. To this reasoning the doctrine that nobody is perfectly sincere, on one hand, and the doctrine that God is merciful, on the other, furnish the chief arguments. To tranquillise himself he often appeals to the testimony of his own conscience, which reminds him of all the religious performances with which he has sought to please God, and speaks faintly of all the deeds with which he has served the devil; but he forgets that, before calling up this witness, he seared its memory, so that it only tells the tale which he himself has dictated. He also shifts from one system to another. Sometimes he is a fatalist: he did the evil from necessity. Sometimes he is a Jesuit: he did the evil that good might come out of it. Sometimes he is a utilitarian: God led him into an evil way that he should learn to choose a better one. Sometimes he is an antinomian: no wonder he did the evil, for what else is the Old Man capable of? And sometimes he is a universalist, and thinks there will be a time when God shall be all in all, and even the devil shall be saved.

Beware of the Hypocrite! for even the harlot and the publican will go into the kingdom of God before him. One day he will find that he cheated nobody so fearfully as himself. To neglect truth and religion is bad. To hate truth and religion is worse. But to *play* with truth and religion is the worst of all; and no hope is held out for those who have lived and died pursuing that awful game.

ANDREW WHITGIFT.

UNDER A COTTAGE ROOF.

I.

My food is but spare,
And humble my cot,
Yet Jesus dwells there,
And blesses my lot.
Though thinly I'm clad,
And tempests oft roll,
He's raiment and bread
And drink to my soul.

II.

His presence is wealth,
His grace is a treasure;
His promise is health,
And joy out of measure;
His word is my rest,
His Spirit my guide:
In Him I am blest,
Whatever betide.

III.

Since Jesus is mine,
Adieu to all sorrow;
I ne'er shall repine,
Nor think of to-morrow;
The lily so fair,
And raven so black,
He nurses with care,
Then how shall I lack?

IV.

Each promise is sure
That shines in his word,
And tells me, though poor,
I'm rich in my Lord.
Hence sorrow and fear:
Since Jesus is nigh,
I'll dry up each tear,
And stifle each sigh.

P. B.

Drawn by E. Hughes. Engraved by J. Swain.

" The lily so fair,
And raven so black,
He nurses with care,
Then how shall I lack ?"

ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BY THE VICAR.

VII.

I WENT home very quietly, as I say, thinking about the strange elements that not only combine to make life, but must be combined in our idea of life, before we can form a true theory about it. Now-a-days, the vulgar notion of what is life-like in any annals is to be realized by sternly excluding everything but the commonplace; and the means at least are often attained, with this much of the end as well—that the appearance life bears to vulgar minds is represented with a wonderful degree of success. But I believe that this is at least quite as unreal a mode of representing life as the other extreme, wherein the unlikely, the romantic, and the uncommon predominate. I doubt whether there is a single history—if one could only get at the whole of it—in which there is not a considerable admixture of the unlikely become fact, including a few strange coincidences; of the uncommon, which, although striking at first, has grown common from familiarity with its presence as our own; with even at least some one more or less rosy touch of what we call the romantic. My own conviction is, that the poetry is far the deepest in us, and that the prose is only broken-down poetry; and likewise that to this our lives correspond. The poetic region is the true one, and just *therefore* the incredible one to the lower order of mind; for although every mind is capable of the truth, or rather capable of becoming capable of the truth, there may lie ages between its capacity and the truth. As you will hear some people read poetry so that no mortal could tell it was poetry, so do some people read their own lives and those of others.

I fell into these reflections from comparing in my own mind my former experiences in visiting my parishioners with those of that day. True, I had never sat down to talk with one of them without finding that that man or that woman had actually a *history*, the most marvellous and important fact to a human being; nay, I had found something more or less remarkable in every one of their histories, so that I was more than barely interested in each of them. And as I made more acquaintance with them, (for I had not been in the position, or the disposition either, before I came to Marshmallows, necessary to the gathering of such experiences), I came to the conclusion—not that I had got into an extraordinary parish of characters—but that every parish must be more or less extraordinary from the same cause. Why did I not use to see such people about me before? Surely I had undergone a change of some sort. Could it be, that the trouble I had been going through of late, had opened the eyes of my mind to the understanding, or rather the simple *seeing*, of my fellow-men?

But the people among whom I had been to-day belonged rather to such as might be put into a romantic story. Certainly I could not see much that was romantic in the old lady; and yet, those eyes and that tight-skinned face—what might they not be capable of in a working out of a story? And then the place they lived in! Why, it would hardly come into my ideas of a nineteenth-century country parish at all. I was tempted to try to persuade myself that all that had happened, since I rose to look out of the window in the old house, had been but a dream. For how could that wooded dell have come there after all? It was much too large for a quarry. And that madcap girl—she never flung herself into the pond!—it could not be. And what could the book have been that the lady with the sea-blue eyes was reading? Was that a real book at all? No. Yes. Of course it was. But what was it? What had that to do with the matter? It might turn out to be a very commonplace book after all. No; for commonplace books are generally new, or at least in fine bindings. And here was a shabby little old book, such as, if it had been commonplace, would not have been likely to be the companion of a young lady at the bottom of a quarry—

> A savage place, as holy and enchanted
> As ere beneath a waning moon was haunted
> By woman wailing for her demon lover.

I know all this will sound ridiculous, especially that quotation from *Kubla Khan* coming after the close of the preceding sentence; but it is only so much the more like the jumble of thoughts that made a chaos of my mind as I went home. And then for that terrible pool, and subterranean passage, and all that—what had it all to do with this broad daylight, and these dying autumn leaves? No doubt there had been such places. No doubt there were such places somewhere yet. No doubt this was one of them. But, somehow or other, it would not come in well. I had no intention of *going in for*—that is the phrase now—going in for the romantic. I would take the impression off by going to see Weir the carpenter's old father. Whether my plan was successful or not, I shall leave my reader to judge.

I found Weir busy as usual, but not with a coffin this time. He was working at a window-sash. "Just like life," I thought—tritely perhaps. "The other day he was closing up in the outer darkness, and now he is letting in the light."

"It's a long time since you was here last, sir," he said, but without a smile.

Did he mean a reproach? If so, I was more glad of that reproach than I would have been of the warmest welcome, even from Old Rogers. The fact was that, having a good deal to attend to besides, and willing at the same time to let the man feel that he was in no danger of being bored by my visits, I had not made use even of my reserve in the shape of a visit to his father.

"Well," I answered, "I wanted to know something about all my people, before I paid a second visit to any of them."

"All right, sir. Don't suppose I meant to complain. Only to let you know you was welcome, sir."

"I've just come from my first visit to Oldcastle Hall. And, to tell the truth, for I don't like pretences, my visit to-day was not so much to you as to your father, whom, perhaps, I ought to have called upon before, only I was afraid of seeming to intrude upon you, seeing we don't exactly think the same way about some things," I added—with a smile I know, which was none the less genuine that I remember it yet.

And what makes me remember it yet? It is the smile that lighted up his face in response to mine. For it was more than I looked for. And his answer helped to fix the smile in my memory.

"You made me think, sir, that perhaps, after all, we were much of the same way of thinking, only perhaps you was a long way ahead of me."

Now the man was not right in saying that we were much of the same way of *thinking*; for our opinions could hardly do more than come within sight of each other; but what he meant was right enough. For I was certain, from the first, that the man had a regard for the downright, honest way of things, and I hoped that I too had such a regard. How much of selfishness and of pride in one's own judgment might be mixed up with it, both in his case and mine, I had been too often taken in—by myself, I mean—to be at all careful to discriminate, provided there was a proportion of real honesty along with it, which, I felt sure, would ultimately eliminate the other. For in the moral nest, it is not as with the sparrow and the cuckoo. The right, the original inhabitant is the stronger; and, however unlikely at any given point in the history it may be, the sparrow will grow strong enough to heave the intruding cuckoo overboard. So I was pleased that the man should do me the honour of thinking I was right as far as he could see, which is the greatest honour one man can do another; for it is setting him on his own steed, as the eastern tyrants used to do. And I was delighted to think that the road lay open for further and more real communion between us in time to come.

"Well," I answered, "I think we shall understand each other perfectly before long. But now I must see your father, if it is convenient and agreeable."

"My father will be delighted to see you, I know, sir. He can't get so far as the church on Sundays; but you'll find him much more to your mind than me. He's been putting ever so many questions to me about the new parson, wanting me to try whether I couldn't get more out of you than the old parson. That's the way we talk about you, you see, sir. You'll understand. And I've never told him that I'd been to church since you came—I suppose from a bit of pride, because I had so long refused to go; but I don't doubt some of the neighbours have told him, for he never speaks about it now. And I know he's been looking out for you; and I fancy he's begun to wonder that the parson was going to see everybody but him. It *will* be a pleasure to the old man, sir, for he don't see a great many to talk to; and he's fond of a bit of gossip, is the old man, sir."

So saying, Weir led the way through the shop into a lobby behind, and thence, up what must have been a back stair of the old house, into a large room over the workshop. There were bits of old carving about the walls yet, but, as in the shop below, all had been whitewashed. At one end of the room stood a bed with chintz curtains and a warm-looking counterpane of rich faded embroidery. There was a bit of carpet by the bedside, and another bit in front of the fire; and there the old man sat, on one side, in a high-backed not very easy-looking chair. With a great effort he managed to rise as I approached him, notwithstanding my entreaties that he would not move. He looked much older when on his feet, for he was bent nearly double, in which posture the marvel was how he could walk at all. For he did totter a few steps to meet me, without even the aid of a stick, and, holding out a thin, shaking hand, welcomed me with an air of breeding rarely to be met with in his station in society. But the chief part of this polish sprung from the inbred kindliness of his nature, which was manifest in the expression of his noble old countenance. Age is such a different thing in different natures! One man seems to grow more and more selfish as he grows older; and in another the slow fire of time seems only to consume, with fine, imperceptible gradations, the yet lingering selfishness in him, letting the light of the kingdom, which the Lord says is within, shine out more and more, as the husk grows thin and is ready to fall off, that the man, like the seed sown, may pierce the earth of this world and rise into the pure air and wind and dew of the second life. The face of a loving old man is always to me like a morning moon, reflecting the yet unrisen sun of the other world, yet fading before its approaching light, until, when it does rise, it pales and withers away from our gaze, absorbed in the source of its own beauty. This old man, you may see, took my fancy wonderfully; for even at this distance of time, when I am old myself, the recollection of his beautiful old face makes me feel as if I could write poetry about him.

"I'm blithe to see ye, sir," said he. "Sit ye down, sir."

And, turning, he pointed to his own easy-chair; and I then saw his profile. It was delicate as that of Dante, which in form it marvellously resembled. But all the sternness which Dante's evil times had generated in his prophetic face was in this old man's replaced by a sweetness of hope that was lovely to behold.

"No, Mr. Weir," I said, "I cannot take your chair. The Bible tells us to rise up before the aged, not to turn them out of their seats."

"It would do me good to see you sitting in my chair, sir. The pains that my son Tom there takes to keep it up as long as the old man may want it! It's a good thing I bred him to the joiner's trade, sir. Sit ye down, sir. The cheer 'll hold ye, though I warrant it won't last that long after I've gone home. Sit ye down, sir."

Thus entreated, I hesitated no longer, but took the old man's seat. His son brought another chair for him, and he sat down opposite the fire and close to me. Thomas then went back to his work, leaving us alone.

"Ye've had some speech wi' my son Tom," said the old man, the moment he was gone, leaning a little

towards me. "It's main kind o' you, sir, to take up kindly wi' poor folks like us."

"You don't say it's kind of a person to do what he likes best," I answered. "Besides, it's my duty to know all my people."

"Oh yes, sir, I know that. But there's a thousand ways ov doin' the same thing. I ha' seen folks, parsons and others, 'at made a great show ov bein' friendly to the poor, ye know, sir; and all the time you could see, or if you couldn't see you could tell without seein', that they didn't much regard them in their hearts; but it was a sort of accomplishment to be able to talk to the poor, like, after their own fashion. But the minute an ould man sees you, sir, he believes that you *mean* it, sir, whatever it is. For an ould man somehow comes to know things like a child. They call it a second childhood, don't they, sir? And there are some things worth growin' a child again to get a hould ov again."

"I only hope what you say may be true—about me, I mean."

"Take my word for it, sir. You have no idea how that boy of mine, Tom there, did hate all the clergy till you come. Not that he's anyway favourable to them yet, only he'll say nothin' again' you, sir. He's got an unfortunate gift o' seein' all the faults first, sir; and when a man is that way given, the faults always hides the other side, so that there's nothing but faults to be seen."

"But I find Thomas quite open to reason."

"That's because you understand him, sir, and know how to give him head. He tould me of the talk you had with him. You don't bait him. You don't say, 'You must come along wi' me,' but you turns and goes along wi' him. He's not a bad fellow at all, is Tom; but he will have the reason for everything. Now I never did want the reason for everything. I was content to be tould a many things. But Tom, you see, he was born with a sore bit in him somewheres, I don't rightly know wheres; and I don't think he rightly knows what's the matter with him himself."

"I dare say you have a guess though, by this time, Mr. Weir," I said; "and I think I have a guess too."

"Well, sir, if he'd only give in, I think he would be far happier. But he can't see his way clear."

"You must give him time, you know. The fact is, he doesn't feel at home yet. And how can he, so long as he doesn't know his own father?"

"I'm not sure that I rightly understand you," said the old man, looking bewildered and curious.

"I mean," I answered, "that till a man knows that he is one of God's family, living in God's house, with God up-stairs, as it were, while he is at his work or his play in a nursery below-stairs, he can't feel comfortable. For a man could not be made that should stand alone, like some of the beasts. A man must feel a head over him, because he's not enough to satisfy himself, you know. Thomas just wants faith; that is, he wants to feel that there is a loving Father over him, who is doing things all well and right, if we could only understand them, though it really does not look like it sometimes."

"Ah, sir, I might have understood you well enough, if my poor old head hadn't been started on a wrong track. For I fancied for the moment that you were just putting your finger upon the sore place in Tom's mind. There's no use in keeping family misfortunes from a friend like you, sir. That boy has known his father all his life; but I was nearly half his age before I knew mine."

"Strange!" I said, involuntarily almost.

"Yes, sir; strange you may well say. A strange story it is. The Lord help my mother! I beg yer pardon, sir. I'm no Catholic. But that prayer will come of itself sometimes. As if it could be of any use now! God forgive me!"

"Don't you be afraid, Mr. Weir, as if God was ready to take offence at what comes naturally, as you say. An ejaculation of love is not likely to offend Him who is so grand that He is always meek and lowly of heart, and whose love is such that ours is a mere faint light—'a little glooming light much like a shade'—as one of our own poets says, beside it."

"Thank you, Mr. Walton. That's a real comfortable word, sir. And I am heart-sure it's true, sir. God be praised for evermore! He *is* good, sir; as I have known in my poor time, sir. I don't believe there ever was one that just lifted his eyes and looked up'ards, instead of looking down to the ground, that didn't get some comfort, to go on with, as it were—the ready-money of comfort, as it were—though it might be none to put in the bank, sir."

"That's true enough," I said. "Then your father and mother——"

And here I hesitated.

"Were never married, sir," said the old man promptly, as if he would relieve me from an embarrassing position. "*I* couldn't help it. And I'm no less the child of my Father in heaven for it. For if He hadn't made me, I couldn't ha' been their son, you know, sir. So that He had more to do wi' the makin' o' me than they had; though mayhap, if He had had his way all out, I might ha' been the son o' somebody else. But, now that things be so, I wouldn't have liked that at all, sir; and bein' once born so, I would not have ere another couple of parents in all England, sir, though I ne'er knew one o' them. And I do love my mother. And I'm so sorry for my father that I love him too, sir. And if I could only get my boy Tom to think as I do, I would die like a psalm-tune on an organ, sir."

"But it seems to me strange," I said, "that your son should think so much of what is so far gone by. Surely he would not want another father than you, now. He is used to his position in life. And there can be nothing cast up to him about his birth or descent."

"That's all very true, sir, and no doubt it would be as you say. But there has been other things to keep his mind upon the old affair. Indeed, sir, we have had the same misfortune all over again among the young people. And I mustn't say anything more about it; only my boy Tom has a sore heart."

I knew at once to what he alluded; for I could not have been about in my parish all this time without learning that the strange handsome woman in the

little shop was the daughter of Thomas Weir, and that she was neither wife nor widow. And it now occurred to me for the first time that it was a likeness to her little boy that had affected me so pleasantly when I first saw Thomas, his grandfather. The likeness to his great-grandfather, which I saw plainly enough, was what made the other fact clear to me. And at the same moment I began to be haunted with a flickering sense of a third likeness which I could not in the least fix or identify.

"Perhaps," I said, "he may find some good come out of that too."

"Well, who knows, sir?"

"I think," I said, "that if we do evil that good may come, the good we looked for will never come thereby. But once evil is done, we may humbly look to Him who bringeth good out of evil, and wait. Is your grand-daughter Catherine in bad health? She looks so delicate!"

"She always had an uncommon look. But what she looks like now, I don't know. I hear no complaints; but she has never crossed this door since we got her set up in that shop. She never comes near her father or her sister, though she lets them, leastways her sister, go and see her. I'm afraid Tom has been raythor unmerciful with her. And if ever he put a bad name upon her in her hearing, I know from what that lass used to be as a young one, that she wouldn't be likely to forget it, and as little likely to get over it herself or pass it over to another, even her own father. I don't believe they do more nor nod to one another when they meet in the village. It's well even if they do that much. It's my belief there's some people made so hard they never can forgive anythink."

'How did she get into the trouble? Who is the father of her child?"

"Nay, that no one knows for certain; though there be suspicions, and one of them no doubt correct. But I believe fire wouldn't drive his name out at her mouth. I know my lass. When she says a thing she'll stick to it."

I asked no more questions. But after a short pause the old man went on.

"I shan't soon forget the night I first heard about my father and mother. That was a night! The wind was roaring like a mad beast about the house; —not this house, sir, but the great house over the way."

"You don't mean Oldcastle Hall?" I said.

"'Deed I do, sir," returned the old man. "This house here belonged to the same family at one time; though when I was born it was another branch of the family, second cousins or something, that lived in it. But even then it was something on to the downhill road, I believe."

"But," I said, fearing my question might have turned the old man aside from a story worth hearing, "never mind all that now, if you please. I am anxious to hear all about that night. Do go on. You were saying the wind was blowing about the old house."

"Eh, sir, it was roaring!—roaring as if it was mad with rage! And every now and then it would come down the chimley like out of a gun, and blow the smoke and a'most the fire into the middle of the housekeeper's room. For the housekeeper had been giving me my supper. I called her auntie, then; and didn't know a bit that she wasn't my aunt really. I was at that time a kind of a under-gamekeeper upon the place, and slep over the stable. But I fared of the best, for I was a favourite with the old woman—I suppose because I had given her plenty of trouble in my time. That's always the way, sir.—Well, as I was a-saying, when the wind stopped for a moment, down came the rain with a noise that sounded like a regiment of cavalry on the turnpike road t'other side of the hill. And then up the wind got again and swept the rain away, and took it all in its own hand again, and went on roaring worse than ever. 'You'll be wet afore you get across the yard, Samuel,' said Auntie, looking very prim in her long white apron, as she sat on the other side of the little round table before the fire, sipping a drop of hot rum and water, which she always had before she went to bed. 'You'll be wet to the skin, Samuel,' she said. 'Never mind,' says I. 'I'm not salt nor yet sugar; and I'll be going, Auntie, for you'll be wanting your bed.'—'Sit ye still,' said she. 'I don't want my bed yet.' And there she sat, sipping at her rum and water; and there I sat, o' the other side, drinking the last of a pint of October she had gotten me from the cellar —for I had been out in the wind all day. 'It was just such a night as this,' said she, and then stopped again.—But I'm wearying you, sir, with my long story."

"Not in the least," I answered. "Quite the contrary. Pray tell it out—your own way. You won't tire me, I assure you."

So the old man went on.

"'It was just such a night as this,' she began again —'leastways it was snow and not rain that was coming down, as if the Almighty was a-going to spend all his winter-stock at oncet.'—'What happened such a night, Auntie?' I said. 'Ah, my lad!' said she, 'ye may well ask what happened. None has a better right. You happened. That's all.'—'Oh, that's all, is it, Auntie?' I said, and laughed. 'Nay, nay, Samuel,' said she, quite solemn, 'what is there to laugh at, then? I assure you, you was anything but welcome.'—'And why wasn't I welcome?' I said. 'I couldn't help it, you know. I'm very sorry to hear I intruded,' I said, still making game of it, you see; for I always did like a joke. 'Well,' she said, 'you certainly weren't wanted. But I don't blame you, Samuel, and I hope you won't blame me.' —'What *do* you mean, Auntie?' 'I mean this, that it's my fault, if so be that fault it is, that you're sitting there now, and not lying, in less bulk by a good deal, at the bottom of the Bishop's Basin.' That's what they call a deep pond at the foot of the old house, sir; though why or wherefore, I'm sure I don't know. 'Most extraordinary, Auntie!' I said, feeling very queer, and as if I really had no business to be there. 'Never you mind, my dear,' she said; 'there you are, and you can take care of yourself now as well as anybody.'—'But who wanted to drown me?'

'Are you sure you can forgive him, if I tell you?'—'Sure enough, if he was sitting where you be now,' I answered. 'It was, I make no doubt, though I can't prove it,—I am morally certain it was your own father.' I felt the skin creep together upon my head, and I could not speak. 'Yes, it was, child; and it's time you knew all about it. Why, you don't know who your own father was!'—'No more I do,' I said; 'and I never cared to ask, somehow. I thought it was all right, I suppose. But I wonder now that I never did.'—'Indeed you did many a time, when you was a mere boy, like; but I suppose, as you never was answered, you give it up for a bad job, and forgot all about it, like a wise man. You always was a wise child, Samuel.' So the old lady always said, sir. And I was willing to believe she was right, if I could. 'But now,' said she, 'it's time you knew all about it.—Poor Miss Wallis!—I'm no aunt of yours, my boy, though I love you nearly as well, I think, as if I was; for dearly did I love your mother. She was a beauty, and better than she was beautiful, whatever folks may say. The only wrong thing, I'm certain, that she ever did, was to trust your father too much. But I must see and give you the story right through from beginning to end.—Miss Wallis, as I came to know from her own lips, was the daughter of a country attorney, who had a good practice, and was likely to leave her well off. Her mother died when she was a little girl. It's not easy getting on without a mother, my boy. So she wasn't taught much of the best sort, I reckon. When her father died early, and she was left alone, the only thing she could do was to take a governess's place, and she came to us. She never got on well with the children, for they were young and self-willed and rude, and would not learn to do as they were bid. I never knew one o' them shut the door when they went out of this room. And, from having had all her own way at home, with plenty of servants, and money to spend, it was a sore change to her. But she was a sweet creature, that she was. She did look sorely tried when Master Freddy would get on the back of her chair, and Miss Gusta would lie down on the rug, and never stir for all she could say to them, but only laugh at her.—To be sure!' And then Auntie would take a sip at her rum and water, and sit considering old times like a statie. And I sat as if all my head was one great ear, and I never spoke a word. And Auntie began again. 'The way I came to know so much about her was this. Nobody, you see, took any notice or care of her. For the children were kept away with her in the old house, and my lady wasn't one to take trouble about anybody till once she stood in her way, and then she would just shove her aside or crush her like a spider, and ha' done with her.'—They have always been a proud and a fierce race, the Oldcastles, sir," said Weir, taking up the speech in his own person, "and there's been a deal o' breedin' in-and-in amongst them, and that has kept up the worst of them. The men took to the women of their own sort somehow, you see. The lady up at the old Hall now is a Crowfoot. I'll just tell you one thing the gardener told me about her years ago, sir. She had a fancy for hyacinths in her rooms in the spring, and she had some particular fine ones; and a lady of her acquaintance begged for some of them. And what do you think she did? She couldn't refuse them, and she couldn't bear any one to have them as good as she. And so she sent the hyacinth-roots—but she boiled 'em first. The gardener told me himself, sir.—'And so, when the poor thing,' said Auntie, 'was taken with a dreadful cold, which was no wonder if you saw the state of the window in the room she had to sleep in, and which I got old Jones to set to rights and paid him for it out of my own pocket, else he wouldn't ha' done it at all, for the family wasn't too much in the way or the means either of paying their debts—well, there she was, and nobody minding her, and of course it fell to me to look after her. It would have made your heart bleed to see the poor thing flung all of a heap on her bed, blue with cold and coughing. "My dear!" I said; and she burst out crying, and from that moment there was confidence between us. I made her as warm and as comfortable as I could, but I had to nurse her for a fortnight before she was able to do anything again. She didn't shirk her work though, poor thing. It was a heartsore to me to see the poor young thing with her sweet eyes and her pale face, talking away to those children that were more like wild cats than human beings. She might as well have talked to wild cats, I'm sure. But I don't think she was ever so miserable again as she must have been before her illness; for she used often to come and see me of an evening, and she would sit there where you are sitting now, foran hour at a time, without speaking, her thin white hands lying folded in her lap, and her eyes fixed on the fire. I used to wonder what she could be thinking about, and I had made up my mind she was not long for this world; when all at once it was announced that Miss Oldcastle, who had been to school for some time, was coming home; and then we began to see a great deal of company, and for month after month the house was more or less filled with visitors, so that my time was constantly taken up, and I saw much less of poor Miss Wallis than I had seen before. But when we did meet on some of the back stairs, or when she came to my room for a few minutes before going to bed, we were just as good friends as ever. And I used to say, "I wish this scurry was over, my dear, that we might have our old times again." And she would smile and say something sweet. But I was surprised to see that her health began to come back—at least so it seemed to me, for her eyes grew brighter and a flush came upon her pale face, and though the children were as tiresome as ever, she didn't seem to mind it so much. But indeed she had not very much to do with them out of school hours now; for when the spring came on, they would be out and about the place with their sister or one of their brothers; and indeed, out of doors it would have been impossible for Miss Wallis to do anything with them. Some of the visitors would take to them too, for they behaved so badly to nobody as to Miss Wallis, and indeed they were clever children, and could be engaging enough when they pleased.—But then I had a blow, Samuel. It was a lovely spring night, just after the sun was down, and I wanted a drop of milk fresh from the cow for

something that I was making for dinner the next day; so I went through the kitchen-garden and through the belt of young larches to go to the shippen. But when I got among the trees, who should I see at the other end of the path that went along, but Miss Wallis walking arm-in-arm with Captain Crowfoot, who was just home from India, where he had been with Lord Clive.' The captain was a man about two or three and thirty, a relation of the family, and the son of Sir Giles Crowfoot'—who lived then in this old house, sir, and had but that one son, my father, you see, sir. —'And it did give me a turn,' said my aunt, 'to see her walking with him, for I felt as sure as judgment that no good could come of it. For the captain had not the best of characters—that is, when people talked about him in chimney-corners, and such like, though he was a great favourite with everybody that knew nothing about him. He was a fine, manly, handsome fellow, with a smile that, as people said, no woman could resist, though I'm sure it would have given me no trouble to resist it, whatever they may mean by that, for I saw that that same smile was the falsest thing of all the false things about him. All the time he was smiling, you would have thought he was looking at himself in a glass. He was said to have gathered a power of money in India, somehow or other. But I don't know, only I don't think he would have been the favourite he was with my lady if he hadn't. And reports were about, too, of the ways and means by which he had made the money; some said by robbing the poor heathen creatures; and some said it was only that his brother officers didn't quite approve of his speculating as he did in horses and other things. I don't know whether officers are so particular. At all events, this was a fact, for it was one of his own servants that told me, not thinking any harm or any shame of it. He had quarrelled with a young ensign in the regiment. On which side the wrong was, I don't know. But he first thrashed him most unmercifully, and then called him out, as they say. And when the poor fellow appeared, he could scarcely see out of his eyes, and certainly couldn't take anything like an aim. And he shot him dead, did Captain Crowfoot.'—Think of hearing that about one's own father, sir! But I never said a word, for I hadn't a word to say.—'Think of that, Samuel,' said my aunt, 'else you won't believe what I am going to tell you. And you won't even then, I dare say. But I must tell you, nevertheless and notwithstanding.—Well, I felt as if the earth was sinking away from under the feet of me, and I stood and stared at them. And they came on, never seeing me, and actually went close past me and never saw me; at least, if he saw me he took no notice, for I don't suppose that the angel with the flaming sword would have put him out. But for her, I know she didn't see me, for her face was down, burning and smiling at once.'—I'm an old man now, sir, and I never saw my mother; but I can't tell you the story without feeling as if my heart would break for the poor young lady.—'I went back to my room,' said my aunt, 'with my empty jug in my hand, and I sat down as if I had had a stroke, and I never moved till it was pitch dark and my fire out. It was a marvel to me afterwards that nobody came near me, for everybody was calling after me at that time. And it was days before I caught a glimpse of Miss Wallis again, at least to speak to her. At last, one night she came to my room; and without a moment of parley, I said to her, "Oh, my dear! what was that wretch saying to you?"—"What wretch?" says she, quite sharp like. "Why, Captain Crowfoot," says I, "to be sure."—"What have you to say against Captain Crowfoot?" says she, quite scornful like. So I tumbled out all I had against him in one breath. She turned awful pale, and she shook from head to foot, but she was able for all that to say, "Indian servants are known liars, Mrs. Prendergast," says she, "and I don't believe one word of it all. But I'll ask him, the next time I see him."—"Do so, my dear," I said, not fearing for myself, for I knew he would not make any fuss that might bring the thing out into the air, and hoping that it might lead to a quarrel between them. And the next time I met her, Samuel—it was in the gallery that takes to the west turret, she passed me with a nod just, and a blush instead of a smile on her sweet face. And I didn't blame her, Samuel; but I knew that that villain had gotten a hold of her. And so I could only cry, and that I did. Things went on like this for some months. The captain came and went, stopping a week at a time. Then he stopped for a whole month, and this was in the first of the summer; and then he said he was ordered abroad again, and went away. But he didn't go abroad. He came again in the autumn for the shooting, and began to make up to Miss Oldcastle, who had grown a fine young woman by that time. And then Miss Wallis began to pine. The captain went away again. Before long I was certain that if ever young creature was in a consumption, she was; but she never said a word to me. How ever the poor thing got on with her work, I can't think, but she grew weaker and weaker. I took the best care of her she would let me, and contrived that she should have her meals in her own room; but something was between her and me that she never spoke a word about herself, and never alluded to the captain. By and by came the news that the captain and Miss Oldcastle were to be married in the spring. And Miss Wallis took to her bed after that; and my lady said she had never been of much use, and wanted to send her away. But Miss Oldcastle, who was far superior to any of the rest in her disposition, spoke up for her. She had been to ask me about her, and I told her the poor thing must go to a hospital if she was sent away, for she had ne'er a home to go to. And then she went to see the governess, poor thing! and spoke very kindly to her; but never a word would Miss Wallis answer; she only stared at her with great, big, wild-like eyes. And Miss Oldcastle thought she was out of her mind, and spoke of an asylum. But I said she hadn't long to live, and if she would get my lady her mother to consent to take no notice, I would take all the care and trouble of her. And she promised, and the poor thing was left alone. I began to think myself her mind must be going, for not a word would she speak, even to me, though every moment I could

spare I was up with her in her room. Only I was forced to be careful not to be out of the way when my lady wanted me, for that would have tied me more. At length one day, as I was settling her pillow for her, she all at once threw her arms about my neck, and burst into a terrible fit of crying. She sobbed and panted for breath so dreadfully, that I put my arms round her and lifted her up to give her relief; and when I laid her down again, I whispered in her ear, "I know now, my dear. I'll do all I can for you." She caught hold of my hand and held it to her lips, and then to her bosom, and cried again, but more quietly, and all was right between us once more. It was well for her, poor thing, that she could go to her bed. And I said to myself, "Nobody need ever know about it; and nobody ever shall if I can help it." To tell the truth, my hope was that she would die before there was any need for further concealment. But people in that condition seldom die, they say, till all is over; and so she lived on and on, though plainly getting weaker and weaker.—At the captain's next visit, the wedding-day was fixed. And after that a circumstance came about that made me uneasy. A Hindoo servant —the captain called him his *nigger* always—had been constantly in attendance upon him. I never could abide the snake-look of the fellow, nor the noiseless way he went about the house. But this time the captain had a Hindoo woman with him as well. He said that his man had fallen in with her in London; that he had known her before; that she had come home as nurse with an English family, and it would be very nice for his wife to take her back with her to India, if she could only give her house-room, and make her useful till after the wedding. This was easily arranged, and he went away to return in three weeks, when the wedding was to take place. Meantime poor Emily grew fast worse, and how she held out with that terrible cough of hers I never could understand —and spitting blood, too, every other hour or so, though not very much. And now, to my great trouble, with the preparations for the wedding, I could see yet less of her than before; and when Miss Oldcastle sent the Hindoo to ask me if she might not sit in the room with the poor girl, I did not know how to object, though I did not at all like her being there. I felt a great mistrust of the woman somehow or other. I never did like blacks, and I never shall. So she went, and sat by her, and waited on her very kindly—at least poor Emily said so. I called her Emily because she had begged me, that she might feel as if her mother were with her, and she was a child again. I had tried before to find out from her when greater care would be necessary, but she couldn't tell me anything. I doubted even if she understood me. I longed to have the wedding over that I might get rid of the black woman, and have time to take her place, and get everything prepared. The captain arrived, and his man with him. And twice I came upon the two blacks in close conversation. —Well, the wedding-day came. The people went to church: and while they were there a terrible storm of wind and snow came on, such that the horses would hardly face it. The captain was going to take his bride home to his father, Sir Giles's; but, short as the distance was, before the time came the storm got so dreadful that no one could think of leaving the house that night. The wind blew for all the world just as it blows this night, only it was snow in its mouth, and not rain. Carriage and horses and all would have been blown off the road for certain. It did blow, to be sure! After dinner was over and the ladies were gone to the drawing-room, and the gentlemen had been sitting over their wine for some time, the butler, William Weir—an honest man, whose wife lived at the lodge—came to my room looking scared. "Lawks, William!" says I,' said my aunt, sir, "what ever is the matter with you?"—"Well, Mrs. Prendergast!" says he, and said no more. "Lawks, William," says I, "speak out."—"Well," says he, "Mrs. Prendergast, it's a strange wedding, it is! There's the ladies all alone in the withdrawing-room, and there's the gentlemen calling for more wine, and cursing and swearing that it's awful to hear. It's my belief that swords 'll be drawn afore long."—"Tut!" says I, "William, it'll come the sooner if you don't give them what they want. Go and get it as fast as you can."—"I don't a'most like goin' down them stairs alone, in sich a night, ma'am," says he. "Would you mind coming with me?"—"Dear me, William," says I, "a pretty story to tell your wife"— she was my own half-sister, and younger than me— "a pretty story to tell your wife, that you wanted an old body like me to go and take care of you in your own cellar," says I. "But I'll go with you, if you like; for, to tell the truth, it's a terrible night." And so down we went, and brought up six bottles more of the best port. And I really didn't wonder, when I was down there, and heard the dull roar of the wind against the rock below, that William didn't much like to go alone.—When he went back with the wine, the captain said, "William, what kept you so long? Mr. Centlivre says that you were afraid to go down into the cellar." Now, wasn't that odd, for it was a real fact? Before William could reply, Sir Giles said, "A man might well be afraid to go anywhere alone in a night like this." Whereupon the captain cried, with an oath, that he would go down the underground stair, and into every vault on the way, for the wager of a guinea. And there the matter, according to William, dropped, for the fresh wine was put on the table. But after they had drunk the most of it—the captain, according to William, drinking less than usual—it was brought up again, he couldn't tell by which of them. And in five minutes after, they were all at my door, demanding the key of the room at the top of the stair. I was just going up to see poor Emily when I heard the noise of their unsteady feet coming along the passage to my door; and I gave the captain the key at once, wishing with all my heart he might get a good fright for his pains. He took a jug with him, too, to bring some water up from the well, as a proof he had been down. The rest of the gentlemen went with him into the little cellar-room; but they wouldn't stop there till he came up again, they said it was so cold. They all came into my room, where they talked as gentlemen wouldn't do if the wine hadn't

got uppermost. It was some time before the captain returned. It's a good way down and back. When he came in at last, he looked as if he had got the fright I wished him, he had such a scared look. The candle in his lantern was out, and there was no water in the jug. "There's your guinea, Centlivre," says he, throwing it on the table. "You needn't ask me any questions, for I won't answer one of them."—"Captain," says I, as he turned to leave the room, and the other gentlemen rose to follow him, "I'll just hang up the key again."—"By all means," says he. "Where is it, then?" says I. He started and made as if he searched his pockets all over for it. "I must have dropped it," says he; "but it's of no consequence; you can send William to look for it in the morning. It can't be lost, you know."—"Very well, Captain," said I. But I didn't like being without the key, because of course he hadn't locked the door, and that part of the house has a bad name, and no wonder. It wasn't exactly pleasant to have the door left open. All this time I couldn't get to see how Emily was. As often as I looked from my window, I saw her light in the old west turret out there, Samuel. You know the room where the bed is still. The rain and the wind will be blowing right through it to-night. That's the bed you were born upon, Samuel.'—It's all gone now, sir, turret and all, like a good deal more about the old place; but there's a story about that turret afterwards, only I mustn't try to tell you two things at once.—'Now I had told the Indian woman that if anything happened, if she was worse, or wanted to see me, she must put the candle on the right side of the window, and I should always be looking out, and would come directly, whoever might wait. For I was expecting you some time soon, and nobody knew anything about when you might come. But there the blind continued drawn down as before. So I thought all was going on right. And what with the storm keeping Sir Giles and so many more that would have gone home that night, there was no end of work, and some contrivance necessary, I can tell you, to get them all bedded for the night, for we were nothing too well provided with blankets and linen in the house. There was always more room than money in it. So it was past twelve o'clock before I had a minute to myself, and that was only after they had all gone to bed—the bride and bridegroom in the crimson chamber of course. Well, at last I crept quietly into Emily's room. I ought to have told you that I had not let her know anything about the wedding being that day, and had enjoined the heathen woman not to say a word; for I thought she might as well die without hearing about it. But I believe the vile wretch did tell her. When I opened the room door, there was no light there. I spoke, but no one answered. I had my own candle in my hand, but it had been blown out as I came up the stair. I turned and ran along the corridor to reach the main stair, which was the nearest way to my room, when all at once I heard such a shriek from the crimson chamber as I never heard in my life. It made me all creep like worms. And in a moment doors and doors were opened, and lights came out, everybody looking terrified; and what with drink, and horror, and sleep, some of the gentlemen were awful to look at. And the door of the crimson chamber opened too, and the captain appeared in his dressing-gown, bawling out to know what was the matter; though I'm certain, to this day, the cry did come from that room, and that he knew more about it than any one else did. As soon as I got a light, however, which I did from Sir Giles's candle, I left them to settle it amongst them, and ran back to the west turret. When I entered the room, there was my dear girl lying white and motionless. There could be no doubt a baby had been born, but no baby was to be seen. I rushed to the bed; but though she was still warm, your poor mother was quite dead. There was no use in thinking about helping her; but what could have become of the child? As if by a light in my mind, I saw it all. I rushed down to my room, got my lantern, and, without waiting to be afraid, ran to the underground stairs, where I actually found the door standing open. I had not gone down more than three turnings, when I thought I heard a cry, and I sped faster still. And just about half-way down, there lay a bundle in a blanket. And how ever you got over the state I found you in, Samuel, I can't think. But I caught you up as you was, and ran to my own room with you; and I locked the door, and there being a kettle on the fire, and some conveniences in the place, I did the best for you I could. For the breath wasn't out of you, though it well might have been. And then I laid you before the fire, and by that time you had begun to cry a little, to my great pleasure. And then I got a blanket off my bed, and wrapt you up in it; and, the storm being abated by this time, made the best of my way with you through the snow to the lodge, where William's wife lived. It was not so far off then as it is now. But in the midst of my trouble the silly body did make me laugh when he opened the door to me, and saw the bundle in my arms. "Mrs. Prendergast," says he, "I didn't expect it of you."—"Hold your tongue," I said. "You would never have talked such nonsense if you had had the grace to have any of your own," says I. And with that I into the bed-room and shut the door, and left him out there in his shirt. My sister and I soon got everything arranged, for there was no time to lose. And before morning I had all made tidy, and your poor mother lying as sweet a corpse as ever angel saw. And no one could say a word against her. And it's my belief that that villain made her believe somehow or other that she was as good as married to him. She was buried down there in the churchyard, close by the vestry-door,' said my aunt, sir; and all of our family have been buried there ever since, my son Tom's wife among them, sir."

"But what was that cry in the house?" I asked. "And what became of the black woman?"

"The woman was never seen again in our quarter. And what the cry was my aunt never would say. She seemed to know though; notwithstanding, as she said, that Captain and Mrs. Crowfoot denied all knowledge of it. But the lady looked dreadful, she said, and never was well again, and died at the birth of

her first child. That was the present Mrs. Oldcastle's father, sir."

"But why should the woman have left you on the stair, instead of drowning you in the well at the bottom?"

"My aunt evidently thought there was some mystery about that as well as the other, for she had no doubt about the woman's intention. But all she would ever say concerning it was, 'The key was never found, Samuel. You see I had to get a new one made.' And she pointed to where it hung on the wall. 'But that doesn't look new now,' she would say. 'The lock was very hard to fit again.' And so you see, sir, I was brought up as her nephew, though people were surprised, no doubt, that William Weir's wife should have a child, and nobody knew she was expecting.—Well, with all the reports of the captain's money, none of it showed in this old place, which from that day began, as it were, to crumble away. There's been little repair done upon it since then. If it hadn't been a well-built place to begin with, it wouldn't be standing now, sir. But it's a very different place, I can tell you. Why, all behind was a garden with terraces, and fruit trees, and gay flowers, to no end. I remember it as well as yesterday; nay, a great deal better, for the matter of that. For I don't remember yesterday well at all, sir."

I have tried a little to tell the story as he told it. But I am aware that I have succeeded very badly; for I am not like my friend in London, who, I verily believe, could give you an exact representation of any dialect he ever heard. I wish I had been able to give a little more of the form of the old man's speech: all I have been able to do is to show a difference from my own way of telling a story. But in the main, I think, I have reported it correctly. I believe if the old man was as correct in representing his aunt's account, the story is very little altered between us.

But why should I tell such a story at all?

I am willing to allow, at once, that I have very likely given it more room than it deserves in these poor Annals of mine; but the reason why I tell it at all is simply this, that, as it came from the old man's lips, it interested me greatly. It certainly did not produce the effect I had hoped to gain from an interview with him, namely a *reduction to the common and present.* For all this ancient tale tended to keep up the sense of distance between my day's experience at the Hall and the work I had to do amongst my cottagers and tradespeople. Indeed it came very strangely upon that experience.

"But surely you did not believe such an extravagant tale? The old man was in his dotage, to begin with."

Had the old man been in his dotage, which he was not, my answer would have been a more triumphant one. For when was dotage consistently and imaginatively inventive? But why should I not believe the story? There are people who can never believe anything that is not (I do not say merely in accordance with their own character, but) in accordance with the particular mood they may happen to be in at the time it is presented to them. They know nothing of human nature beyond their own immediate preference at the moment for port or sherry, for vice or virtue. To tell me there could not be a man so lost to shame, if to rectitude, as Captain Crowfoot, is simply to talk nonsense. Nay, gentle reader, if you—and let me suppose I address a lady—if you will give yourself up for thirty years to doing just whatever your lowest self and not your best self may like, I will warrant you capable, by the end of that time, of child-murder at least. I do not think the descent to Avernus is always easy; but it is always possible. Many and many such a story was fact in old times; and human nature being the same still, though under different restraints, equally horrible things are constantly in progress towards the windows of the newspapers.

"But the whole tale has such a melo-dramatic air!"

That argument simply amounts to this: that, because such subjects are capable of being employed with great dramatic effect, and of being at the same time very badly represented, therefore they cannot take place in real life. But ask any physician of your acquaintance, whether a story is unlikely simply because it involves terrible things such as do not occur every day. The fact is, that such things, occurring monthly or yearly only, are more easily hidden away out of sight. Indeed we can have no sense of security for ourselves except in the knowledge that we are striving up and away, and therefore cannot be sinking nearer to the region of such awful possibilities.

Yet, as I said before, I am afraid I have given it too large a space in my narrative. Only it so forcibly reminded me at the time of the expression I could not understand upon Miss Oldcastle's face, and since then has been so often recalled by circumstances and events, that I felt impelled to record it in full. And now I have done with it.

I left the old man with thanks for the kind reception he had given me, and walked home, revolving many things with which I shall not detain the attention of my reader. Indeed my thoughts were confused and troubled, and would ill bear analysis or record. I shut myself up in my study, and tried to read a sermon of Jeremy Taylor. But it would not do. I fell fast asleep over it at last, and woke refreshed.

VIII.

During the suffering which accompanied the disappointment at which I have already hinted, I did not think it inconsistent with the manly spirit in which I was resolved to endure it, to seek consolation from such a source as the New Testament—if mayhap consolation for such a trouble was to be found there. Whereupon, a little to my surprise, I discovered that I could not read the Epistles at all. For I did not then care an atom for the theological discussions in which I had been interested before, and for the sake of which I had read those epistles. Now that I was in trouble, what to me was that philosophical theology staring me in the face from out the sacred page? Ah! reader, do not misunderstand me. All reading of the Book is not reading of the Word. And many that are first shall be last and the last first. I know *now* that it was Jesus Christ and not

theology that filled the hearts of the men that wrote those epistles—Jesus Christ, the living, loving God-Man, whom I found—not in the Epistles, but in the Gospels. The Gospels contain what the Apostles preached—the Epistles what they wrote after the preaching. And until we understand the Gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ our brother-king—until we understand Him, until we have his Spirit, promised so freely to them that ask it—all the Epistles, the words of men who were full of Him, and wrote out of that fulness, who loved Him so utterly that by that very love they were lifted into the air of pure reason and right, and would die for Him, and did die for Him without two thoughts about it, in the very simplicity of *no choice*—the Letters, I say, of such men are to us a sealed book. Until we love the Lord so as to do what He tells us, we have no right to have an opinion about what one of those men meant; for all they wrote is about things beyond us. The simplest woman who tries not to judge her neighbour, or not to be anxious for the morrow, will better know what is best to know, than the best-read bishop without that one simple outgoing of his highest nature in the effort to do the will of Him who thus spoke.

But I have, as is too common with me, been led away by my feelings from the path to the object before me. What I wanted to say was this: that, although I could make nothing of the Epistles, could see no possibility of consolation for my distress springing from them, I found it altogether different when I tried the Gospel once more. Indeed it then took such a hold of me as it had never taken before. Only that is simply saying nothing. I found out that I had known nothing at all about it; that I had only a certain surface-knowledge, which tended rather to ignorance, because it fostered the delusion that I did know. Know that man, Christ Jesus! Ah! Lord, I would go through fire and water to sit the last at Thy table in Thy kingdom; but dare I say now I *know* Thee!—But Thou art the Gospel, for Thou art the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and I have found Thee the Gospel. For I found, as I read, that Thy very presence in my thoughts, not as the theologians show Thee, but as Thou showedst thyself to them who report Thee to us, smoothed the troubled waters of my spirit, so that, even while the storm lasted, I was able to walk upon them to go to Thee. And when those waters became clear, I most rejoiced in their clearness because they mirrored Thy form—because Thou wert there to my vision—the one Ideal, the perfect man, the God perfected as king of men by working out his Godhood in the work of man; revealing that God and man are one; that to serve God, a man must be partaker of the Divine nature; that for a man's work to be done thoroughly, God must come and do it first himself; that to help men, He must be what He is—man in God, God in man—visibly before their eyes, or to the hearing of their ears. So much I saw.

And therefore, when I was once more in a position to help my fellows, what could I want to give them but that which was the very bread and water of life to me—the Saviour himself? And how was I to do this?—By trying to represent the man in all the simplicity of his life, of his sayings and doings, of his refusals to say or do.—I took the story from the beginning, and told them about the Baby; trying to make the fathers and mothers, and all whose love for children supplied the lack of fatherhood and motherhood, feel that it was a real baby-boy. And I followed the life on and on, trying to show them how He felt, as far as one might dare to touch such sacred things, when He did so and so, or said so and so; and what his relation to his father and mother and brothers and sisters was, and to the different kinds of people who came about Him. And I tried to show them what his sayings meant, as far as I understood them myself; and where I could not understand them I just told them so, and said I hoped for more light by and by to enable me to understand them; telling them that that hope was a sharp goad to my resolution, driving me on to do my duty, because I knew that only as I did my duty would light go up in my heart, making me wise to understand the precious words of my Lord. And I told them that if they would try to do their duty, they would find more understanding from that than from any explanation I could give them.

And so I went on from Sunday to Sunday. And the number of people that slept grew less and less, until at last it was reduced to the churchwarden, Mr. Brownrigg, and an old washerwoman, who, poor thing, stood so much all the week, that sitting down with her was like going to bed, and she never could do it, as she told me, without going to sleep. I therefore called upon her every Monday morning, and had five minutes' chat with her as she stood at her wash-tub, wishing to make up to her for her drowsiness; and thinking that if I could once get her interested in any thing, she might be able to keep awake a little while at the beginning of the sermon; for she gave me no chance of interesting her on Sundays—going fast asleep the moment I stood up to preach. I never got so far as that, however; and the only fact that showed me I had made any impression upon her, beyond the pleasure she always manifested when I appeared on the Monday, was, that, whereas all my linen had been very badly washed at first, a decided improvement took place after a while, beginning with my surplice and bands, and gradually extending itself to my shirts and handkerchiefs; till even Mrs. Pearson was unable to find any fault with the poor old sleepy woman's work. For Mr. Brownrigg, I do not believe the sense of any one sentence I ever uttered, down to the day of his death, entered into his brain, not to say mind or heart. With regard to him, and millions besides, I am more than happy to obey my Lord's command, and not judge.

But it was not long either before my congregations began to improve, whatever might be the cause. I could not help hoping that it was really because they liked to hear the Gospel, that is, the good news about Christ himself. And I always made use of the knowledge I had of my individual hearers, to say what I thought would do them good. Not that I ever preached *at* anybody; I only sought to explain the principles of things in which I knew action of some sort was demanded from them. For I remembered how our Lord's sermon against covetousness, with the parable of the rich man with the little barn, had for

its occasion the request of a man that our Lord would interfere to make his brother share with him; which He declined to do, but gave both brothers a lesson such as, if they wished to do what was right, would help them to see clearly what was the right thing to do in this and every such matter. Clear the mind's eye, by washing away the covetousness, and the whole nature would be full of light, and the right walk would speedily follow.

Before long, likewise, I was as sure of seeing the pale face of Thomas Weir perched, like that of a man beheaded for treason, upon the apex of the gablet of the old tomb, as I was of hearing the wonderful playing of that husky old organ, of which I have spoken once before. I continued to pay him a visit every now and then; and I assure you, never was the attempt to be thoroughly honest towards a man better understood or more appreciated than my attempt was by the *atheistical* carpenter. The man was no more an atheist than David was when he saw the wicked spreading like a green bay-tree and was troubled at the sight. He only wanted to see a God in whom he could trust. And if I succeeded at all in making him hope that there might be such a God, it is to me one of the most precious seals of my ministry.

But it was now getting very near Christmas, and there was one person whom I had never yet seen at church: that was Catherine Weir. I thought, at first, it could hardly be that she shrunk from being seen; for how then could she have taken to keeping a shop, where she must be at the beck of every one? I had several times gone and bought tobacco of her since that first occasion; and I had told my housekeeper to buy whatever she could from her, instead of going to the larger shop in the place; at which Mrs. Pearson had grumbled a good deal, saying how could the things be so good out of a poky shop like that? But I told her I did not care if the things were not quite as good; for it would be of more consequence to Catherine to have the custom, than it would be to me to have the one lump of sugar I put in my tea of a morning one shade or even two shades whiter. So I had contrived to keep up a kind of connection with her, although I saw that any attempt at conversation was so distasteful that it must do harm until something should have brought about a change in her feelings; though what feeling wanted changing, I could not at first tell. I came to the conclusion that she had been wronged grievously, and that this wrong operating on a nature similar to her father's, had drawn all her mind to brood over it. The world itself, the whole order of her life, everything about her, would seem then to have wronged her; and to speak to her of religion would only rouse her scorn, and make her feel as if God himself, if there were a God, had wronged her too. Evidently, likewise, she had that peculiarity of strong undeveloped natures, of being unable, once possessed by one set of thoughts, to get rid of it again, or to see anything except in the shadow of those thoughts. I had no doubt, however, at last, that she was ashamed of her position in the eyes of society, although a hitherto indomitable pride had upheld her to face it so far as was necessary to secure her independence; both of which—pride and shame—prevented her from appearing where it was unnecessary, and especially in church. I could do nothing more than wait for a favourable opportunity. I could invent no way of reaching her yet, for I had soon found that kindness to her boy was regarded rather in the light of an insult to her. I should have been greatly puzzled to account for his being such a sweet little fellow, had I not known that he was a great deal with his aunt and grandfather. A more attentive and devout worshipper was not in the congregation than that little boy.

Before going on to speak of perhaps the most remarkable of all my parishioners, whom I have just once mentioned I believe already, I should like to say that on three several occasions before Christmas I had seen Judy look grave. She was always quite well-behaved in church, though restless, as one might expect. But on these occasions she was not only attentive, but grave, as if she felt something or other. I will not mention what subjects I was upon at these times, because the mention of them would not, in the minds of my readers, at all harmonize with the only notion of Judy they can yet by possibility have.

For Mrs. Oldcastle, I never saw her change countenance or even expression at anything—I mean in church.

"THE BLACK CAMEL."

A FEW THOUGHTS FOR BEREAVED PARENTS.

When God sent us our little Edith, it was a time of darkness and of sorrow, and the smiles that welcomed her were something like the rays of sunshine breaking through a rift in the storm-clouds, and falling upon the drenched and dripping foliage. But they were very bright smiles nevertheless, just as the sunshine is, I think, all the brighter when it thus pierces the blackness and is reflected by a myriad raindrops. And wonderful was the comfort which that little baby brought us. There she lay; tiny and helpless; clinging to us and seeming to call us to exert ourselves for her; and yet she strengthened us, and as we looked at her we gained courage. Scarcely had she opened her dark blue eyes upon the world, before, on a cold foggy winter's night, we had to take her up and carry her away, we hardly knew whither—for still the clouds hung over us, and if all around us was dark, all before us was darker still. But, as we traversed our uncertain path, carrying our precious burden with us, she supported us more than we supported her, and seemed visibly to connect us with that care which we had so often been in danger of doubting.

After a while the storm passed away, and all around

us became as bright as it had previously been dark. Our home was very happy, but Edith seemed to produce for us more of that happiness than any other of the many blessings for which we had to be thankful.

Our Heavenly Father had given her to us as a star to cheer our darkness, but even now that the day had come she increased its radiance not a little.

She was soon able to run about and talk to us in her broken childish prattle, making herself easily understood, not only by us but by others who were perfect strangers to her. That she was surprisingly quick, intelligent, and affectionate, was not the mere verdict of parental fondness, but a matter of common remark with all who knew her. There was nothing fairy-like or etherial about her. She was a chubby, little, rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed, golden-haired child, full of rough antics, and not unfrequently displaying childish tempers; but there was a wonderful fascination about her, and her influence upon us was almost magical. Though unusually quick, she was in no respect precocious, but thoroughly a child; and yet somehow we seemed to learn much from her, and to be made better and more trustful and hopeful by her presence. Parents teach children much, but do not children teach parents a great deal more?

Nearly two years passed away. They were years of peace and prosperity unmarked by any very notable incident. Meanwhile our little one was becoming more and more firmly bound to our hearts until we wondered how we had lived before she was given to us, and scarcely dared to ask how we should live if she were taken from us.

The spring had come with all its freshness, and brightness, and promise, and for some weeks we had been meditating a sojourn amongst the mountains of North Wales. All our preparations were made, our luggage packed, and the day came for our departure, but on the morning of that day we were roused earlier than usual: Edith had been very restless all night, and did not seem well.

The medical man, however, said that the indisposition was only very slight, and that in a few days she would be quite well again. But our hearts told us he was wrong; and so it proved. She became gradually worse during the day; and when, in answer to our further anxious summons, the doctor came again in the evening, he told us that there was no hope. The fatal croup had got so firm a hold of our little darling, that no earthly power could release her; she would continue to grow worse, and in a few hours must inevitably die.

Years have elapsed since that dreadful sentence fell upon my ears; but even now, as I think of it, I experience something of the thrill of agony which the terrible words caused at first. So sudden!—so overwhelming! In the morning, "no fear;" at night, "no hope."

I have often heard the Turkish proverb, "The Black Camel kneels at every man's door;" but on this night, for the first time, I seemed to hear his steady tramp in the distance approaching my dwelling. The night passed slowly on; the little sufferer tossed about in our arms or upon her bed, unable to remain at rest for more than a few seconds, and in the intense and lingering agony of her disease casting such appealing looks to us for the help which she could no longer ask, and which she seemed to think we ought to give, as rent our hearts with far greater pain than even the thought of losing her occasioned. And with every moan and every convulsion of the features there came the harrowing conviction that the worst had not yet come, and that the destroyer was but tightening his grasp upon our precious child; and ever that same steady tramp fell upon my ear with increasing distinctness. Nearer and nearer the Black Camel came, but at length we even became impatient that he approached no quicker. So heartrending were our baby's sufferings, that even *we*, who on the previous morning had thought life almost impossible without her—we, who feared only that we had idolised her, longed for her release; and were never so much disposed to doubt our Father's care as when her agony was thus protracted. At long last it came. The poor little face turned cold and pallid; the eyes, from whose dark blue depths so much affection had beamed, became fixed and glassy; the once ruby lips lost all their colour; the breathing became fainter; and, just as the calm grey dawn of the summer's morning looked into our sorrowful chamber, a last gentle sigh passed through those pallid lips, and our little Edith was in Heaven. The Black Camel knelt at our door for a moment, and, taking up his precious burden, passed on into the dim and distant land, whither so many of our treasures have been carried out of our sight. Our child was given to us for awhile, just when our need was greatest; but, having cheered our sorrow, as perhaps only such a child could have cheered us, and having strengthened our faith in the Everlasting Love, her work here was done, though it hardly seemed begun, and He who gave her to us called her to something higher and nobler far, which even such a one was, by his grace and mercy, fitted for.

> "He would have infant trebles ringing
> The glories of the great I AM;
> He would have childish voices singing
> The hallelujahs of the Lamb."

There is nothing out of the common way in this simple recital of our first loss. No doubt almost every one who reads it could tell a similar story, for the proverb is true enough, "The Black Camel kneels at every man's door," but the purpose I have at present before me is to remind such that there is more in the proverb than at first sight appears.

No doubt the notion which the Turks have, and which generally obtains, is that the Black Camel kneels to take up and bear away as his burden what is most precious to us. Such, and such alone was my feeling when our little girl was taken from us; but I have lived some years since then, and have lived to learn that there is a deeper meaning in the saying, worth far more than that which lies on the surface.

The Black Camel takes away our treasure; but when he kneels at our door, *does he not many a time leave behind a still greater treasure?*

What a blank we felt when Edith was no longer

visibly present with us. How our hearts sank as we went to one spot after another which had become associated with her, and found all vacant and still; when at every turn a chair, a toy, or some little article of dress attracted our notice. The little hat, beneath which we could still almost see the flashing of her merry blue eyes. The tiny boots which she had worn for the first time, and which she showed us with so much pride the very day before her death. The drinking cup from which alone she would allow her poor parched lips to be moistened during the protracted agony of the last hours. The corals which had encircled the bonnie neck, and the familiar frocks and pinafores which only seemed to be laid aside whilst she slept, to be put on again when she should presently awake. All brought fresh tears to our eyes, and made the sense of loss weigh more heavily upon our hearts. Oh! how desolate our home seemed for a while.

But at length we became sensible that though the Black Camel had taken what was so precious, he had left behind what was not less so. In one sense, we seemed even to have more of Edith than we had before. Her bodily presence was gone, and yet we had reason to acknowledge with deep thankfulness how true are the words spoken by a great teacher of our day who knows well what he says—"the children whom God brings up for us are more to us than those we bring up for ourselves; the cradle empty blesses us more than the cradle filled." Our child did not appear to be far far away from us in an unknown land. It was as though the spirit, freed from the material body, got nearer to our spirit, and exerted upon us an influence such as was not possible before. It might be fancy, but it was a fancy which wrought for us advantages which were anything but fanciful. Perhaps she was amongst the ministering spirits commissioned from our Father. A helpless little baby when she died, but now gifted with a power to do for us far more than we could ever do for her.

Often the thought of Edith has checked wrong feeling—given fervency to our prayers—power to our faith, and reality to the spiritual world as the thought of no *living* child could do. She kept us from doubting our Father's care when she travelled with us in the first winter of her life, but more so since she has gone to her home in heaven as we have travelled the rough wilderness path without her. The Father who has *our child* in his keeping will surely take care of us. The very fact that He has taken her to his own bosom strengthens our confidence in his willingness to befriend *us*. For we have always felt that God removed her, not only because He loved *her*, but because He loved *us*. We were sure that He *gave* her to us in his love, and when she died we had no thought that the gift had been withdrawn in anger, but in the same love as prompted Him to send it.

And then, was it not worth something to have our thoughts drawn heavenward, as they were drawn by our sainted child? So much of our thought and affection had been centred in her; and when she was called away, that thought and affection followed her to the better world.

A little while before her death, we had heard a story which has ever since had for us a special significance. Some years ago a party of friends were enjoying, on a fine summer's day, a boating excursion upon one of our inland lakes. Having gone a certain distance, one young lady declined to go further, saying that she would remain on one of the islands which studded the lake. She was therefore left; but the party remained away longer than they intended, and, a thick fog coming on, they were much afraid of losing her. At last, however, her clear voice was heard: "Come this way, father—come this way." The young lady is now in heaven; but still very often does her father hear the words repeated from the upper sanctuary, "Come this way, father—come this way."

Thus did we hear our little Edith calling to us scores of times from different parts of the house; still the sound rings in our ears, frequently saving us from being too much absorbed with the visible present; and I confidently look forward to hearing it one day when the sights of earth grow dim, and its sounds dull, and when it will be especially cheering to recognise the voice of my own child amongst the many that join to call from the heights of immortality.

Then further the Black Camel bore away our treasure, but it was *to a place of greater safety*. We have now a much more certain prospect of possessing that treasure eternally than we should have had if it had remained with us upon earth.

It is undoubtedly a great joy to have our children clustering around us here, but the pavilion of our love is not safe from the entrance of the tempter, and all our strength cannot shield them from those influences which so frequently pervert the fairest dispositions. We have so often seen early promise end in shame and sorrow, that we cannot help sometimes shuddering to think what *may* become of the most lovely of our children.

In more than the one case of which we have all heard, the angelic countenance of the child, from which the light of truth and affection has shone, and which the artist has enthusiastically painted and hung up in his studio as the type of holy innocence, has in a few short years, by the terrible alchemy of vice, been so transformed as to furnish for the same artist a hideous impersonation of guilt.

And so the infant that has been fondled upon the lap, the joy and hope of its parents, and the admiration of all—the very light of the home, and seemingly essential to its happiness—has, despite all affectionate and tender care, and wise counsel and holy example, developed into a being of such depravity as to be a curse to his family, wringing with unutterable woe the hearts that were once so proud of him; and they have even mourned that he was not removed while yet in his innocence.

It is very hard to have a child taken from our arms just when all its attractions are unfolding, and our whole being is wrapped up in it—but it is far more terrible to have a child spared to us until we cannot help but see that it is lost for ever. In the one case we have the confident hope of everlasting reunion,—in the other, we are certain that, should we

enter heaven ourselves, we must leave our child behind us for ever in the outer darkness and the torments of the lost.

The first strong consolation which came over our spirits, calming their agitation as the Saviour's "Peace, be still," calmed the storm upon the lake, softly whispered into our ears as by the Divine Spirit himself almost at the very moment when our darling ceased to breathe, was the words—

"Safe, safe at home, where the rude tempter comes not."

Many a time now, as we sail over this tempestuous sea of life, carrying our other treasures with us and trembling again and again lest the dashing waves of temptation should sweep them away, and they should be submerged in the billows and lost to us *for ever*, it is very sweet to look up to our Father's house and think, we have at least one child *safe there*, the wildest storm cannot reach *her*, and when we arrive on that peaceful shore, *she* will be ours for ever. The transformation we shall behold in her will not be that of the pure and gentle child into the hardened and repulsive sinner, but into the glorious angelic being, radiant even amidst the radiance of heaven—fit to occupy a place with those whose white robes flash beneath the dazzling light which beams from the Throne.

So long then as these things are so, is it not rather a matter for thankfulness that God has thus made our treasure *secure* for us? Is it not worth our while to give up resignedly and even thankfully the *temporary* possession of it, or rather the temporary *sight* of it (for, as I have said, we still feel it to be ours), and especially considering that we have in return for our privation the honour of feeling that one has taken her place *in our name*, in the glorious assembly of the redeemed? In the knowledge of that fact there is, too, an incentive to spiritual diligence which is a treasure greater even than the honour. Shall our Edith be the *only* one bearing our name in that glorious host? Shall she be there, and they from whom she took the name be absent!

My reader, the Black Camel has knelt at *your* door. I think I may fairly presume this, if you have read so far, for these are but common-place words, very trite doubtless to those who do not need them, as water is insipid to those who are not thirsty; and you have only read on line after line hoping to find some comfort and help for yourself. The treasures carried from your home (for the sable visitant has perhaps been more than once) were, I doubt not, quite as precious to you as was my little Edith to me. I hope you have also found that treasures have been left with you for which you do not feel that you have paid too dearly. Whether this is so or not, to a large extent depends upon yourself.

The greatest treasures are sometimes within our grasp and we do not know it; and *because* we do not know it we allow them to pass away and we lose them. The angel comes, but we see in him only a stranger, and a stranger in no very winsome guise, and so we neglect to entertain him, and he who might have filled our home with blessing passes out of it dishonoured, taking back with him the gift he would fain have left. Oh! how much richer we should all have been if we had only had the patience or the penetration to look beyond the dress, or even the tones and manner of our visitors, and to discover their nature and their mission.

Never was camel burdened with gems and spices and costly merchandize so richly laden as the Black Camel which God sends to every man's door! And yet, because he comes with a demand for some of *our* treasure, we shut our eyes to the good which he brings us, and often petulantly refuse to have it.

Let us be wiser for the future, and as we let him carry away out of our sight for a while our precious possessions, let us gratefully accept those gifts of unutterable value which only such a messenger could bring, and which this messenger leaves only with those who are prepared to receive them.

There is another thought which must not escape us. We have none of us done with this Black Camel yet. At least *once* more he is certain to come, kneeling at our door for the last time, no more to take away our household gods, but to take *ourselves*, either *from* our treasures or *to* our treasures. If he has brought us nothing worth the having when on former occasions he has visited us, then, he will take us for ever *from* our treasures when he comes for the last time.

If the removal of our loved ones from our side has not done great things for us—giving us more meekness and submission—weaning us from the world—strengthening our faith in unchanging love—making the spirit world more real to us, and quickening our diligence in seeking for the inheritance of the saints; it must have hardened and soured us, and the gulf between us and our sainted friends must have been widened by every bereavement, so that at length the Black Camel will come to carry us for ever out of their reach, and the only communication coming to us from their blessed habitation, will be "They which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence."

Let you and me, then, who are weeping because our children are not, seek in all lowliness and meekness to take the good things which our Father would send us through our sorrows, and as the Black Camel comes from time to time to our door he will greatly enrich and not impoverish us; and when he halts at our dwelling for the last time, it will be to bear us home where our loved ones are gathered, waiting for us, and where

"Hand in hand firm linked at last,
And heart with heart enfolded all;
We'll smile upon the troubled past,
And wonder why we wept at all."

W. C. P.

THE BEST WAY OF DOING BUSINESS.

BY A BUSINESS MAN.

Mr. Middlewood was a well-to-do merchant, living somewhere about Battersea. Those who were well acquainted with him, and especially his fellow-merchants in the City, did not marvel at his prosperity, for they knew him to be a thorough "business man," who never came too late for a sale, nor too early for an offer. He was one of those rare men who never occupy themselves with two things at a time; who, when it is time to act do not talk, and when it is time to talk, have their words ready at once. He was also a thoroughly honest man, who never applied to deception for a profit or to falsehood for a favour. In short, he was one of the most respected merchants in the City; and a father who wanted his son to learn business thoroughly, was everywhere congratulated if he succeeded in getting a situation for him at Middlewood's.

Adversity, which had always passed the door of his office in Old Broad Street, had more than once entered the door of his house at Battersea. In the course of six years he lost his only child and his wife, and at the age of thirty he was alone in his home with the saddened heart of a mourning father and widower. He had been very happy with his young wife, though it was said that she was not so happy with him. To tell the truth, Mr. Middlewood's temper was not one of the best. He had no control of his passions, indomitable as was his desire for order. Grasping everything that came under his management, whether at home or at his office, with an iron hand, he suffered no contradiction whatever, not even from his wife, and, cordially as he loved her, yet she had to endure many a frown and bitter word, if only the slightest irregularity happened to occur in her household. In Old Broad Street he would remind his clerks that "his office was not a family parlour." But at Battersea he forgot too often that a family parlour is not an office either.

Two years had now elapsed since the death of his wife. He kept his household in the same state in which she left it—four servants, under the management of a middle-aged housekeeper whom he was firmly attached to, because she had nursed his beloved deceased ones and knew how to put up with his crotchets. Yet scarcely a day elapsed that his deep bass voice was not heard thundering through the house or in the garden, because tea was served up one minute behind time, or because the cat was allowed to slip through the garden door.

For all that, Mr. Middlewood was known as a supporter of every good cause. He was a regular attendant at church, and during his wife's lifetime family worship had been held every evening punctually at nine, with the whole household, on which occasions he always read the lesson and his wife the prayers. After his wife's death this good custom was left off, because he was often out in the evening and business required him to start too early in the morning to allow of even so much as a quarter of an hour's family devotion either before or after breakfast. Missions and charities always found in him a liberal contributor, but he never accepted a call to be a member of any Board or Committee because his time was too much taken up to allow him to give his attention to the management of concerns not his own. He was no friend of evening parties, theatres, concerts, and the like—not because he saw anything wrong in these recreations themselves, but because he had found they made him less fit for his work on the next day; but what he was very fond of was a game at chess with his next-door neighbour, Mr. Bryant, a retired banker of sixty, at whose house he spent many an evening in the week, and with whom he had many a friendly chat across the low stone wall that separated their gardens.

One fine summer afternoon, a little before sunset, Mr. Middlewood was walking in his garden, and his stentorian voice made the walls ring, while, in an angry tone, he addressed a servant, who was standing at a distance in the doorway of the kitchen. I forget what it was about, but it was a trifle at any rate. It was curious to see the contrast between poor Mary and her master, for while she stood motionless like a pillar, and pale as a sheet, his arms were going like the wings of a windmill, and his face was red as a lobster. Mr. Bryant, the banker, happened just then to be in his garden enjoying his shrubs and flowers. This was not the first time he had witnessed his neighbour's talent for scolding his servants. He thought there was a great deal of noise for nothing, and that the sooner a stop was put to it the better.

"Good evening, Mr. Middlewood. And what do you say now that Richmond is taken!"

The effect which these words, uttered in a gentle voice, produced was similar to that which is experienced when a carriage, rattling in full speed over a rough pavement, suddenly dashes upon a sandy road. The sunshine of a kind smile at once pierced through the clouds that darkened the merchant's face. He turned towards his friend, and away slipped poor Mary back into the kitchen, to shake off the shower which this time it had been her turn to pass through.

"Ah, Mr. Bryant!" he cried, "How do you do? Why, isn't it splendid! *Now* the blacks are free once and for ever. That cursed thing slavery will soon be swept off the face of the earth now."

"At least from the States," was the answer; "but whether there will be fewer slaves is another question. To obtain freedom is a great thing, but to abuse it is worse than slavery itself."

"Oh, the blacks will learn to use it well," cried Mr. Middlewood.

"I hope so, but it seems not to be a very easy thing to learn. I know people who, from their childhood, and for upwards of twenty, thirty years, have lived in freedom, and yet have not learnt to use

it well. I believe it is one of the hardest of lessons, Mr. Middlewood."

Now Mr. Middlewood knew from experience that when his neighbour closed a sentence with his name, there was something in it that regarded himself, and he had always found that that "something" was a good thing, which it was as well for him to take notice of. Nor was it so very difficult for him this time to guess what it might be, for he had felt a little ashamed of himself when seen by Mr. Bryant squabbling with the servant.

"I believe I know what you mean," he said, passing his hand over his face. "There are masters *within*, sir, from whom it is not so easy to escape as from the masters *without*."

"Just so; and yet, until those within are completely subdued, no one can be called truly free. Man's heart is a fortress much stronger than Richmond. There is but one Conqueror who is mighty to take it, and not until He has taken it are its slaves free."

"So they *ought* to be at least," quoth Mr. Middlewood, with an air of doubt; "but how many good men and real Christians are there not whose temper often gets the better of them?"

"I believe so, but there are not many Christians who, after having allowed Christ to take the fortress of their heart, do not keep one or two quarters shut against Him. Moreover, many people are called Christians who have only allowed the outworks to be taken. Where Christ has taken possession of the *whole* man, there *must* be true liberty, for He is the Truth. As it is written: 'The truth shall make you free.' And again: 'If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.'"

"But do you mean to say that a man who is angry cannot be a Christian?"

"By no means. We read of the Lord himself that one time He 'looked round about with anger,' and the Apostle says, 'Be ye angry;' but he adds 'and sin not.' Instability, or weakness of character, is also a bad master in my opinion, and I am afraid that he too has many slaves. A man who never can turn angry with the evil cannot be delighted with the good either. But what I mean to say is, that, if angry, we ought to be masters of the mood, and not its bondsmen. And I believe that anger is our master, when there is plenty without to rouse it and nothing within to check it. Now where Christ dwells in the heart there is a power within stronger than all anger, even the fiercest. For though Christ may be angry sometimes, yet anger is not his essence but love. 'Learn of me,' He said, 'for I am meek and lowly in heart.'"

Mr. Middlewood did not feel all the force of these observations of his neighbour, but the little which he did feel was sufficient to make him ponder for a moment or two.

"Well," he said, after a pause, "it appears to me after all that you are overdoing Christianity a little, Mr. Bryant. I know very well that I am not a perfect man, but I believe I am a Christian at any rate. Nor do I give proofs to the contrary in my conduct, as far as I am aware. I do my duty during the week, as much as is in my power, and while giving to Cæsar what is Cæsar's, I give to God what is God's on Sunday, and on many other occasions. But if *your* way of looking at religion is the only true one, I am no Christian at all, notwithstanding all that. For if I understand you rightly, your opinion is that he only is a true Christian who all the week, from Sunday morning till Saturday night, thinks of nothing else than Christ, so that not one moment can slip, in which any evil passion, such as anger for instance, can get the better of him. Now this is altogether impossible, in my opinion, unless one shuts himself up in a convent, like a monk. But it is quite absurd to expect such a continuous devotional state of mind in a man who has to spend eight hours a day behind his desk in a bustling office, which is like a bee-hive, and where he has to elbow his way through heaps of bills of lading, accounts, invoices, &c., till his head spins like a mill-wheel, and all the spirit threatens to go out of him. I wonder, indeed, that such a notion can be held by a man like you, who spent some forty years of your life in a brisk banking concern."

Mr. Bryant smiled.

"I don't recollect," answered he, "I ever said to you that we ought to do nothing else all the week but *think* of Christ, if by thinking you mean *meditating*. I know very well that no man can in that sense 'think' of church and at the same time talk to a broker, examine a bill of lading, or cast an account. But if 'thinking of Christ' is understood in the sense of feeling Christ's presence in one's soul, of longing for and rejoicing in Christ, I believe it is not only possible, but a fact, that many a Christian has thought of Him in that way from morning till evening, even in the midst of the most engaging occupations. The thought of Him brightened up their faces even in the most tedious labours, kept them in temper even in the most provoking emergencies, and consoled them in the most grievous disappointments."

"Nonsense!" cried Mr. Middlewood, "I don't believe a word of it. Yes, there may be such saints, but then it must be a poor business that of theirs! I say, Mr. Bryant, it is quite impossible to think of anything else than one's business, if one is to do that business well."

"All depends upon the disposition of one's heart," observed Mr. Bryant. "If the heart is full of the love of Christ, it cannot forget Him even in the most bustling office. You remember Keble's beautiful lines:—

> 'There are in the loud stunning tide
> Of human care and crime
> With whom the melodies abide
> Of th' everlasting chime—
> Who carry music in their heart
> Through dusky lane and wrangling mart;
> Plying their daily task with busier feet
> Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat.'

And," added Mr. Bryant, "I cannot see why a man must do a poor business because he loves a certain being with all his heart. But have you ever tried the experiment, Mr. Middlewood? Did you ever feel an intense love for Christ?"

There was a pause.

"Well I think I love Him," said Mr. Middlewood. "At least I don't see why I should not."

"Then *why* do you love Him?"

"Why! Why, of course, because He is the Saviour."

"But is He *your* Saviour?"

"What do you mean by that?"

"Do you regard yourself as saved by Him from sin and eternal perdition?"

"Of course I do."

"So you are sure you will go to heaven at last?"

"I hope so."

"Everybody hopes so. But are you *sure* of it, as every true Christian ought to be? You know Paul said, 'To me to die is gain.'"

Mr. Middlewood was silent.

"Ay," said Mr. Bryant, "here lies the fault, Mr. Middlewood. Unless one feels oneself saved for ever, Christ has not taken possession of one's heart. Nor can such a one think all the day of Christ, because, since heaven is not his, he clings to the world. You cannot rejoice in Christ behind your desk, if you do not sit there as a saved soul, expecting to see Him soon in the joy of heaven."

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Middlewood once more, shaking his head with an air of unbelief. "It *must* be poor business that is done in that way. One cannot possibly do two things at a time, without doing damage to either. To think of one thing and to attend to another—I say, Mr. Bryant, that is like looking up to the sky while shooting at a hare."

The conversation here was broken off by a message to say that somebody wanted to speak to Mr. Bryant. A few days had elapsed when one evening Mr. Middlewood entered Mr. Bryant's parlour with a shining face.

"Oh, I can see what you are coming to tell me," said Mr. Bryant. "May I congratulate you?"

"Yes, Isabella is mine!" exclaimed the happy lover. "To-day I received her consent!"

"May God's blessing rest upon your union!" said Mr. Bryant, cordially shaking hands with his friend.

"I thank you. This is one of the happiest days of my life, I assure you, after so much painful uncertainty!"

The two friends now sat down, this time not to have a game at chess, but to talk about the excellences of the future bride and the marriage that was in prospect. Mr. Bryant knew her well, for she was his brother's daughter.

A few days later Mr. Bryant called at Mr. Middlewood's office in the forenoon. He found him engaged in reading his letters.

"Isabella gave me this note for you this morning," said Mr. Bryant; "but there is no hurry about it. You may read your letters first. It is only about a tea party, I believe."

But to throw down the letter which he was just reading and to open the envelope which Mr. Bryant handed to him was the work of a moment.

"The dear girl!" he said, after having read her couple of lines. "Did you see her this morning?"

"Yes; she called on me herself."

"Is she well? She had a slight headache last night."

"Oh, she is better. Now, good-bye. I won't detain you."

"Stop a moment. Don't be in a hurry. I was thinking this morning about making her a present you know. I have been turning it over in my mind all the way in the omnibus, but I could not fix upon anything definite. But while I was reading this letter of Welgrove and Co.'s, the silk merchants, it occurred to me that a silk dress would perhaps be the best. What do you think of it? Eh?"

"Well, I have no time to talk about it just now," answered Mr. Bryant, "as I want to see a friend before eleven. But I shall be back in an hour or so. Will you be in?"

"I will. In the meantime think of it, will you? You know her taste better than I do."

Scarcely an hour elapsed before Mr. Bryant found himself again in Mr. Middlewood's office. Mr. Middlewood being engaged with a gentleman, he was shown into a little parlour. The door being left ajar, he could hear every word that was spoken in the office.

"What in the world did the governor want you so long for this morning?" asked a voice.

"Why, it was about a carriage. He knows my father is a coach-builder. He seems to have made up his mind to keep a carriage and horses. He never spoke to me so kindly. He is in high spirits these few days."

"Very much so. I wonder who the David is who has harped away the evil spirits from his mind."

"I suppose it is because the war is over in America."

"Pshaw! He lost five hundred by it, the bookkeeper told me the other day. I expected it would make him as sour as a crab, but he seems not to mind it, and he is as cheerful as a lark."

The gentleman with whom Mr. Middlewood was engaged came out, and Mr. Bryant stepped in.

"Do you know that gentleman who left just now?" asked Mr. Middlewood. "What a pity you didn't come earlier. I wish you had been present; he is a merchant from Geneva. We are doing a great deal of business with him. I asked him about the best plan to spend a month in Switzerland. I think it is the best route for our wedding trip."

Mr. Middlewood now told his friend all about his conversation with the Swiss merchant, and after the subject of the silk dress was settled, Mr. Bryant departed.

That same evening Mr. Bryant saw his neighbour at his house.

"You must have done a poor business to-day," he said.

"Me?" asked Mr. Middlewood, in a tone of surprise. "Not at all. We had a very good day."

"Oh, but that's impossible!"

"How so?"

"Why, you have been thinking about things which had nothing whatever to do with your business. I found you engaged in reading a letter of Messrs. Welgrove and Co.'s, and you told me you were

meanwhile thinking of a silk dress for Isabella. You called your clerk into your parlour and you spoke to him about a carriage. I suppose it had something to do with that pony-cart which you intend to give to her. And I learnt from yourself that when a Geneva merchant called upon you, you had a long talk about your proposed tour with Isabella through Switzerland. Now, I say you must have done a poor business in that way, for you told me yourself the other day, that it is impossible to think of one thing and to do another."

"I see! I see!" cried Mr. Middlewood, cheerfully. "Well, I must confess I am beaten. But then—love came into the game, you see, and who can tell what a man can or cannot do in such a case!"

Mr. Bryant was silent. He looked his friend in the face with an expression of deep concern.

"Just so," he said, "love, sincere love, in the heart is the key to the riddle. I now hope you will also come to experience that it is possible for a merchant to do his business well, and yet to think all the time of Jesus. L.

THE SHULAMITE TELLS HER STORY.

"By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth."—*Solomon's Song*, iii. 1—4.

I.

In my Belovèd's garden, in my quiet bower I lay,
And having tasted of his cup I slept the hours away,
When lo! a voice within my ear—I waken'd on the spot—
I call'd, I sought for my Belov'd—I sought—but found Him not.

II.

O sorrowful my waking was, and sore perplex'd my mind,
When Him my heart did so desire my glance could nowhere find;
I sprang in terror from my bed, and cried, "I will arise,
And go about the city's streets until He meets my eyes.

III.

"And I will call and call again, nor ever will be still,
Till—O poor soul, what words are these?—why sayest thou '*I will*,'
As tho' thy own weak will and sight would not alike prove vain
To reach thy loved One where He is, or bring Him back again?

IV.

"As though, indeed, it had not been of his own grace most free
That He, the King of Heaven, e'er held his sceptre out to thee."
I hurried weeping through the streets, and in the broad ways round,
But He whom my soul loveth, He, alas! I had not found.

V.

My fears, my doubts redoubled as I search'd on every side,
My sight grew ever dimmer and my heart within me died.
The watchmen found me—I stood still, and cried to them, "O tell,
Tell me if you have seen Him pass, the Friend I love so well?"

VI.

Alas! my spirit counsel sought and comfort craved from man,
As tho' these watchers needs must know their Master's path and plan;
As though a mortal could make plain all secrets of his grace,
Or help us to behold Him when He wills to hide his face.

VII.

He has indeed his watchmen who upon the watch-tower stand,
He sends throughout the city's streets his tried and faithful band;
Counsel and knowledge too are theirs,—and yet they did me harm,
Because I sought in my distress to make of flesh my arm.

VIII.

I turn'd aside, they could not help—I felt 'twas so at last.
When as I but a little, but a little from them pass'd,
When I most utterly despair'd of my own skill or might,
When I confess'd all help of man to be but poor and slight;

IX.

When of my own weak will no more I dared to think or speak,
When with a sense of impotence my heart was like to break;
'Twas then I found Him, then He drew near to my soul again,
'Twas then He set me free from all my grief and fear and pain.

X.

'Twas then I found Him, held Him fast,—'twas then that He reveal'd
Why He had bow'd me down so low, and why his face conceal'd.
It was not only to enjoy that He had woo'd my soul,
Not only to be sick with love I was by Him made whole;

XI.

Not only because peace and joy He scatter'd full and free,
Was I to love the Giver Good of joy and peace to me.
No; since I in myself remain so poor, so weak, so small
That if He ever leave me, I can only fail and fall;

XII.

Therefore in rest supine no more I venture to delight,
I will not in his service shrink from toil, or pain, or fight.
I give myself to Him, nor ask what wages I shall win:
Enough that I am saved, enough that I'm absolved from sin!

XIII.

'Tis true that at the first He leads his bride to solitude,
But only that her spirit there may be with strength endued,—
Strength to do battle with the foe that threatens heart and life;
To fight without, to fight within, till death shall end the strife.

XIV.

Me too He took and led apart into his silent bowers,
Refresh'd my soul with joy's sweet wine, and gave me peaceful hours:
But now I go into the world, 'tis so his love decrees,
To tell and testify of Him so long as He shall please.

XV.

This is the lesson that He taught—I learn it with delight;
I take his easy yoke on me, I bear his burden light.
There may be darksome hours in store, and foes may gather round,
But Him whom my soul loveth—Him, once more—for aye—I've found! L. C. C.

NOTES FOR READERS OUT OF THE WAY.

Every journal has written, and every speaker has spoken, during the last few weeks, of the death of Lord Palmerston; and with hardly an exception, the fitting tribute has been paid to the memory of one who served his country so long and so ably, and who was so largely endowed with the virtues that conciliate kindly feeling. It was not to have been expected that the deepest emotions of the nation would be stirred by the departure of one who had more than completed the term of fourscore, and whom men liked rather than loved; or that the mourning of the nation would be at all so profound, as it was nearly four years ago, when death so suddenly struck down, in the person of the Prince Consort, the highest, if not the foremost, of our public men. In the wide expression of feeling called forth by Lord Palmerston's death, the chief and almost the only painful thing has been the loud and confident manner in which some of his admirers have pronounced upon his religious condition. No one would blame attached and pious relatives, in the agony of their anxiety about the spiritual state of one of whom they have stood in doubt, laying hold of every death-bed word or look that could be construed into a sign of devout feeling, and persuading themselves that the soul of their departed one was safe. But it is a different thing to hasten before the public with these treasured memorials of the death-bed, and call on all men, almost as an article of faith, to hold the same conclusion. It was in a different way that the Christian mind of the country settled into the belief it rejoices to entertain regarding the Prince Consort, whose last utterances served to indicate the connection between a blameless and useful life, and the faith from which it sprung. In the present instance, the prevailing feeling seems to be that it is a case in which we ought to "judge nothing before the time;" abstaining alike from harsh judgments against, and confident judgments in favour of, the great man who is gone.

Ever since the issuing of the royal proclamation for prayer for deliverance from the cattle plague and the cholera, there has been no small discussion in some quarters whether or not prayer in such a case could have any avail. The chief arena of the discussion has been in the columns of the *Pall Mall Gazette*; but with that strong tendency which the secular journals of the day show to discuss religious questions, many other newspapers have joined in the debate. Professor Tyndall, of the Royal Institution, well-known for his works on "Heat," and "The Glaciers of the Alps," and for his eminence in physical science generally, maintained in the boldest manner the invariable sequence of natural phenomena, and declared that prayer was only a sign of ignorance, as no one would pray against an effect when he knew its cause. In Edinburgh, the opposition has been led by a Congregationalist minister, whose unexpected championship has awakened an interest somewhat resembling that created by Dr. Colenso's position in relation to the controversy on the Pentateuch. Many ingenious and able answers have been given to the objection, which, however, is by no means a new one, and will be found to have been handled by several of our ablest theologians, such as Dr. Chalmers, in his Cholera Sermon in 1832, "On the Efficacy of Prayer and the Uniformity of Nature;" M. Guizot, in his "Meditations on Christianity;" and Professor Mansel, in the "Aids to Faith." It is admitted that there is a real difficulty, as there always must be, where the will of the Infinite Being comes into contact with that of the creature. On the other hand, to cast ourselves on the Divine clemency in a time of awful danger is one of the best instincts of our nature, and it is in perfect harmony with both the spirit and the letter of the word of God. It seems quite a gratuitous thing to provoke a quarrel between religion and science on such a point; for religious men are at least as ready as any to show respect for the laws of nature by trying to avert the natural causes of disease, so far as they are known; and men of science would be yielding to no superstitious feeling by joining in a devout acknowledgment of the Divine Sovereignty. Practically, the question—whether prayer or sanitary precautions should be resorted to?—is solved, as so many similar problems are solved, by the comment of our Lord: "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

The Charges of Bishops, both in England and Ireland, amid much that has special interest for the diocese or the church with which they are connected, often contain views of wider interest, and more universal application. Dr. Trench has lately delivered his first charge, as Archbishop of Dublin. On the vexed question of National Education in Ireland, he indicated his opinion in favour of a compromise—denominational grants where there is room enough for two schools, and grants on the present system to continue where there is not. He is very far from regarding this as the best arrangement, but as the best that is practicable under present circumstances. On the subject of revivals, Dr. Trench expressed his opinion that in themselves they were good and profitable, and only mischievous when the means employed were merely sensational appeals to the feelings. With these convictions, he had ventured upon an eight days of special services in the summer of last year, taking Bray for a centre, and including so far as possible the neighbouring parishes in the scheme. Sixteen sermons had been preached there, and seventeen in the neighbouring parishes; there had been daily communion, and two numerously-attended conferences of the clergy. The work had been of so encouraging a nature that he trusted next year to repeat the experiment in some other part of the diocese. Dr. Harold Browne has also delivered his primary charge as Bishop of Ely. Among its practical recommendations, one is in favour of weekly classes for young people who have left school, for instruction

and counsel from the clergymen, who ought also to hold personal intercourse with each candidate for confirmation. He expressed his sense of the very urgent need in these times of candidates for the ministry "of high powers of thought, deep learning, the wisdom of the serpent, with the harmlessness of the dove. Never have we more needed men whose wit would be bright anywhere, but who will restrain it gladly that it should never sparkle for selfish honour, still less wound for selfish vanity, but shine only for the glory of God. And if we need such, we ought to have some places in which we can give them honour, if they do not seek it for themselves." At a meeting of the (Auxiliary) Bible Society of Oxford, Dr. Payne Smith, the recently appointed Professor of Divinity, expressed himself thus on the authority of the Bible:—"If in any point all the great fathers of the Church were agreed, it was that the Bible was the sole rule of faith, the sole authority to which orthodox and heretic alike must appeal in support of their views. Untroubled by the disputes that had arisen in modern times as to the exact nature and extent of inspiration, they held in the fullest way that Scripture was inspired, and as a matter of fact, for twelve centuries, not a voice had been raised in opposition to this doctrine, except upon the part of an obscure section of the Arians (the Anomœi), and by a monk of Constantinople (Euthymius), who, at the end of that period, had brought upon himself universal reprobation by saying, that it was no wonder there were discrepancies in the Gospels, for the Evangelists were but men, and wrote sometime after the events which they recorded happened." It may be interesting to some to know, that six years ago, collections were made for the British and Foreign Bible Society in *three* of the colleges of Oxford, last year in *seven*, and this year in *ten* colleges.

The autumnal session of the Baptist Union at Bradford was attended by between four and five hundred ministers and delegates. It was opened by an address from the President, the Rev. Dr. Angus, on the conditions of true prosperity in churches. This prosperity, he urged, was ever in proportion to the inspired truth they devoutly held, the loving, self-devoting spirit they cherished towards themselves and the world, and the special grace and blessing of the Holy Ghost, which was ever, in accordance with God's promise, in proportion to the earnestness and constancy of their prayers. The attention of the meeting was also directed to the state of the Baptist missions, to the persecution of their brethren in Saxony, and to the colleges of the denomination.

A similar meeting of the Congregational Union has been held at Bristol. The opening address of the Chairman—the Rev. D. Thomas—bore on the Christian nurture of the young, and on the course which would tend most, under God's blessing, to secure the children of pious parents to the Church of God. Among the other topics considered, the subject of home-missions had a somewhat prominent place. Mr. Newman Hall dwelt on the sad statistics of attendance on public worship which our large towns furnish; Salford having but 29 per cent. at worship, Preston 20, Birmingham 18, and London only 12. In London, out of three millions, there were but 374,000 at church at one time. It is calculated that there are at least a million of persons in London who never go to the house of God. The class of skilled mechanics do not go to places of worship. Not more than two or three in a hundred are regular worshippers. Dr. Pusey had truly said, "It would be better for the multitudes of London if they had been born in Calcutta, because the charity of Christian missions might have had some chance of meeting them there." Dr. Vaughan and Dr. Raleigh gave an account of their recent visit to the Congregational churches of the United States, which excited much interest.

November is always a memorable month in Edinburgh, being the commencing month of the College session, and of several collateral institutions. Friday, the 3rd of that month, was remarkable in Edinburgh for the delivery of two very noticeable discourses—one by Mr. Gladstone, Chancellor of the Exchequer, in quitting the office of Rector of the University; the other by Mr. Froude, the historian, inaugurating the season of the Philosophical Institution. Mr. Gladstone's discourse was on the place of ancient Greece in the providential order of the world. He held that, in the Providence of God, the Greeks had had an important and special function to fulfil in preparing the way for the Incarnation. To them it had been entrusted to shadow forth the connection between deity and humanity—to represent the indwelling of God in the human form, and thus prepare the world for the advent of the "Word made flesh." The body of the discourse consisted of illustrations of this position, derived from the respect for human life among the Greeks, their admiration of the human form, the honour they paid to woman, and other such things, especially in the heroic and the Homeric periods. It has not been generally thought that Mr. Gladstone was very successful in establishing his theory, especially as he himself acknowledged that at the time of the Advent the state of feeling and practice in Greece had degenerated in a marked and lamentable way, even on the points which he had selected. But the devout tone that marked the discourse was very noticeable, and the testimony to the special inspiration and the blessed revelations of the Hebrew Scriptures, was given with marked emphasis, and called forth from the audience the loudest burst of applause. "There is no need," he remarked, "in order to a due appreciation of our debt to the ancient Greeks, that we should either forget or disparage the function which was assigned by the Almighty Father to his most favoured people. Much profit, says St. Paul, had the Jew in every way. He had the oracles of God: he had the custody of the promises: he was the steward of the great and fundamental conception of the unity of God, the sole and absolute condition under which the Divine idea could be upheld among men at its just elevation. No poetry, no philosophy, no art of Greece, ever embraced, in its most soaring and widest conceptions, that simple law of love towards God and towards our neighbour, on which 'two commandments hang all the law and the pro-

phets,' and which supplied the moral basis of the new dispensation. There is one history, and that the most touching and most profound of all, for which we should search in vain through all the pages of the classics—I mean the history of the human soul in its relations with its Maker; the history of its sin, and grief, and death, and of the way of its recovery to hope and life, and to enduring joy. For the exercises of strength and skill, for the achievements and for the enchantments of wit, of eloquence, of art, of genius, for the imperial games of politics and war, let us seek them on the shores of Greece. But if the first among the problems of life be, how to establish the peace and restore the balance of our inward being; if the highest of all conditions in the existence of the creature be his aspect towards the God to whom he owes his being, and in whose great hand he stands, then let us make our search elsewhere. All the wonders of the Greek civilisation heaped together are less wonderful than is the single Book of Psalms. Palestine was weak and despised, always obscure, oftentimes and long trodden down beneath the feet of imperious masters. Greece for a thousand years,

'Confident from foreign purposes,'

repelled every invader from her shores, and, fostering her strength in the keen air of freedom, she defied, and at length overthrew, the mightiest of empires; and when finally she felt the resistless grasp of the masters of all the world, them too, at the very moment of her subjugation, she subdued to her literature, language, arts, and manners. Palestine, in a word, had no share of the glories of our race; they blaze on every page of the history of Greece with an overpowering splendour. Greece had valour, policy, renown, genius, wisdom, wit,—she had all, in a word, that this world could give her; but the flowers of Paradise, which blossom thinly, blossomed in Palestine alone."

Mr. Froude's discourse was on "The Influence of the Reformation on the Scottish people." It was chiefly important as repelling charges that have of late been so often brought against the religion of Scotland. Considering the high quarters from which these charges have come, and the confident tone in which they have been uttered, it was no slight thing to hear a historian of Mr. Froude's eminence, research, and impartiality, proclaim and prove that John Knox had not only saved his country, but, in a sense, created the Scottish nation. "Passing over knight and noble, he had touched the farmer, the peasant, the petty tradesman, and the artisan, and turned the men of clay into men of steel." And as to the character of the people moulded under these influences, there was much to be said in their favour. "There have rarely been seen in this world a set of people who have thought more about right and wrong, and the judgment about them of the upper powers. Longheaded thrifty industry, a sound hatred of all waste, imprudence, idleness, extravagance—the feet planted firmly upon the earth—a conscientious sense that the worldly virtues are nevertheless very necessary virtues; that without them honesty, for one thing, is not possible, and that without honesty no other excellence, religious or moral, is worth anything at all—this is the stuff of which Scottish life was made, and very good stuff it is. It has been called gloomy, austere, harsh, and such other epithets. . . . I should rather say, that the Scotch had been an unusually happy people. Intelligent industry, the honest doing of daily work, with a sense that it must be done well, under penalties; the necessaries of life moderately provided for; and a sensible content with the situation of life in which men are born—this through the week, and at the end of it the 'Cottar's Saturday Night,' the homely family, gathered reverently and peacefully together, and irradiated with a sacred presence. Happiness! such happiness as we human creatures are likely to know upon this world will be found there, if anywhere!"

Some very interesting letters have lately appeared in the *Guardian* on the religious condition and prospects of Italy. The writer's standpoint is not the same as our own, but the letters, which are dated from Florence, show signs of much candour and care. He has nothing good to report, either of the priests, or of the masses, or of the upper class belonging to the Roman Catholic Church. The priests are corrupt; not perhaps to the full extent of some scandals that are in circulation, but certainly as practising a tyranny and extortion on the death-bed and at the confessional that justify the charges of the author of the celebrated "Le Maudit." Among the masses there is as much superstition as ever, perhaps more; all other altars are deserted for that of Mary, and even in the cathedral of Florence, there is hardly a soul at high mass, while at the same time, and in the same place, the chapel of Mary is blazing with lights and thronged with devotees of all classes and sexes, though chiefly females. Among the higher ranks, religion seems not to be a subject of the slightest interest. An Italian nobleman of great distinction, as well as of great simplicity and religious earnestness of character, assured the writer that he did not know of another man of his order in Florence who professed to be actively and openly concerned about the interests of religion. Among the younger members of the upper class simple disbelief and infidelity are common. But on the other hand, there are striking symptoms of an earnest religious movement among the lower classes. Amongst them are to be found schools to teach children, chapels in which to preach to grown-up people, numberless controversial publications, *dépôts* and shops at which they are sold below their cost price, distribution of the Scriptures on a large scale, subscriptions, associations—in a word, Propaganda, with all its ardent features and reality. The basis of this movement is chiefly from the Waldenses, and partly from foreign—chiefly British, and emphatically Scottish—agencies. Some of the Protestants complain of the excessive rigidity of the Waldenses, and have thrown off all church organisation and forms. The writer goes on to give the following remarkable account of Dr. De Sanctis, the Waldensian leader in Italy:—

"This very remarkable man seems to me to be doing far more in his own sphere than Passaglia, and

to be the living and working representative of Italian religious reform in the only shape in which it is as yet really in action. He is at the head of a theological school or seminary consisting of some twenty young men, whom he can hardly fail to imbue with a portion of his own indomitable fire and energy, and with whom he resides in a large building, still called by courtesy a Palazzo, once the property of the Archbishop of Florence, and purchased by foreign and, of course, chiefly English funds, for the foundation of this college. In a large and commodious chapel belonging to the same, De Sanctis preaches every Sunday to an audience far more numerous than I expected to find in Tuscany, and far more earnest and attentive than any similar congregation I saw either in Turin, Milan, or elsewhere. To be sure, the preacher was a man of different vein and calibre, possessing a remarkable power of rousing and fixing the sympathies and attention of a congregation such as he addressed, composed almost entirely of the humbler classes. And yet De Sanctis is anything but a man of imposing appearance, or answering to our idea of a divinity teacher. He wears no gown or ecclesiastical vestment of any kind, dresses absolutely like a layman, even to wearing a spotted neck-tie, turn-down collar, and breast-pin; and when he entered the church at a side door, laid down his brown straw hat and walking-stick upon the communion-table in front of the pulpit previous to ascending the latter. This was carrying *sans façon* pretty nearly as far as it could go in such matters. But his teaching has been above his appearances when I have heard him, and his power over his hearers evidently very great. His publications are very numerous and widely disseminated. You meet with them everywhere; and though far less bulky, their effect must be infinitely greater than that produced by Passaglia's heavy productions, which no one seems to read except those who do not need them, or his newspapers, which no one seems to read at all. Italy is quite weary of and indifferent to mere scholastic theology, and must be roused by a trumpet of quite a different sound if she is to be roused at all. The popularity and sale of some of De Sanctis's publications are immense. The sixteenth edition of 'La Confessione' has just appeared. The 'Ritratto di Maria,' or portrait of the Blessed Virgin, drawn from the Gospels, promises to be immensely popular. The 'Il Purgatorio' is at the second edition, and 'La Messa' and 'Il Papa' equally in favour as specimens of popular controversy. The most widely-spread of all his publications, however, is his almanack, called 'L'Amico di Casa,' price twopence, almost universally used among the people, both Catholic and Protestant, in spite of the opposition of the priests, and a most damaging exposure of the legends indulged in by Romish publishers in similar works. There can be doubt that these writings, now that they can no longer be checked or controlled by physical and material opposition, will end by producing a wide effect upon the population. The movement, such as it exhibits itself at present, springs evidently from below. It is asserted, on good authority, that De Sanctis, after he had fled from Rome and taken refuge, I believe, at Malta, was offered a bishopric if he would return to his allegiance; nor can we wonder at the authority he had thrown off being desirous at almost any cost to stop the mouth of so formidable and well-initiated an opponent."

In the United States of America the re-union of the Churches of North and South, divided by the civil war, is occupying much attention. In the case of the Episcopal Church, where no separation took place till the war began, there seems every prospect of a speedy re-union. The case of the Presbyterian Churches is more complicated. For a considerable time the Presbyterian Churches have been divided into two—old and new schools. In the Southern States these two branches united during the war. In the other States they are still separate, and the question to which of them the United Southern Church will go, is not simplified by the terms on which either branch professes itself willing to receive them. Both branches have pronounced the Southern Churches guilty of treason, and demand a humble acknowledgment of this sin as a condition of re-union. In the case of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which in the South still advocates slavery, the breach, it is thought, will be still more difficult to heal.—It is interesting to observe how well the contributions to the cause of missions have kept up, amid all the excitement of the war. The American Board of Missions, at its late sitting at Chicago, has raised, during the year, 534,763 dollars, which defrays all expenses, and leaves a small balance in the treasury.

The account of the state of Christianity in Madagascar, which Mr. Ellis has given on his return home, is extremely interesting. The number of native Christians in the capital of Madagascar he reckons at 10,000, and in other parts of the island 5,000. A considerable proportion of the converts belong to the upper classes of society, and in the families of the nobles and officers of the capital many of their children who have attained adult age have renounced the superstitions of their country, and are sincere worshippers of the true God, and believers in Jesus Christ. The zeal and activity of the converts is very exemplary and striking. Every individual who professes to believe the Gospel, labours to make known its truths, and commend its blessings to his neighbour; and this accounts, under the Divine blessing, for the astonishing increase in the numbers, both of the congregations and the churches, during the short period of Mr. Ellis's residence at the capital.

Through a Wesleyan Missionary, accounts have been received of an interesting endeavour to form a regular government, which has been made by the people of the Fiji islands. A meeting, presided over by the British Consul, was held at Ovalau, on the 8th and 9th of May, at which the principal chiefs were present, and agreed upon a constitution, conferring on one of their number, to be elected annually, the office of president, appointing a general assembly of chiefs to be held once a year, reserving to each of the seven chiefs local supremacy in his own territory,

appointing a code of laws to be prepared for the entire group, and adopting a national flag for distinction from their neighbours. It was agreed to adopt such of the Tongan laws as were deemed applicable to Fiji, and various suggestions were forwarded to each state for consideration during the year. An interesting illustration of the simultaneous march of Christianity and civilisation.

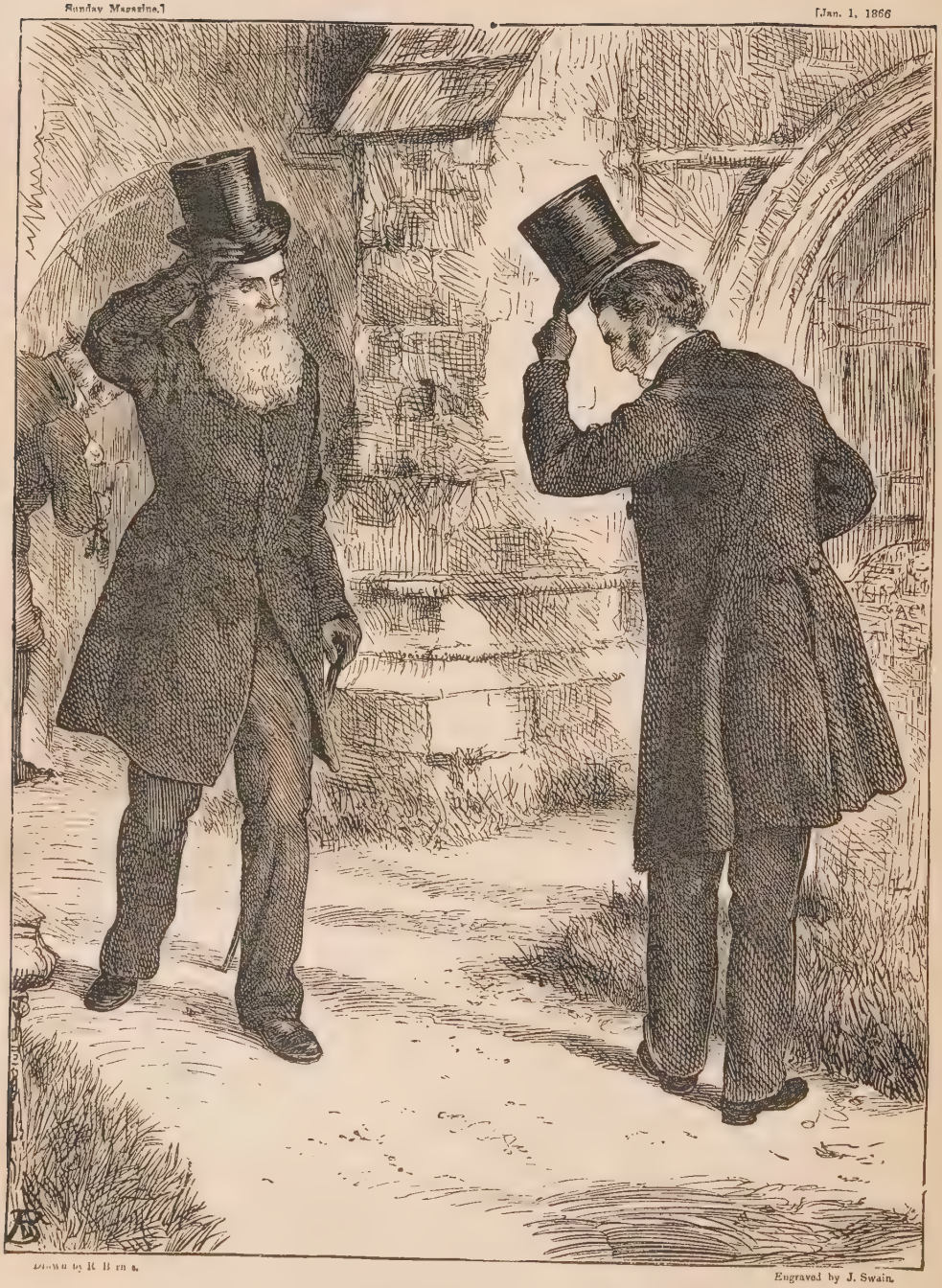
Turning now to the field of Literature, we call attention to two remarkable books—remarkable as illustrating the occasional union of much personal Christian excellence with opinions from which most of our readers would recoil. The first is a Letter by Dr. Pusey; the second is the Life of the late Mr. Robertson, of Brighton.

In a letter of more than four hundred pages, to his friend and fellow-worker, Mr. Keble, Dr. Pusey asserts his grounds for holding "the Church of England a portion of Christ's one holy Catholic Church, and a means of restoring visible unity." In opposition to Dr. Manning, he holds that the Church of England has in no way departed from the catholic faith, the heritage and the foundation of the Church universal. She is a portion of the one Catholic Church, though unfortunately not in visible communion with other portions of it, in much the same way as the Greek Church is not in visible communion with the Latin, or the two portions of the Latin Church, during the great western schism, were not in visible communion with each other. But the truth is held by the Church of England, and the Church of Rome is the same. A great part of the letter is devoted to the establishment and illustration of this position. Dr. Pusey holds that, fairly explained, the articles and homilies are not so Protestant, and the authoritative dogmas of the Roman Church not so ultramontane as they at first appear. In fact, it only requires a candid mind and a loving heart to reconcile them to each other. But on one point, he admits a most formidable exception, and a dismal obstacle to the union he so longs for. This is the Romish doctrine regarding Mary. His soul is oppressed by the overwhelming evidence of the degree to which practically, in the minds of Roman Catholics, Mary is made to divide and even supersede the mediatorial functions of Jesus. And his distress reaches its climax when he considers how the present Pope has elevated the immaculate conception of Mary into an article of faith. For if Pio Nono has done this in regard to the Immaculate Conception, what is to prevent other Popes doing the same in regard to many other beliefs, practically held by Roman Catholic people? He finds some consolation in the fact that the Pope had no right to do as he did; that his "constitution" establishing the Immaculate Conception was irregular and uncanonical, and also that it was very far from expressing the universal opinion of the bishops of the Church. A very interesting portion of the letter and the appendix, consists of a summary of the views of the bishops, and others who were opposed to the "constitution." Singularly enough, among these opponents were all the professors at Maynooth. Another heavy blow and great discouragement befel Dr. Pusey, after his letter was written, and forms the subject of a very dolorous postscript. This was the perusal of the Pope's celebrated Encyclical Letter of last year. Dr. Pusey was thunderstruck by the degree to which the claim of personal infallibility is confessedly advanced by the Pope. Here too he finds some consolation in the fact that his claim is unwarranted, and that, supposing it conceded in the case of previous Popes, the greatest inconsistencies and absurdities must follow. However curious this letter may be, as thedream of one who to a very subtle mind unites a devout soul and a loving heart, it is amazing that Dr. Pusey can see so little difference between the Roman Catholic and any Biblical Church. The great gulf between Churches that in the spirit of Holy Scripture place Jesus before the sinner as the great mediator, and Churches that practically draw away the soul from Him, cannot be filled up by Dr. Pusey's subtle explanations. Dr. Pusey speaks in a kindly tone of other bodies of Protestants. His allusions to them are respectful, with no sting of bitterness or contempt. Amid all his strange speculations and dangerous views, a tone of deepest reverence and love pervades the letter for the one Lord and only Saviour of the sinner. However little alive we may hold him to be to the tendency of his views and system to obscure the mediatorial glory of Jesus, we can have no doubt of his own profound devotion to Him whose blood cleanseth from all sin; and as little can we question that his heart's desire and prayer is, that the world may be brought to know and love its only Saviour, and to revere the Name that is above every name.

The "Life and Letters of Frederick W. Robertson, M.A., Incumbent of Trinity Chapel, Brighton, edited by Stopford A. Brooke, M.A.," gives a deeply interesting account of one of the most remarkable and impressive preachers of our day. Born in 1816; educated at the Edinburgh Academy and at Oxford; a curate, for a short time at Winchester and at Cheltenham, and afterwards incumbent of St. Ebbe's, Oxford, and finally of Trinity Chapel, Brighton, he died in 1853 at the early age of thirty-seven, having, in the middle of his ministerial life, passed through a change in theological opinion remarkable alike for its completeness and its rarity. At first he was thoroughly attached to the evangelical school; at Oxford he was noted for his earnest and consistent piety; he was a rigid sabbatarian, and a warm advocate of Calvinistic theology. The change he underwent not only withdrew him from Calvinistic theology and the fellowship of the Evangelical body, but gave him an intense dislike to the system, and led him to speak strongly against the ordinary view of the atonement, of the inspiration of the Scriptures and of the obligation of the Sabbath. Yet the change was accompanied with no laxity of life and no abatement of earnestness; his attachment to the person of the Saviour was as strong as ever, and his zeal for the promotion of personal religious earnestness and inward excellence burned with inextinguishable ardour. His preaching was more than popular in the ordinary sense, it was singularly effective, and that among two classes that would hardly have been expected to appreciate him together

—men of highest intellect and culture on the one hand, and the working classes on the other. His published sermons have been even more widely influential than when preached; having not merely had a most extensive circulation, but having been read and admired by a much greater variety of classes than the sermons of any other preacher of the day. The memoir throws considerable light on all this. Mr. Robertson was a man of the most intensely sympathetic nature, with a nervous temperament developed to a pitch of sensibility that showed the action of disease. The illness of which he died was an affection of the brain. His sympathetic temperament led him to recoil from what he considered the dogmatism of the school in which he had been brought up; and fancying that their system discouraged views to which he attached the highest importance—views regarding the *person* of the Saviour, the spirit of self-sacrifice, and the supreme importance of inward excellence—he persuaded himself that its influence was pernicious, and expressed himself accordingly. He rejected the evangelical theology because he thought it excluded such things; whereas a more thoroughly comprehensive view of truth would have shown that it included them all, and that the exclusion was only practised by its narrower adherents. But with these drawbacks, it is impossible not to be deeply impressed with the singular beauty and purity of his character, the fervour of his love for Christ, the intensity of the pain he suffered on account of the sins and sorrows of humanity, the noble devotion with which he threw in his lot with the poor and the oppressed, and his fearless courage in uttering his sentiments, no matter what outcry might be raised against him. He was one of those who early saw the importance of what is now so generally admitted to be important—the condition of the working classes in England; and the service he rendered about the trying period of 1848-9 in restraining the wild spirit which had come over from the Continent, in guiding the working classes wisely, and in promoting a spirit of sympathy between employers and employed, and between rich and poor generally, was one of the most prominent features of his life.

Whatever may at one time have been "A Dutchman's difficulties with the English language," there is very little sign of Mr. de Liefde's having had much to do with them in the composition of his beautiful and most attractive book, "Six Months among the Charities of Europe." As the composition of a foreigner whose first lessons in English were obtained from the English Bible, these handsome volumes would be very remarkable, even if they had no higher interest or value. We do not need to tell the readers of the Sunday Magazine of the charm that belongs to M. de Liefde's writings—the happy spirit which breathes in them, the directness, the raciness, the picturesqueness of his style. We do not need to tell of his strong attachment to the great truths of the Word of God,—how he ever writes as one whose own spirit has been bathed in the great love of God in Christ, and who delights to reflect on other hearts the sunshine that has brightened his own. His visits to the Charities of Europe must have been congenial work. They were paid at three different times; and altogether, six-and-twenty charities were visited, though he has not described in his volumes more than fifteen. The reader will find here a most graphic account of several institutions well-known to fame, and of others whose usefulness is hardly smaller, though their celebrity may be less. The Rauhe Haus at Horn; the Deaconess House at Kaiserswerth; Father Zeller's School at Beuggen; the Asylum at Düsselthal; Pastor Heldring's Establishments near Hemmen; those of Mr. J. Bost at Laforce; the Agricultural Colonies at Rijsselt and at Sainte Foy, are among those that are fully described in this book. It is impossible to read of these without feeling rebuked for apathy, listlessness, and coldness in the great cause of Christian love. The Gospel of Christ has a fresh glory thrown back on it from these remarkable fruits of its loving spirit. M. de Liefde says most truly:—"I have always been of opinion that nowhere could a better proof of the Divine origin of Christianity and of the truth of the Gospel be found, than in the story, simply told, of some charitable institutions. Whatever the Christian religion may apparently have in common with other religions, this much is certain, that true self-denying charity, which seeks the lost, loves the poor, and consoles the sufferer, is exclusively its own. There never were such things as charities known in Heathendom, however civilized; nor were they even known in Israel before He appeared who taught his people to love their enemies, and to exercise charity towards the harlot, the publican, and the sinner."



Drawn by R. Barnes. Engraved by J. Swain.

"HE BOWED TO ME AS HE PASSED."

ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BY THE VICAR.

IX.

On the afternoon of my second Sunday at Marshmallows, I was standing in the churchyard, casting a long shadow in the light of the declining sun. I was reading the inscription upon an old headstone, for I thought everybody was gone; when I heard a door open, and shut again before I could turn. I saw at once that it must have been a little door in the tower, almost concealed from where I stood by a deep buttress. I had never seen the door open, and I had never inquired anything about it, supposing it led merely into the tower.

After a moment it opened again, and, to my surprise, out came, stooping his tall form to get his grey head clear of the low archway, a man whom no one could pass without looking after him. Tall, and strongly built, he had the carriage of a military man, without an atom of that sternness which one generally finds in the faces of those accustomed to command. He had a large face, with large regular features, and large clear grey eyes, all of which united to express an exceeding placidity or repose. It shone with intelligence—a mild intelligence—no way suggestive of profundity, although of geniality. Indeed there was a little too much expression. The face seemed to express *all* that lay beneath it.

I was not satisfied with the countenance; and yet it looked quite good. It was somehow a too well-ordered face. It was quite Greek in its outline; and marvellously well-kept and smooth, considering that the beard, to which razors were utterly strange, and which descended half-way down his breast, would have been as white as snow, except for a slight yellowish tinge. His eyebrows were still very dark, only just touched with the frost of winter. His hair, too, as I saw when he lifted his hat, was still wonderfully dark for the condition of his beard.—It flashed into my mind, that this must be the organist who played so remarkably. Somehow I had not happened yet to inquire about him. But there was a stateliness in this man amounting almost to consciousness of dignity; and I was a little bewildered. His clothes were all of black, very neat and clean, but old-fashioned and threadbare. They bore signs of use, but more signs of time and careful keeping. I would have spoken to him, but something in the manner in which he bowed to me as he passed, prevented me, and I let him go unaccosted.

The sexton coming out directly after, and proceeding to lock the door, I was struck by the action. "What *is* he locking the door for?" I said to myself. But I said nothing to him, because I had not answered the question myself yet.

"Who is that gentleman," I asked, "who came out just now?"

"That is Mr. Stoddart, sir," he answered.

I thought I had heard the name in the neighbourhood before.

"Is it he who plays the organ?" I asked.

"That he do, sir. He's played our organ for the last ten years, ever since he came to live at the Hall."

"What Hall?"

"Why the Hall, to be sure,—Oldcastle Hall, you know."

And then it dawned on my recollection that I had heard Judy mention her uncle Stoddart. But how could he be her uncle?

"Is he a relation of the family?" I asked.

"He's a brother-in-law, I believe, of the old lady, sir, but how ever he come to live there I don't know. It's no such binding connection, you know, sir. He's been in the milintairy line, I believe, sir, in the Ingies, or somewheres."

I do not think I shall have any more strange parishioners to present to my readers; at least I do not remember any more just at this moment. And this one, as the reader will see, I positively could not keep out.

A military man from India! a brother-in-law of Mrs. Oldcastle, choosing to live with her! an entrancing performer upon an old, asthmatic, dry-throated church organ! taking no trouble to make the clergyman's acquaintance, and passing him in the churchyard with a courteous bow, although his face was full of kindliness if not of kindness! I could not help thinking all this strange. And yet—will the reader cease to accord me credit when I assert it?—although I had quite intended to inquire after him when I left the vicarage to go to the Hall, and had even thought of him when sitting with Mrs. Oldcastle, I never thought of him again after going with Judy, and left the house without having made a single inquiry after him. Nor did I think of him again till just as I was passing under the outstretched neck of one of those serpivolants on the gate; and what made me think of him then, I cannot in the least imagine; but I resolved at once that I would call upon him the following week, lest he should think that the fact of his having omitted to call upon me had been the occasion of such an apparently pointed omission on my part. For I had long ago determined to be no further guided by the rules of society than as they might aid in bringing about true neighbourliness, and if possible friendliness and friendship. Wherever they might interfere with these, I would disregard them—as far on the other hand as the disregard of them might tend to bring about the results I desired.

When, carrying out this resolution, I rang the door-bell at the Hall, and inquired whether Mr. Stoddart was at home, the butler stared; and, as I simply continued gazing in return, and waiting, he answered at length, with some hesitation, as if he were picking and choosing his words:

"Mr. Stoddart never calls upon any one, sir."

"I am not complaining of Mr. Stoddart," I answered, wishing to put the man at his ease.

"But nobody calls upon Mr. Stoddart," he returned.

"That's very unkind of somebody, surely," I said.

"But he doesn't want anybody to call upon him, sir."

"Ah! that's another matter. I didn't know that. Of course nobody has a right to intrude upon anybody. However, as I happen to have come without knowing his dislike to being visited, perhaps you will take him my card and say that if it is not disagreeable to him, I should like exceedingly to thank him in person for his sermon on the organ last Sunday."

He had played an exquisite voluntary in the morning.

"Give my message exactly, if you please," I said, as I followed the man into the hall.

"I will try, sir," he answered. "But won't you come up-stairs to mistress's room, sir, while I take this to Mr. Stoddart?"

"No, I thank you," I answered. "I came to call upon Mr. Stoddart only; and I will wait the result of your mission here in the hall."

The man withdrew, and I sat down on a bench, and amused myself with looking at the portraits about me. I learned afterwards that they had hung, till some thirty years before, in a long gallery connecting the main part of the house with that portion to which the turret referred to so often in Old Weir's story was attached. One particularly pleased me. It was the portrait of a young woman—very lovely—but with an expression both sad and—scared, I think, would be the readiest word to communicate what I mean. It was indubitably, indeed remarkably, like Miss Oldcastle. And I learned afterwards that it was the portrait of Mrs. Oldcastle's grandmother, that very Mrs. Crowfoot mentioned in Weir's story. It had been taken about six months after her marriage, and about as many before her death.

The butler returned, with the request that I would follow him. He led me up the grand staircase, through a passage at right angles to that which led to the old lady's room, up a narrow circular staircase at the end of the passage, across a landing, then up a straight steep narrow stair, upon which two people could not pass without turning sideways and then squeezing. At the top of this I found myself in a small cylindrical lobby, papered in blocks of stone. There was no door to be seen. It was lighted by a conical skylight. My conductor gave a push against the wall. Certain blocks yielded, and others came forward. In fact a door revolved on central pivots, and we were admitted to a chamber crowded with books from floor to ceiling, arranged with wonderful neatness and solidity. From the centre of the ceiling, whence hung a globular lamp, radiated what I took to be a number of strong beams supporting a floor above; for our ancestors put the ceiling above the beams, instead of below them as we do, and gained in space if they lost in quietness. But I soon found out my mistake. Those radiating beams were in reality book-shelves. For on each side of those I passed under I could see the gilded backs of books standing closely ranged together. I had never seen the contrivance before, nor, I presume, was it to be seen anywhere else.

"How does Mr. Stoddart reach those books?" I asked my conductor.

"I don't exactly know, sir," whispered the butler. "His own man could tell you, I dare say. But he has a holiday to-day; and I do not think he would explain it either; for he says his master allows no interference with his contrivances. I believe, however, he does not use a ladder."

There was no one in the room, and I saw no entrance but that by which we had entered. The next moment, however, a nest of shelves revolved in front of me, and there Mr. Stoddart stood with outstretched hand.

"You have found me at last, Mr. Walton, and I am glad to see you," he said.

He led me into an inner room, much larger than the one I had passed through.

"I am glad," I replied, "that I did not know, till the butler told me, your unwillingness to be intruded upon; for I fear, had I known it, I should have been yet longer a stranger to you."

"You are no stranger to me. I have heard you read prayers, and I have heard you preach."

"And I have heard you play; so you are no stranger to me either."

"Well, before we say another word," said Mr. Stoddart, "I must just say one word about this report of my unsociable disposition.—I encourage it; but am very glad to see you notwithstanding.—Do sit down."

I obeyed.

"I was so bored with visits after I came, visits which were to me utterly uninteresting, that I was only too glad when the unusual nature of some of my pursuits gave rise to the rumour that I was mad. The more people say I am mad, the better pleased I am, so long as they are satisfied with my own mode of shutting myself up, and do not attempt to carry out any fancies of their own in regard to my personal freedom."

Upon this followed some desultory conversation, during which I took some observations of the room. Like the outer room, it was full of books from floor to ceiling. But the ceiling was divided into compartments, harmoniously coloured.

"What a number of books you have!" I observed.

"Not a great many," he answered. "But I think there is hardly one of them with which I have not some kind of personal acquaintance. I think I could almost find you any one you wanted in the dark, or in the twilight at least, which would allow me to distinguish whether the top edge was gilt, red, marbled, or uncut. I have bound a couple of hundred or so of them myself. I don't think you could tell the work from a tradesman's. I'll give you a guinea for the poor-box if you pick out three of my binding consecutively."

I accepted the challenge; for although I could not bind a book, I considered myself to have a keen eye for the outside finish. After looking over the backs of a great many, I took one down, examined a little further, and presented it.

"You are right. Now try again."

Again I was successful, although I doubted.

"And now for the last," he said.

Once more I was right.

"There is your guinea," said he, a little mortified.

"No," I answered. "I do not feel at liberty to take it, because, to tell the truth, the last was a mere guess, nothing more."

Mr. Stoddart looked relieved.

"You are more honest than most of your profession," he said. "But I am far more pleased to offer you the guinea upon the smallest doubt of your having won it."

"I have no claim upon it."

"What! Couldn't you swallow a small scruple like that for the sake of the poor even? Well, I don't believe *you* could.—Oblige me by taking this guinea for some one or other of your poor people. But I *am* glad you weren't sure of that last book. I am indeed."

I took the guinea, and put it in my purse.

"But," he resumed, "you won't do, Mr. Walton. You're not fit for your profession. You won't tell a lie for God's sake. You won't dodge about a little to keep all right between Jove and his weary parishioners. You won't cheat a little for the sake of the poor! You wouldn't even bamboozle a little at a bazaar!"

"I should not like to boast of my principles," I answered; "for the moment one does so, they become as the apples of Sodom. But assuredly I would not favour a fiction to keep a world out of hell. The hell that a lie would keep any man out of is doubtless the very best place for him to go to. It is truth, yes, *The Truth* that saves the world."

"You are right, I daresay. You are more sure about it than I am though."

"Let us agree where we can," I said, "first of all; and that will make us able to disagree, where we must, without quarrelling."

"Good," he said. "Would you like to see my workshop?"

"Very much, indeed," I answered.

"Do you take any pleasure in applied mechanics?"

"I used to do so as a boy. But of course I have little time now for anything of the sort."

"Ah! of course."

He pushed a compartment of books. It yielded, and we entered a small closet. In another moment I found myself leaving the floor, and in yet a moment we were on the floor of an upper room.

"What a nice way of getting up stairs!" I said.

"There is no other way of getting to this room," answered Mr. Stoddart. "I built it myself; and there was no room for stairs. This is my shop. In my library I only read my favourite books. Here I read anything I want to read; write anything I want to write; bind my books; invent machines; and amuse myself generally. Take a chair."

I obeyed, and looked about me.

The room had many books in detached book-cases. There were various benches against the walls between, —one a bookbinder's; another a carpenter's; a third had a turning-lathe; a fourth had an iron vice fixed on it, and was evidently used for working in metal. Besides these, for it was a large room, there were several tables with chemical apparatus upon them, Florence-flasks, retorts, sand-baths, and such like; while in a corner stood a furnace.

"What an accumulation of ways and means you have about you," I said; "and all, apparently, to different ends."

"All to the same end, if my object were understood."

"I presume I must ask no questions as to that object?"

"It would take time to explain. I have theories of education. I think a man has to educate himself into harmony. Therefore he must open every possible window by which the influences of the All may come in upon him. I do not think any man complete without a perfect development of his mechanical faculties, for instance, and I encourage them to develop themselves into such windows."

"I do not object to your theory, provided you do not put it forward as a perfect scheme of human life. If you did, I should have some questions to ask you about it, lest I should misunderstand you."

He smiled what I took for a self-satisfied smile. There was nothing offensive in it, but it left me without anything to reply to. No embarrassment followed, however, for a rustling motion in the room the same instant attracted my attention, and I saw, to my surprise, and, I must confess, a little to my confusion, Miss Oldcastle. She was seated in a corner, reading from a quarto lying upon her knees.

"Oh! you didn't know my niece was here? To tell the truth, I forgot her when I brought you up, else I would have introduced you."

"That is not necessary, uncle," said Miss Oldcastle, closing her book.

I was by her instantly. She slipped the quarto from her knee, and took my offered hand.

"Are you fond of old books?" I said, not having anything better to say.

"Some old books," she answered.

"May I ask what book you were reading?"

"I will answer you—under protest," she said, with a smile.

"I withdraw the question at once," I returned.

"I will answer it notwithstanding. It is a volume of Jacob Behmen."

"Do you understand him?"

"Yes. Don't you?"

"Well, I have made but little attempt," I answered. "Indeed, it was only as I passed through London last that I bought his works; and I am sorry to find that one of the plates is missing from my copy."

"What plate is it? It is not very easy, I understand, to procure a perfect copy. One of my uncle's copies has no two volumes bound alike. Each must have belonged to a different set."

"I can't tell you what the plate is. But there are only three of those very curious unfolding ones in my third volume, and there should be four."

"I do not think so. Indeed I am sure you are wrong."

"I am glad to hear it—though to be glad that the world does not possess what I thought I only was

deprived of, is selfishness, cover it over as one may with the fiction of a perfect copy."

"I don't know," she returned, without any response to what I said. "I should always like things perfect myself."

"Doubtless," I answered; and thought it better to try another direction.

"How is Mrs. Oldcastle?" I asked, feeling in its turn the reproach of hypocrisy; for though I could have suffered, I hope, in my person and goods and reputation, to make that woman other than she was, I could not say that I cared one atom whether she was in health or not. Possibly I should have preferred the latter member of the alternative; for the suffering of the lower nature is as a fire that drives the higher nature upwards. So I felt rather hypocritical when I asked Miss Oldcastle after her.

"Quite well, thank you," she answered, in a tone of indifference, which implied either that she saw through me, or shared in my indifference. I could not tell which.

"And how is Miss Judy?"

"A little savage, as usual."

"Not the worse for her wetting, I hope."

"Oh! dear no. There never was health to equal that child's. It belongs to her savage nature."

"I wish some of us were more of savages, then," I returned; for I saw in her eyes signs of exhaustion which moved my sympathy.

"You don't mean me, Mr. Walton, I hope. For if you do, I assure you your interest is quite thrown away. Uncle will tell you I am as strong as an elephant."

But here came a slight elevation of her whole figure; and a shadow, at the same moment, passed over her face. I saw that she felt she ought not to have allowed herself to become the subject of conversation.—Meantime her uncle was busy at one of his benches, filing away at a piece of brass fixed in the vice. He had thick gloves on. And indeed it had puzzled me before to think how he could have so many kinds of work and yet keep his hands so smooth and white as they were. I could not help thinking the results could hardly be of the most useful description if they were all accomplished without some loss of whiteness and smoothness in the process. Even the feet that keep the garments clean must be washed themselves in the end.

When I glanced away from Miss Oldcastle in the embarrassment produced by the repulsion of her last manner, I saw Judy in the room. At the same moment Miss Oldcastle rose.

"What is the matter, Judy?" she said.

"Grannie wants you," said Judy.

Miss Oldcastle left the room, and Judy turned to me.

"How do you do, Mr. Walton?" she said.

"Quite well, thank you, Judy," I answered. "Your uncle admits you to his workshop, then?"

"Yes, indeed. He would feel rather dull, sometimes, without me. Wouldn't you, Uncle Stoddart?"

"Just as the horses in the field would feel dull without the gad-fly, Judy," said Mr. Stoddart, laughing.

Judy, however, did not choose to receive the laugh as a scholium explanatory of the remark, and was gone in a moment, leaving Mr. Stoddart and myself alone. I must say he looked a little troubled at the precipitate retreat of the damsel; but he recovered himself with a smile, and said to me,

"I wonder what speech I shall make next to drive you away, Mr. Walton."

"I am not so easily got rid of, Mr. Stoddart," I answered. "And as for taking offence, I don't like it, and therefore I never take it. But tell me what you are doing now."

"I have been working for some time at an attempt after a perpetual motion, but, I must confess, more from a metaphysical or logical point of view than a mechanical one."

Here he took a drawing from a shelf, explanatory of his plan.

"You see," he said, "here is a top, made of platinum, the heaviest of metals, except iridium—which it would be impossible to procure enough of, and which would be difficult to work into the proper shape. It is surrounded, you will observe, by an air-tight receiver, communicating by this tube with a powerful air-pump. The plate upon which the point of the top rests and revolves is a diamond; and I ought to have mentioned that the peg of the top is a diamond likewise. This is of course for the sake of reducing the friction. By this apparatus communicating with the top, through the receiver, I set the top in motion—after exhausting the air as far as possible. Still there is the difficulty of the friction of the diamond point upon the diamond plane, which must ultimately occasion repose. To obviate this, I have constructed here, underneath, a small steam-engine, which shall cause the diamond plate to revolve at precisely the same rate of speed as the top itself. This, of course, will prevent all friction."

"Not that with the unavoidable remnant of air, however," I ventured to suggest.

"That is just my weak point," he answered. "But that will be so very small!"

"Yes; but enough to deprive the top of *perpetual* motion."

"But suppose I could get over that difficulty, would the contrivance have a right to the name of a perpetual motion? For you observe that the steam-engine below would not be the cause of the motion. That comes from above, here, and is withdrawn, finally withdrawn."

"I understand perfectly," I answered. "At least I think I do. But I return the question to you: Is a motion which, although not caused, is *enabled* by another motion, worthy of the name of a perpetual motion; seeing the perpetuity of motion has not to do merely with time, but with the indwelling of self-generative power—renewing itself constantly with the process of exhaustion?"

He threw down his file on the bench.

"I fear you are right," he said. "But you will allow it would have made a very pretty machine."

"Pretty, I will allow," I answered, "as distinguished from beautiful. For I can never dissociate beauty from use."

"You say that! with all the poetic things you say in your sermons! For I am a sharp listener, and none the less such that you do not see me. I have a loophole for seeing you. And I flatter myself, therefore, I am the only person in the congregation on a level with you in respect of balancing advantages. I cannot contradict you, and you cannot address me."

"Do you mean, then, that whatever is poetical is useless?" I asked.

"Do you assert that whatever is useful is beautiful?" he retorted.

"A full reply to your question would need a ream of paper and a quarter of quills," I answered; "but I think I may venture so far as to say that whatever subserves a noble end must in itself be beautiful."

"Then a gallows must be beautiful because it subserves the noble end of ridding the world of malefactors?" he returned promptly.

I had to think for a moment before I could reply.

"I do not see anything noble in the end," I answered. "If the machine got rid of malefaction, it would indeed have a noble end. But if it only compels it to move on, as a constable does—from this world into another—I do not, I say, see anything so noble in that end. The gallows cannot be beautiful."

"Ah, I see. You don't approve of capital punishments."

"I do not say that. An inevitable necessity is something very different from a noble end. To cure the diseased mind is the noblest of ends; to make the sinner forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, the loftiest of designs; but to punish him for being wrong, however necessary it may be for others, cannot, if dissociated from the object of bringing good out of evil, be called in any sense a *noble* end. I think now, however, it would be but fair in you to give me some answer to my question. Do you think the poetic useless?"

"I think it is very like my machine. It may exercise the faculties without subserving any immediate progress."

"It is so difficult to get out of the region of the poetic, that I cannot think it other than useful: it is so wide-spread. The useless could hardly be so nearly universal. But I should like to ask you another question: What is the immediate effect of anything poetic upon your mind?"

"Pleasure," he answered.

"And is pleasure good or bad?"

"Sometimes the one, sometimes the other."

"In itself?"

"I should say so."

"I should not."

"Are you not, then, by your very profession, more or less an enemy of pleasure?"

"On the contrary, I believe that pleasure is good, and does good, and urges to good. *Care* is the evil thing."

"Strange doctrine for a clergyman."

"Now, do not misunderstand me, Mr. Stoddart. That might not hurt you, but it would distress me. Pleasure, obtained by wrong, is poison and horror. But it is not the pleasure that hurts, it is the wrong that is in it that hurts; the pleasure hurts only as it leads to more wrong. I almost think myself, that if you could make everybody happy, half the evil would vanish from the earth."

"But you believe in God?"

"I hope in God I do."

"How can you then think that He would not destroy evil at such a cheap and pleasant rate?"

"Because He wants to destroy *all* the evil, not the half of it; and destroy it so that it shall not grow again; which it would be sure to do very soon if it had no antidote but happiness. As soon as men got used to happiness, they would begin to sin again, and so lose it all. But care is distrust. I wonder now if ever there was a man who did his duty, and *took no thought*. I wish I could get the testimony of such a man. Has anybody actually tried the plan?"

But here I saw that I was not taking Mr. Stoddart with me (as the old phrase was). The reason I supposed to be, that he had never been troubled with much care. But there remained the question, whether he trusted in God or the Bank?

I went back to the original question.

"But I should be very sorry you should think, that to give pleasure was my object in saying poetic things in the pulpit. If I do so, it is because true things come to me in their natural garments of poetic forms. What you call the *poetic* is only the outer beauty that belongs to all inner or spiritual beauty—just as a lovely face—mind, I say *lovely*, not *pretty*, not *handsome*—is the outward and visible presence of a lovely mind. Therefore, saying I cannot dissociate beauty from use, I am free to say as many poetic things—though, mind, I don't claim them: you attribute them to me—as shall be of the highest use, namely, to embody and reveal the true. But a machine has material use for its end. The most grotesque machine I ever saw that *did* something, I felt to be in its own kind beautiful; as God called many fierce and grotesque things good when He made the world—good for their good end. But your machine does nothing more than raise the metaphysical doubt and question, whether it can with propriety be called a perpetual motion or not?"

To this Mr. Stoddart making no reply, I take the opportunity of the break in our conversation to say to my readers, that I know there was no satisfactory following out of an argument on either side in the passage of words I have just given. Even the closest reasoner finds it next to impossible to attend to all the suggestions in his own mind, not one of which he is willing to lose, to attend at the same time to everything his antagonist says or suggests, that he may do him justice, and to keep an even course towards his goal—each having the opposite goal in view. In fact, an argument, however simply conducted and honourable, must just resemble a game at football; the unfortunate question being the ball, and the numerous and sometimes conflicting thoughts which arise in each mind forming the two parties whose energies are spent in a succession of kicks. In fact, I don't like argument, and I don't care for the victory. If I had my way, I would never argue at all. I would spend my energy in setting forth what I believe—

as like itself as I could represent it, and so leave it to work its own way, which, if it be the right way, it must work in the right mind,—for Wisdom is justified of her children; while no one who loves the truth can be other than anxious, that if he has spoken the evil thing it may return to him void: that is a defeat he may well pray for. To succeed in the wrong is the most dreadful punishment to a man who, in the main, is honest. But I beg to assure my reader I could write a long treatise on the matter between Mr. Stoddart and myself; therefore, if he is not yet interested in such questions, let him be thankful to me for considering such a treatise out of place here. I will only say in brief, that I believe with all my heart that the true is the beautiful, and that nothing evil can be other than ugly. If it seems not so, it is in virtue of some good mingled with the evil, and not in the smallest degree in virtue of the evil.

I thought it was time for me to take my leave. But I could not bear to run away with the last word, as it were: so I said,

"You put plenty of poetry yourself into that voluntary you played last Sunday. I am so much obliged to you for it!"

"Oh! that fugue. You liked it, did you?"

"More than I can tell you."

"I am very glad."

"Do you know those two lines of Milton in which he describes such a performance on the organ?"

"No. Can you repeat them?"

"'His volant touch'
Instinct through all proportions, low and high,
Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.'"

"That is wonderfully fine. Thank you. That is better than my fugue by a good deal. You have cancelled the obligation."

"Do you think doing a good turn again is cancelling an obligation? I don't think an obligation can ever be *returned* in the sense of being got rid of. But I am being hypercritical."

"Not at all.—Shall I tell you what I was thinking of while playing that fugue?"

"I should like much to hear."

"I had been thinking, while you were preaching, of the many fancies men had worshipped for the truth; now following this, now following that; ever believing they were on the point of laying hold upon her, and going down to the grave empty-handed as they came."

"And empty hearted, too?" I asked; but he went on without heeding me.

"And I saw a vision of multitudes following, following where nothing was to be seen, with arms outstretched in all directions, some clasping vacancy to their bosoms, some reaching on tiptoe over the heads of their neighbours, and some with hanging heads, and hands clasped behind their backs, retiring hopeless from the chase."

"Strange!" I said; "for I felt so full of hope while you played, that I never doubted it was hope you meant to express."

"So I do not doubt I did; for the multitude was full of hope, vain hope, to lay hold upon the truth And you, being full of the main expression, and in sympathy with it, did not heed the undertones of disappointment, or the sighs of those who turned their backs on the chase. Just so it is in life."

"I am no musician," I returned, "to give you a musical counter to your picture. But I see a grave man tilling the ground in peace, and the form of Truth standing behind him, and folding her wings closer and closer over and around him as he works on at his day's labour."

"Very pretty," said Mr. Stoddart, and said no more.

"Suppose," I went on, "that a person knows that he has not laid hold on the truth, is that sufficient ground for his making any further assertion than that he has not found it?"

"No. But if he has tried hard and has not found *anything* that he can say is true, he cannot help thinking that most likely there is no such thing."

"Suppose," I said, "that nobody has found the truth, is that sufficient ground for saying that nobody ever will find it? or that there is no such thing as truth to be found? Are the ages so nearly done that no chance yet remains? Surely if God has made us to desire the truth, He has got some truth to cast into the gulf of that desire. Shall God create hunger and no food? But possibly a man may be looking the wrong way for it. You may be using the microscope, when you ought to open both eyes and lift up your head. Or a man may be finding some truth which is feeding his soul, when he does not think he is finding any. You know the *Fairy Queen*. Think how long the Redcross Knight travelled with the Lady Truth—Una, you know—without learning to believe in her; and how much longer still without ever seeing her face. For my part, may God give me strength to follow till I die. Only I will venture to say this, that it is not by any agony of the intellect that I expect to discover her."

Mr. Stoddart sat drumming silently with his fingers, a half-smile on his face, and his eyes raised at an angle of forty-five degrees. I felt that the enthusiasm with which I had spoken was thrown away upon him. But I was not going to be ashamed therefore. I would put some faith in his best nature.

"But does not," he said, gently lowering his eyes upon mine after a moment's pause—"does not your choice of a profession imply that you have not to give chase to a fleeting phantom? Do you not profess to have, and hold, and therefore teach the truth?"

"I profess only to have caught glimpses of her white garments,—those, I mean, of the abstract truth of which you speak. But I have seen that which is eternally beyond her: the ideal in the real, the living truth, not the truth that I can *think*, but the truth that thinks itself, that thinks me, that God has thought, yea, that God is, the truth *being* true to itself and to God and to man—Christ Jesus, my Lord, who knows, and feels, and does the truth. I have seen Him, and I am both content and unsatisfied. For in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Thomas à Kempis says: 'Cui æternum Verbum loquitur, ille a multis opinionibus expe-

ditur.'" (He to whom the eternal Word speaks, is set free from a press of opinions.)

I rose, and held out my hand to Mr. Stoddart. He rose likewise, and took it kindly, conducted me to the room below, and ringing the bell, committed me to the care of the butler.

As I approached the gate, I met Jane Rogers going home from the village. I stopped and spoke to her. Her eyes were very red.

"Nothing amiss at home, Jane?" I said.

"No, sir, thank you," answered Jane, and burst out crying.

"What is the matter, then? Is your——"

"Nothing's the matter with nobody, sir."

"Something is the matter with you.

"Yes, sir. But I'm quite well."

"I don't want to pry into your affairs; but if you think I can be of any use to you, mind you come to me."

"Thank you kindly, sir," said Jane; and, dropping a courtesy, walked on with her basket.

I went to her parents' cottage. As I came near the mill, the young miller was standing in the door with his eyes fixed on the ground, while the mill went on hopping behind him. But when he caught sight of me, he turned, and went in, as if he had not seen me.

"Has he been behaving ill to Jane?" thought I.

As he evidently wished to avoid me, I passed the mill without looking in at the door, as I was in the habit of doing, and went on to the cottage, where I lifted the latch, and walked in. Both the old people were there, and both looked troubled, though they welcomed me none the less kindly.

"I met Jane," I said, "and she looked unhappy; so I came on to hear what was the matter."

"You oughtn't to be troubled with our small affairs," said Mrs. Rogers.

"If the parson wants to know, why the parson must be told," said Old Rogers, smiling cheerily, as if he at least would be relieved by telling me.

"I don't want to know," I said, "if you don't want to tell me. But can I be of any use?"

"I don't think you can, sir,—leastways, I'm afraid not," said the old woman.

"I am sorry to say, sir, that Master Brownrigg and his son has come to words about our Jane; and it's not agreeable to have folk's daughter quarrelled over in that way," said Old Rogers. "What'll be the upshot on it, I don't know, but it looks bad now. For the father he tell the son that if ever he hear of him saying one word to our Jane, out ov that mill he goes, as sure as his name's Dick. Now, it's rather a good chance, I think, to see what the young fellow's made of, sir. So I tells my old 'ooman here; and so I told Jane. But neither on 'em seems to see the comfort of it somehow. But the New Testament do say a man shall leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife."

"But she ain't his wife yet, Old Rogers," interposed his wife.

"No more she can be, 'cept he leaves his father for her."

"And what'll become of them then, without the mill?"

"You and I never had no mill, old 'ooman," said Rogers; "yet here we are, very nearly ripe now,—ain't us, wife?"

"Medlar-like, Old Rogers, I doubt,—rotten before we're ripe," replied his wife, quoting a more humorous than refined proverb.

"Nay, nay, old 'ooman. Don't 'ee say so. The Lord won't let us rot before we're ripe."

"But, anyhow, it's all very well to talk. Thou knows how to talk, Rogers. But how will it be when the children comes, and no mill?"

"To grind 'em in, old 'ooman?"

Mrs. Rogers turned to me, who was listening with real interest, and much amusement.

"I wish you would speak a word to Old Rogers, sir. He never will speak as he's spoken to. He's always too merry, or too serious. He either takes me up short with a sermon, or he laughs me out of countenance that I don't know where to look."

Now I was pretty sure that Rogers's conduct was simple consistency, and that the difficulty arose from his always acting upon one or two of the plainest principles of truth and right; whereas his wife, good woman—for the bad, old leaven of the Pharisees could not rise much in her somehow—was always reminding him of certain precepts of behaviour to the oblivion of principles. "A bird in the hand," &c.—"Marry in haste," &c.—"When want comes in at the door, love flies out at the window," were amongst her favourite sayings; although not one of them was supported by her own experience. For instance, she had married in haste herself, and never, I believe, had once thought of repenting of it, although she had had far more than the requisite leisure for doing so. And many was the time that want had come in at her door, and the first thing it always did was to clip the wings of Love and make him less flighty, and more tender and serviceable. So I could not even pretend to read her husband a lecture.

"He's a curious man, Old Rogers," I said. "But as far as I can see, he's in the right, in the main. Isn't he now?"

"Oh, yes, I daresay. I think he's always right about the rights of the thing, you know. But a body may go too far that way, you know. It won't do to starve, sir."

Strange confusion—or, ought I not rather to say—ordinary and common-place confusion of ideas!

"I don't think," I said, "anyone can go too far in the right way."

"That's just what I want my old 'ooman to see, and I can't get it into her, sir. If a thing's right, it's right, and if a thing's wrong, why wrong it is. The helm must either be to starboard or port, sir."

"But why talk of starving?" I said. "Can't Dick work? Who could think of starting that?"

"Why, my old 'ooman here. She wants 'em to give it up and wait for better times. The fact is, she don't want to lose the girl."

"But she hasn't got her at home now."

"She can have her when she wants her, though—leastways after a bit of warning. Whereas if she was married, and the consequences a follerin' at her

heels, like a man-o'-war with her convoy, she would find she was chartered for another port, she would."

"Well, you see, sir, Rogers and me's not so young as we once was, and we're likely to be growing older every day. And if there's a difficulty in the way of Jane's marriage, why I take it as a Godsend."

"How would you have liked such a difficulty, Mrs. Rogers, when you were going to be married to your sailor here? What would you have done?"

"Why whatever he liked, to be sure. But then, you see, Dick's not my Rogers."

"But your daughter thinks about him much in the same way as you did about this dear old man here when he was young."

"Young people may be in the wrong. *I* see nothing in Dick Brownrigg."

"But young people may be right sometimes, and old people may be wrong sometimes."

"I can't be wrong about Rogers."

"No, but you may be wrong about Dick."

"Don't you trouble yourself about my old 'ooman, sir. She allus was awk'ard in stays, but she never missed them yet. When she's said her say, round she comes in the wind like a bird, sir."

"There's a good old man to stick up for your old wife. Still I say, they may as well wait a bit. It would be a pity to anger the old gentleman."

"What does the young man say to it?"

"Why, he says like a man, he can work for her as well's the mill, and he's ready, if she is."

"I am very glad to hear such a good account of him. I shall look in, and have a little chat with him. I always liked the look of him. Good morning, Mrs. Rogers."

"I'll see you across the stream, sir," said the old man, following me out of the house.

"You see, sir," he resumed, as soon as we were outside, "I'm always afraid of taking things out of the Lord's hands. It's the right way, surely, that when a man loves a woman, and has told her so, he should act like a man, and do as is right. And isn't that the Lord's way? And can't He give them what's good for them. Mayhap they won't love each other the less in the end if Dick has a little bit of the hard work that many a man that the Lord loved none the less has had before him. I wouldn't like to anger the old gentleman, as my wife says; but if I was Dick, I know what I would do. But dont'ee think hard of my wife, sir, for I believe there's a bit of pride in it. She's afeard of bein' supposed to catch at Richard Brownrigg, because he's above us, you know, sir. And I can't altogether blame her, only we ain't got to do with the look o' things, but with the things themselves."

"I understand you quite, and I'm very much of your mind. You can trust me to have a little chat with him, can't you?"

"That I can, sir."

Here we had come to the boundary of his garden—the busy stream that ran away as if scared at the labour it had been compelled to go through, and was now making the best of its speed back to its mother-ocean, to tell sad tales of a world where every little brook must do some work ere it gets back to its rest. I bade him good day, jumped across it, and went into the mill, where Richard was tying the mouth of a sack as gloomily as the brothers of Joseph must have tied their sacks after his silver cup had been found.

"Why did you turn away from me, as I passed half-an-hour ago, Richard?" I said, cheerily.

"I beg your pardon, sir. I didn't think you saw me."

"But supposing I hadn't?—But I won't tease you. I know all about it. Can I do anything for you?"

"No, sir. You can't move my father. It's no use talking to him. He never hears a word anybody says. He never hears a word you say o' Sundays, sir. He won't even believe the *Mark Lane Express* about the price of corn. It's no use talking to him, sir."

"You wouldn't mind if I were to try?"

"No, sir. You can't make matters worse. No more can you make them any better, sir."

"I don't say I shall talk to him; but I may try it, if I find a fitting opportunity."

"He's always worse—more obstinate, that is, when he's in a good temper. So you may choose your opportunity wrong. But it's all the same. It can make no difference."

"What are you going to do, then?"

"I would let him do his worst. But Jane doesn't like to go against her mother. I'm sure I can't think how she should side with my father against both of us. He never laid her under any such obligation, I'm sure."

"There may be more ways than one of accounting for that. You must mind, however, and not be too hard upon your father. You're quite right in holding fast to the girl; but mind that vexation does not make you unjust."

"I wish my mother were alive. She was the only one that ever could manage him. How she contrived to do it nobody could think; but manage him she did, somehow or other. There's not a husk of use in talking to *him*."

"I daresay he prides himself on not being moved by talk. But has he ever had a chance of knowing Jane—of seeing what kind of a girl she is?"

"He's seen her over and over."

"But seeing isn't always believing."

"It certainly isn't with him."

"If he could only know her! But don't you be too hard upon him. And don't do anything in a hurry. Give him a little time, you know. Mrs. Rogers won't interfere between you and Jane, I am pretty sure. But don't push matters till we see. Good-bye."

"Good-bye, and thank you kindly, sir.—Ain't I to see Jane in the meantime?"

"If I were you, I would make no difference. See her as often as you used, which I suppose was as often as you could. I don't think, I say, that her mother will interfere. Her father is all on your side."

I called on Mr. Brownrigg; but, as his son had forewarned me, I could make nothing of him. He didn't see, when the mill was his property, and Dick was

his son, why he shouldn't have his way. And he was going to have it. His son might marry any lady in the land; and he wasn't going to throw himself away that way.

I will not weary my readers with the conversation we had together. All my missiles of argument were lost as it were in a bank of mud, the weight and resistance of which they only increased. My experience in the attempt, however, did a little to reconcile me to his going to sleep in church; for I saw that it could make little difference whether he was asleep or awake. He, and not Mr. Stoddart in his organ-sentry-box, was the only person whom it was absolutely impossible to preach to. You might preach *at* him; but *to* him?—no.

X.

As Christmas drew nearer and nearer, my heart glowed with the more gladness; and the question came more and more pressingly—Could I not do something to make it more really a holiday of the Church for my parishioners? That most of them would have a little more enjoyment than they had had all the year through, I had ground to hope; but I wanted to connect this gladness—in their minds I mean, for who could dissever them in fact?—with its source, the love of God, that love manifested unto men in the birth of the Human Babe, the Son of Man. But I would not interfere with the Christmas Day at home. I resolved to invite as many of my parishioners as would come, to spend Christmas Eve at the Vicarage.

I therefore had a notice to that purport affixed to the church door; and resolved to send out no personal invitations whatever, so that I might not give offence by accidental omission. The only person thrown into perplexity by this mode of proceeding was Mrs. Pearson.

"How many am I to provide for, sir?" she said, with an injured air.

"For as many as you ever saw in church at one time," I said. "And if there should be too much, why so much the better. It can go to make Christmas Day the merrier at some of the poorer houses."

She looked discomposed, for she was not of an easy temper. But she never *acted* from her temper; she only *looked* or *spoke* from it.

"I shall want help," she said, at length.

"As much as you like, Mrs. Pearson. I can trust you entirely."

Her face brightened; and the end showed that I had not trusted her amiss.

I was a little anxious about the result of the invitation—partly as indicating the amount of confidence my people placed in me. But although no one said a word to me about it beforehand except Old Rogers, as soon as the hour arrived, the people began to come. And the first I welcomed was Mr. Brownrigg.

I had had all the rooms on the ground-floor prepared for their reception. Tables of provision were set out in every one of them. My visitors had tea or coffee, with plenty of bread and butter, when they arrived; and the more solid supplies were reserved for a later part of the evening. I soon found myself with enough to do. But before long, I had a very efficient staff. For after having had occasion, once or twice, to mention something of my plans for the evening, I found my labours gradually diminish, and yet everything seemed to go right; the fact being that good Mr. Boulderstone, in one part, had cast himself into the middle of the flood, and stood there immoveable both in face and person, turning its waters into the right channel, namely, towards the barn, which I had fitted up for their reception in a body; while in another quarter, namely, in the barn, Dr. Duncan was doing his best, and that was simply something first-rate, to entertain the people till all should be ready. From a kind instinct these gentlemen had taken upon them to be my staff, almost without knowing it, and very grateful I was. I found, too, that they soon gathered some of the young and more active spirits about them, whom they employed in various ways for the good of the community.

When I came in and saw the goodly assemblage, for I had been busy receiving them in the house, I could not help rejoicing that my predecessor had been so fond of farming that he had rented land in the neighbourhood of the vicarage, and built this large barn, of which I could make a hall to entertain my friends. The night was frosty—the stars shining brilliantly overhead—so that, especially for country people, there was little danger in the short passage to be made to it from the house. But, if necessary, I resolved to have a covered-way built before next time. For how can a man be *the parson* of a parish, if he never entertains his parishioners? And really, though it was lighted only with candles round the walls, and I had not been able to do much for the decoration of the place, I thought it looked very well, and my heart was glad that Christmas Eve—just as if the Babe had been coming again to us that same night. And is He not always coming to us afresh in every childlike feeling that awakes in the hearts of his people?

I walked about amongst them, greeting them, and greeted everywhere in turn with kind smiles and hearty shakes of the hand. As often as I paused in my communications for a moment, it was amusing to watch Mr. Boulderstone's honest, though awkward endeavours to be at ease with his inferiors; but Dr. Duncan was just a sight worth seeing. Very tall and very stately, he was talking now to this old man, now to that young woman, and every face glistened towards which he turned. There was no condescension about him. He was as polite and courteous to one as to another, and the smile that every now and then lighted up his old face, was genuine and sympathetic. No one could have known by his behaviour that he was not at court. And I thought—Surely even the contact with such a man will do something to refine the taste of my people. I felt more certain than ever that a free mingling of all classes would do more than anything else towards binding us all into a wise patriotic nation; would tend to keep down that foolish emulation which makes one class ape another from afar, like Ben Jonson's *Fungoso*, "still lighting short a suit;" would refine the

roughness of the rude, and enable the polished to see with what safety his just share in public matters might be committed into the hands of the honest workman. If we could once leave it to each other to give what honour is due; knowing that honour demanded is as worthless, as insult undeserved is hurtless! What has one to do to honour himself? That is and can be no honour. When one has learned to seek the honour that cometh from God only, he will take the withholding of the honour that comes from men very quietly indeed.

The only thing that disappointed me was, that there was no one there to represent Oldcastle Hall. But how could I have everything a success at once?—And Catherine Weir was likewise absent.

After we had spent a while in pleasant talk, and when I thought nearly all were with us, I got up on a chair at the end of the barn and said:

"Kind friends,—I am very grateful to you for honouring my invitation as you have done. Permit me to hope that this meeting will be the first of many, and that from it may grow the yearly custom in this parish of gathering in love and friendship upon Christmas Eve. When God comes to man, man looks round for his neighbour. When man departed from God in the Garden of Eden, the only man in the world ceased to be the friend of the only woman in the world; and, instead of seeking to bear her burden, became her accuser to God, in whom he saw only the Judge, unable to perceive that the infinite love of the Father had come to punish him in tenderness and grace. But when God in Jesus comes back to men, brothers and sisters spread forth their arms to embrace each other, and so to embrace Him. This is, when He is born again in our souls. For, dear friends, what we all need is just to become little children like Him; to cease to be careful about many things, and trust in Him, seeking only that He should rule, and that we should be made good like Him. What else is meant by 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you?' Instead of doing so, we seek the things God has promised to look after for us, and refuse to seek the thing He wants us to seek—a thing that cannot be given us, except we seek it. We profess to think Jesus the grandest and most glorious of men, and yet hardly care to be like Him; and so when we are offered his Spirit, that is, his very nature within us, for the asking, we will hardly take the trouble to ask for it. But to-night, at least, let all unkind thoughts, all hard judgments of one another, all selfish desires after our own way, be put from us, that we may welcome the Babe into our very bosoms; that when He comes amongst us—for is He not like a child still, meek and lowly of heart?—He may not be troubled to find that we are quarrelsome, and selfish, and unjust."

I came down from the chair, and Mr. Brownrigg being the nearest of my guests and wide awake, for he had been standing, and had indeed been listening to every word according to his ability, I shook hands with him. And positively there was some meaning in the grasp with which he returned mine.

I am not going to record all the proceedings of the evening; but I think it may be interesting to my readers to know something of how we spent it. First of all, we sang a hymn about the Nativity. And then I read an extract from a book of travels, describing the interior of an Eastern cottage, probably much resembling the inn in which our Lord was born, the stable being scarcely divided from the rest of the house. For I felt that to open the inner eyes even of the brain, enabling people to *see* in some measure the reality of the old lovely story, to help them to have what the Scotch philosophers call a true *conception* of the external conditions and circumstances of events, might help to open the yet deeper spiritual eyes which alone can see the meaning and truth dwelling in and giving shape to the outward facts. And the extract was listened to with all the attention I could wish, except, at first, from some youngsters at the further end of the barn, who became, however, perfectly still as I proceeded.

After this followed conversation, during which I talked a good deal to Jane Rogers, paying her particular attention, indeed, with the hope of a chance of bringing old Mr. Brownrigg and her together in some way.

"How is your mistress, Jane?" I said.

"Quite well, sir, thank you. I only wish she was here."

"I wish she were. But perhaps she will come next year?"

"I think she will. I am almost sure she would have liked to come to-night; for I heard her say——"

"I beg your pardon, Jane, for interrupting you; but I would rather not be told anything you may have happened to overhear," I said, in a low voice.

"Oh, sir!" returned Jane, blushing a dark crimson; "it wasn't anything particular."

"Still, if it was anything on which a wrong conjecture might be built"—I wanted to soften it to her—"it is better that one should not be told it. Thank you for your kind intention, though."

Meantime Dr. Duncan was talking to one of his own patients, old Mrs. Trotter, to whose wants he ministered far more from his table than his surgery. I have known that man, hearing of a case of want from his servant, send the fowl he was about to dine upon, untouched, to those whose necessity was greater than his. But this is not the place; I will tell you more about him afterwards.

"Jane," I said, "will you do me a favour?"

"That I will, sir, if I can."

"Sing that Christmas carol I heard you sing last night to your mother."

"I didn't know anyone was listening, sir."

"I know you did not. I came to the door with your father, and we stood and listened."

She looked very frightened. But I would not have asked her had I not known that she could sing like a bird.

"I am afraid I shall make a fool of myself," she said.

"We should all be willing to run that risk for the sake of others," I answered.

"I will try then, sir."

So she sang, and her clear voice soon silenced the speech all round.

"Babe Jesus lay on Mary's lap;
The sun shone in his hair;
And so it was she saw, mayhap,
The crown already there.

"For she sang: 'Sleep on, my little King!
Bad Herod dares not come;
Before Thee, sleeping, holy thing,
Wild winds would soon be dumb.

"I kiss Thy hands, I kiss Thy feet,
My King, so long desired;
Thy hands shall never be soiled, my sweet,
Thy feet shall never be tired.

"For Thou art the King of men, my son;
Thy crown I see it plain;
And men shall worship Thee, every one,
And cry, Glory! Amen.'

"Babe Jesus opened his eyes so wide!
At Mary looked her Lord.
And Mary stinted her song and sighed.
Babe Jesus said never a word."

When Jane had done singing, I asked her where she had learned the carol; and she answered,—

"My mistress gave it me. There was a picture to it of the Baby on his mother's knee."

"I never saw it," I said. "Where did you get the tune?"

"I thought it would go with a tune I knew; and I tried it, and it did. But I was not fit to sing to you, sir."

"You must have quite a gift of song, Jane!" I said.

"My father and mother can both sing."

Mr. Brownrigg was seated on the other side of me, and had apparently listened with some interest. His face was ten degrees less stupid than it usually was. I fancied I saw even a glimmer of some satisfaction in it. I turned to Old Rogers.

"Sing us a song, Old Rogers," I said.

"I'm no canary at that, sir; and besides, my singing days be over. I advise you to ask Dr. Duncan there. He *can* sing."

I rose and said to the assembly:

"My friends, if I did not think God was pleased to see us enjoying ourselves, I should have no heart for it myself. I am going to ask our dear friend Dr. Duncan to give us a song.—If you please, Dr. Duncan."

"I am very nearly too old," said the doctor; "but I will try."

His voice was certainly a little feeble; but the song was not much the worse for it. And a more suitable one for all the company he could hardly have pitched upon.

"There is a plough that has no share,
But a coulter that parteth keen and fair.
But the furrows they rise
To a terrible size,
Or ever the plough hath touched them there.
'Gainst horses and plough in wrath they shake:
The horses are fierce; but the plough will break.

"And the seed that is dropt in those furrows of fear,
Will lift to the sun neither blade nor ear.
Down it drops plumb,
Where no spring times come;
And here there needeth no harrowing gear:
Wheat nor poppy nor any leaf
Will cover this naked ground of grief.

"But a harvest-day will come at last
When the watery winter all is past;
The waves so grey
Will be shorn away
By the angels' sickles keen and fast;
And the buried harvest of the sea
Stored in the barns of eternity."

Genuine applause followed the good doctor's song. I turned to Mr. Boulderstone.

"I am greatly obliged to you, Mr. Boulderstone, for the help you have given me this evening. I've seen you talking to everybody, just as if you had to entertain them all."

"I hope I haven't taken too much upon me. But the fact is, somehow or other, I don't know how, I got into the spirit of it."

"You got into the spirit of it because you wanted to help me, and I thank you heartily."

"Well, I thought it wasn't a time to mind one's peas and cues exactly. And really it's wonderful how one gets on without them. I hate formality myself."

The dear fellow was the most formal man I had ever met.

I then asked Mr. Brownrigg to take Jane Rogers into the house, and give her something to eat in return for her song. He yielded somewhat awkwardly, and what passed between them I do not know. But when they returned, she seemed less frightened at him than when she heard me make the proposal. And ere the evening was over, I may as well mention now, that I heard Mr. Brownrigg take leave of Jane with the words—

"Give us a kiss, my girl, and let bygones be bygones."

Which kiss I heard with delight. For had I not been a peacemaker in this matter? And had I not then a right to feel blessed?—But the understanding was brought about simply by making the people meet—compelling them, as it were, to know something of each other really. Hitherto this girl had been a mere name, or phantom at best, to her lover's father; and it was easy for him to treat her as such, that is, as a mere fancy of his son's. The idea of her had passed through his mind; but with what vividness any idea, notion, or conception could be present to him, my readers must judge from my description of him. So that obstinacy was a ridiculously easy accomplishment to him. For he never had any notion of the matter to which he was opposed—only of that which he favoured. It is very easy indeed for such people to stick to their point.

After this I read two or three of Wordsworth's ballads to them, and they listened even with more interest than I had been able to hope for. The fact was that the happy and free-hearted mood they were in "enabled the judgment." I wish one knew always by what musical spell to produce the right mood for receiving and reflecting a matter as it really is. Every true poem carries this spell with it in its own music, which it sends out before it as a harbinger, or properly a *herberger*, to prepare a harbour or lodging for it. But then it needs a quiet mood first of all, to let this music be listened to.

For I thought with myself, if I could get them to like poetry and beautiful things in words, it would not only do them good, but help them to see what is in the Bible, and therefore to love it more. For I never could believe that a man who did not find God in other places as well as in the Bible ever found Him there at all. And I always thought, that to find God in other books enabled us to see clearly that he was *more* in the Bible than in any other book, or all other books put together.

After supper we had a little more singing. And to my satisfaction nothing came to my eyes or ears,

during the whole evening, that was undignified or ill-bred. Of course, I knew that many of them must have two behaviours, and that now they were on their good behaviour. But I thought the oftener such were put on their good behaviour, giving them the opportunity of finding out how nice it was, the better. It might make them ashamed of the other at last.

There were many little bits of conversation I overheard, which I should like to give my readers; but I cannot dwell longer upon this part of my Annals. Especially I should have enjoyed recording one piece of talk, in which Old Rogers was evidently trying to move a more directly religious feeling in the mind of Dr. Duncan. I thought I could see that *the* difficulty with the noble old gentleman was one of expression. But after all the old foremast-man was a seer of the Kingdom; and the other, with all his refinement, and education, and goodness too, was but a child in it.

Before we parted, I gave to each of my guests a sheet of Christmas Carols, gathered from the older portions of our literature. For most of the modern hymns are to my mind neither milk nor meat—mere wretched imitations. There were a few curious words in these, but I thought it better to leave them as they were; for they might set them inquiring, and give me an opportunity of interesting them further, some time or other, in the history of a word; for, in their ups and downs of fortune, words fare very much like human beings.

And here is my sheet of Carols :—

AN HYMNE OF HEAVENLY LOVE.

O blessed Well of Love! O Floure of Grace!
O glorious Morning-Starre! O Lampe of Light!
Most lively image of thy Father's face,
Eternal King of Glorie, Lord of Might,
Meeke Lambe of God, before all worlds behight,
How can we Thee requite for all this good?
Or what can prize that Thy most precious blood?

Yet nought Thou ask'st in lieu of all this love,
But love of us, for guerdon of Thy paine:
Ay me! what can us lesse than that behove?
Had He required life of us againe,
Had it beene wrong to ask his owne with gaine?
He gave us life, He it restored lost;
Then life were least, that us so little cost.

But He our life hath left unto us free,
Free that was thrall, and blessed that was bann'd;
Ne ought demaunds but that we loving bee,
As He himselfe hath lov'd us afore-hand,
And bound therto with an eternall band,
Him first to love that us so dearely bought,
And next our brethren, to his image wrought.

Him first to love great right and reason is,
Who first to us our life and being gave,
And after, when we fared had amisse,
Us wretches from the second death did save;
And last, the food of life, which now we have,
Even He himselfe, in his dear sacrament,
To feede our hungry soules, unto us lent.

Then next, to love our brethren, that were made
Of that selfe mould, and that self maker's hand,
That we, and to the same againe shall fade,
Where they shall have like heritage of land,
However here on higher steps we stand,
Which also were with selfe-same price redeemed
That we, however of us light esteemed.

Then rouze thy selfe, O Earth! out of thy soyle,
In which thou wallowest like to filthy swyne,
And doest thy mynd in durty pleasures moyle,
Unmindfull of that dearest Lord of thyne;
Lift up to Him thy heavie clouded eyne,
That thou this soveraine bountie mayst behold,
And read, through love, his mercies manifold.

Beginne from first, where He encradled was
In simple cratch, wrapt in a wad of hay,
Betweene the toylfull oxe and humble asse,
And in what rags, and in how base array,
The glory of our heavenly riches lay,
When Him the silly shepheards came to see,
Whom greatest princes sought on lowest knee.

From thence reade on the storie of his life,
His humble carriage, his unfaulty wayes,
His cancred foes, his fights, his toyle, his strife,
His paines, his povertie, his sharpe assayes,
Through which He past his miserable dayes
Offending none, and doing good to all,
Yet being malist both by great and small.

With all thy hart, with all thy soule and mind,
Thou must Him love, and his beheasts embrace:
All other loves, with which the world doth blind
Weake fancies, and stirre up affections base,
Thou must renounce and utterly displace,
And give thy selfe unto Him full and free,
That full and freely gave himselfe to thee.

Then shall thy ravisht soul inspired bee
With heavenly thoughts farre above humane skil,
And thy bright radiant eyes shall plainly see
Th' idee of his pure glorie present still
Before thy face, that all thy spirits shall fill
With sweete enragement of celestial love,
Kindled through sight of those faire things above.

SPENSER.

NEW PRINCE, NEW POMP.

BEHOLD a silly tender Babe,
In freezing winter night,
In homely manger trembling lies;
Alas! a piteous sight.

The inns are full, no man will yield
This little Pilgrim bed;
But forced He is with silly beasts
In crib to shroud his head.

Despise Him not for lying there,
First what He is enquire;
An orient pearl is often found
In depth of dirty mire.

Weigh not his crib, his wooden dish,
Nor beast that by Him feed;
Weigh not his mother's poor attire,
Nor Joseph's simple weed.

This stable is a Prince's court,
The crib his chair of state;
The beasts are parcel of his pomp,
The wooden dish his plate.

The persons in that poor attire
His royal liveries wear;
The Prince himself is come from heaven—
This pomp is praised there.

With joy approach, O Christian wight!
Do homage to thy King;
And highly praise this humble pomp
Which He from heaven doth bring.

SOUTHWELL.

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THREE SHEPHERDS.

1. WHERE is this blessed Babe
That hath made
All the world so full of joy
And expectation;
That glorious Boy
That crowns each nation
With a triumphant wreath of blessedness?

2. Where should He be but in the throng,
And among
His angel-ministers, that sing
And take wing
Just as may echo to his voice,
And rejoice,
When wing and tongue and all
May so procure their happiness?

3. But He hath other waiters now.
A poor cow,
An ox and mule stand and behold,
And wonder,
That a stable should enfold
Him that can thunder.

Chorus. O what a gracious God have we!
How good! How great! Even as our misery.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

A SONG OF PRAISE FOR THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

AWAY, dark thoughts; awake, my joy;
Awake, my glory; sing;
Sing songs to celebrate the birth
Of *Jacob's* God and King.
O happy night, that brought forth light,
Which makes the blind to see!
The day-spring from on high came down
To cheer and visit thee.

The wakeful shepherds, near their flocks,
Were watchful for the morn;
But better news from heav'n was brought,
Your Saviour Christ is born.
In *Bethlem*-town the infant lies,
Within a place obscure,
O little *Bethlem*, poor in walls,
But rich in furniture!

Since heaven is now come down to earth,
Hither the angels fly!
Hark, how the heavenly choir doth sing
Glory to God on High!
The news is spread, the church is glad,
Simeon, o'ercome with joy,
Sings with the infant in his arms,
Now let thy servant die.

Wise men from far beheld the star,
Which was their faithful guide,
Until it pointed forth the Babe,
And Him they glorified.
Do heaven and earth rejoice and sing—
Shall we our Christ deny?
He's born for us, and we for him:
Glory to God on High.

JOHN MASON.

(To be continued.)

OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS; OR, METHODS TO DO GOOD.

BY THE EDITOR.

III.—OUR CHIEF END.

"WHEN thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee, and put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite." This passage, in which Solomon, by a startling metaphor, teaches the propriety of self-restraint, illustrates one of the most remarkable features of the Bible—this, namely, that though the conditions of men are infinitely varied, each one may find something appropriate to itself there. Our globe floats in an ocean of air; and as that, the atmosphere which surrounds it, descends to the bottom of the deepest mine, and also rises to the summit of the highest mountain; as it covers continents and seas alike; as, an element of universal life, it is found in all dwellings, and is fitted for men in all variety of conditions; so is the Word of God. Thus, whether they dwell in a palace or a prison, whether they celebrate a feast or observe a fast, whether they are prosperous or unfortunate in business, whether they hang rejoicing over a cradle or sit weeping by a coffin, whether they enjoy health or lie pining on a bed of sickness, whether they are occupied with the things of this world or of the next, whatever be the relation in which they stand to others,—that of sovereign or subject, parent or child, brother or sister, companion or neighbour, bosom friend or deadly foe,—there are none but will find something in the Bible written for them, and for their case.

While spreading itself thus over the whole surface of society, and directing us in the vast variety of cases which society offers, this book in some instances presents remarkable illustrations of the adage "much in little." Like a river which, flowing in a broad and spacious bed, contracts its limits, and collects its waters to pour them through a rocky channel not broader than a brave man could leap, the Bible gathers up all its directions to men in all manner of circumstances to present them in one short, single, comprehensive sentence. For instance, the duties we owe to God and to our neighbours, which fill so many of its chapters and have filled so many volumes of divinity, it gathers up into this short saying, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." On these, says our Lord, hang all the law and the prophets. Enunciating the motives from which our conduct should spring, these condense into one sentence the whole duty of man. With a condensation no less remarkable, and an application equally broad, the Apostle Paul enunciates, not the motives but the object of our conduct, not the feelings that should move us, but the end we should move to, in this single but equally memorable sentence, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

This is the End for which we should live; and what a noble end this, compared with the mean, base, paltry, selfish, sinful objects for which so many live! Let a domestic who kindles a fire or sweeps a floor, do so for God's glory, let her go about her meanest avocations with a desire to honour the God she serves and the religion she professes; like the lark that from its lowly nest ascends on quivering wing to fill the blue sky over him with a flood of melody, let a ploughman, rising to this object, draw his furrow and go through his work with a view to God's glory, as well as to his master's interests and his own, and here indeed "the end sanctifies the means;" the secular becomes a sacred, the meanest an exalted and honourable occupation. By this motive we ally ourselves to the angels who sing God's praise and shine to his glory. Rising higher still, we become one with God himself. Our aim is his: He does all things for his own glory. In a sense we live the life and die the death of him who, praying, "Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee," undertook the work of redemption, and brought to light in the latent attribute of Mercy the brightest jewel of his Father's crown.

A grand end to live for, how many are the strong yet most tender, the common yet most sacred ties, that bind us to it, it were impossible to tell. We have more reason for living to God's glory than any angel has. He made us; he has preserved our fragile life; he has provided for our daily wants. But to man He has been merciful and gracious, besides being abundant in goodness and in truth—having borne with us, and pitied us, and spared us, and loved us, and, not sparing his own Son, redeemed us, and by his gracious Spirit called us out of darkness into his marvellous light. And so the warmest love to God should burn in human bosoms; and in the heavenly choir the highest notes should be sung, not by angels, but by those whom Jesus has redeemed to God by his blood out of every kindred, and nation, and people, and tongue. In taking our nature into union with his own, God conferred the rarest and highest honour on humanity;

nor, since he redeemed men with the blood of his Son, do the highest angels wear crowns so bright as the thief of the cross, or the woman that was a sinner. As in the families of men the youngest child is seated by day next to its father, and lies closest by night to its mother's breast; or as in the material heavens it is not the largest but the smallest planets that revolve in orbits nearest to the sun; so in consequence of redeeming love, though in his original position inferior to angels, man occupies in the family of God, and in those heavens of which the visible are but the starry pavement, a place nearest to the throne. And thus by the law that to whom much is given, of them shall much be required, those whom God has most loved are most bound to love, those whom he has most glorified are most bound to glorify him.

We may regard the glory of God in a wider aspect than in its connection with our pleasure or our duty. There are in nature, ordained of God, laws of limited operation, and others, acting everywhere and on everything, of universal operation. There is no place in the world, for instance,—neither on the sea nor its shore, neither at the bottom of the darkest mine nor on the snowy summit of the loftiest mountain,—where a stone, if dropped from the hand, does not fall, drawn downward by the earth's attraction. Nor is this, which is called the law of gravitation, bounded by earth, her spacious seas or sounding shores. It reaches the utmost limits of creation; so that the law by which its rattle drops from an infant's hand, or the tear from its cheek, is the very law that rolls the planets in their orbits and fixes the stars in heaven. Now he who appears—so far as science has travelled the realms, and penetrated the mysteries, of creation—to have made all matter, worlds equally with grains of sand, suns of light equally with drops of rain, celestial equally with terrestrial things, subject to the imperial law of gravitation, with a sweep more universal still, because embracing both the spiritual and the material universe, has made all things for his own glory. Insects as well as angels, the flowers that spangle the meadow as well as the stars that spangle the sky, the lamp of the glowworm as well as the light of the sun, the lark that sings in the air and the saint that is singing in Paradise, the still small voice of conscience as well as the thunders that rend the clouds, or the trump that shall rend the tomb,—these and all things else manifest God's attributes and proclaim his praise. They glorify him; and for that end—the loftiest that God, angel, or man can aim at—they were made. As is said in Scripture, "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."

There is a sense indeed in which we, puny creatures whom he could crush before the moth, may defeat God in this object, may defraud him of his due. "Will a man rob God?" is the question he himself puts; and, speaking to the Jews, answers thus—"Ye have robbed me of tithes and offerings." But while, to use his own strong language, men may rob God of the love, service, time, and talents which are his due, of his glory they can no more rob him than they can pluck from his hand the sceptre, or from his brows the crown, of the universe. For though the atheist denies his existence,—the fool saying in his heart, "There is no God;" and the infidel his Word,—spurning it as an old superstition or cunningly-devised fable; and others, less bold but equally undutiful, like Simon Magus who sought the Holy Ghost to make money of his gifts, may profess for worldly ends to serve him, while in reality, the slaves of vicious passions, they serve his enemy, the devil, how abortive are all their efforts to rob him of his glory? "He that sits in heaven laughs, the Lord holds them in derision;" making the ungodly passions and very wrath of man so to praise him, that they who will not glorify him with the services of earth and on the harps of heaven, shall be compelled, as objects of his righteous indignation, to glorify him in the fires of hell. Not that he wishes it so. God is not willing that any should perish. Not that He has any pleasure in the death even of the wicked. Not but that he would have all men to come and be saved. he spared not his Son that he might spare us. But he will have his glory out of all men. Let men, therefore, "kiss the Son lest he be angry, and they perish from the way." "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down and cast into the fire;" nor will God be defrauded of his glory. The tree that is not good for fruit shall be found good for fuel.

For example, Pharaoh had no intention whatever of serving God and promoting his glory. Nothing was further from his thoughts; as appears from the insolent and defiant tone of his answer to the message conveyed to him from God by Moses and Aaron: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go!" "Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go!" Thus, the proud king of Egypt throws down the gage of battle; and daring the God of Israel to do his worst, puts the people under a more grievous and grinding bondage. Yet see how God took his glory out of this man; making Egypt a theatre on which to display his sovereign and almighty power in a series of unparalleled and stupendous miracles! Moses throws his rod on the palace floor; and so soon as the straight, dry, dead wood touches the ground, it turns, and twists, and hisses, and rears its crest, a living serpent,—putting the astonished courtiers to sudden flight. He stretches it on the river—and all the waters of Egypt change into blood;—the goblet with its loathsome draught drops from the hand of the thirsty; and the Nile rolls its red flood from shore to shore onward to the sea, crimsoning her foaming waves. He raises it; and loud thunders rend the sky, nor cease till there is neither standing tree nor living beast in the fertile fields of Egypt—all lie crushed and killed by balls of fire and tremendous bolts of ice. Miracle succeeds miracle; each fit of Pharaoh's obstinacy affording God an opportunity of glorifying himself through one who refused to glorify him. Nor was the last of these judgments the least remarkable. For though it was to his own destruction, it was eminently to God's glory that Pharaoh, seeing the sea open its gates to let Israel go, rushed down into the deep, lashing his horses like a madman. And when

Moses, standing against the morning skyline on a rock of the other shore, again stretched out his rod, the parted waters, obedient to the signal, rushed together, to roar and foam in one wild tumultuous sea over the banners and chariots, the pride and hosts of Egypt. The sea has moaned over many a wreck, but never made one like that, over which her avenging waves go rejoicing; and never did any man she flung on her shore less intend to glorify God than he over whom, and the drowned host the waves floated to their feet, Moses and the whole congregation sang, "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. Thy right hand, O Lord, is glorious in power: thy right hand hath dashed in pieces the enemy; thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Who is like unto thee among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea!"

But let us confine our attention to the glory of God as the end for which we should be willing, and should be happy, to live. Without entering into the merits of the different catechisms used by Protestant Churches, all will admit that none open with an introduction more grand than that of the Westminster Divines. Whatever judgment may be formed of the building itself, no porch or vestibule, no introduction could exceed in loftiness and grandeur the manner in which it opens—with this question, namely, and its appropriate answer, "What is the chief end of man?"—"The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him for ever." With that, like the catechism, our life should open, and should also close; the glory of God, and not our own, being the end we ought to have in view in all its plans and purposes, its actions and arrangements. And it may serve to illustrate the subject, and also promote a good practical end, to consider here the case which St. Paul puts, namely that of eating and drinking to the glory of God.

Now I remark that we eat and drink to this end when we share our food with the needy. It were not to glorify God, it were not to be like the children of our Father in heaven, it were not to recommend religion in the eyes of the world, it were not to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, it were not to be like Jesus Christ, for Christians to pamper their appetite and indulge their love of a luxurious table to the loss of those who suffer want, and are ready to perish. I refer not only to times of public calamity, of high prices and low wages, of scant harvests and stern winters, of such destruction of crops as some years ago sent our Highlanders to their stormy shores to pluck the tangle and gather shells for food, and turned Ireland into a Hadadrimmom, or valley of weeping. At all times and everywhere, but especially in our crowded cities, there are families sorely pinched for the common necessaries of life; people who struggle for existence, and find it hard to feed the hungry mouths of children, or keep body and soul together. In many cases, perhaps, their vices have reduced them to this misery; and it is sometimes a serious and difficult question whether, and how far, charity should interpose between crime and its consequences. God has wisely ordained suffering to be the penalty of sin, and appointed pain the guardian of virtue as well as of life. Were it otherwise, were the indolent to enjoy the same advantages as the industrious, were vice as conducive to health and wealth and pleasure as virtue, this world would not be fit to live in. Therefore, however painful it may be to refuse relief and pass by the sufferer, as if our hearts, instead of bleeding for them, were as hard as stone, our duty in certain cases and to some extent may require us to allow men, by reaping as they have sowed, to learn that "the way of transgressors is hard." But God makes his sun to shine upon the evil and the good; and we are to be the children of our Father in heaven, which we cannot be, blessing others—the many who suffer want in this world and no blame to them, poor children, the fatherless, and the stranger, unless in the very matter of our tables and of ministering to our appetites we have respect to God's glory. Were there no waste on the part of some, how much less want would there be on the part of others? If Dives had not fared sumptuously, Lazarus had fared comfortably, every day. The waste that goes on in many houses, the luxuries under which tables groan and health suffers, would supply the wants, and diffuse contentment through the homes, of thousands; and they only who, thinking that there is room and bread enough at their Father's table for them and others, make room for these, and from their own superfluity supply their neighbour's plate and fill his cup, eat to God's glory; glorify God at the table in eating, as well as in the temple in worshipping; and breathe the spirit of him, our divine Pattern, who, when the fare was but barley loaves and fishes, said, "Gather up the fragments, that nothing may be lost!"

I remark again, we eat and drink to God's glory when we abstain from excess—from the gluttony that, on the one hand, makes man a beast, and the drunkenness that, on the other hand, makes him a devil. The last, as a national, at least our most prevailing sin, has the chief claim on our notice. The evils of intemperance we would not have cause to lament, and be ashamed of; it would not be the blot of our country and the disgrace of our Churches, the curse of so many families and the "skeleton" in so many houses, were God's glory our end in eating and in drinking, as in all things else. But such wide-spread desolation has this hideous vice wrought on the peace and prosperity of families, on the bodies and souls of those for whom Jesus died, that many, who do not go the length of saying that there is sin in the use of stimulants, go the length (and I am not ashamed to confess myself one of the number) of saying that these do so much more ill than good, are so dangerous to all and so deadly to many, that for security against their abuse, it is best, unless as medicines, to abstain from their use. A matter this to which the apostolic rule applies, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

I know that great errors have been propagated, and even great crimes committed, from mistaken views of what was for the glory of God. For that end, Saul of

Tarsus — as many bloody bigots have done since then—persecuted the Church of God, and was so exceedingly mad against Christ's people that his very name struck terror into their hearts. In shedding Stephen's blood, and breathing forth slaughters, this Jew thought he did God service. He aimed at God's glory; but by how great a distance did he miss the mark? People, I admit, may be as far wrong as Saul, or even Jehu, when, pursuing his selfish and ambitious ends, he reined in his fiery steeds and invited the prophet to share his chariot, saying, "Come, see my zeal for the Lord." But though it may sometimes be doubtful whether a sober man is on the way to heaven, there is, and can be, no doubt that a drunkard is on the way to hell. It may be a question with a humble, downcast, trembling believer, seated at the Lord's table, whether, when he raises the wine cup of communion to his lips, he is drinking to the glory of God; but there can be no question that God is not glorified, but dishonoured, by the cup which turns man's heart to stone and his head to madness,—which destroys his reason, and damns his soul. No drunkard, says the Bible, "shall inherit the kingdom of God."

All who love God and their fellow-creatures, who are animated with a spark of the love which brought our blessed Saviour to this world and the cross, should, as pre-eminently one grand way of living to the glory of God, conspire together to check, and, were that possible, to extinguish and trample out this terrible vice. It may be said of its evils, their name is *legion*. For one God's providence makes poor, drunkenness reduces a thousand to poverty; for one born without reason, it deprives thousands of reason; for one sober man who commits suicide, by the accidents which it produces and the diseases which it generates it sends thousands by their own hands to an untimely grave; and in broken-hearted wives and starving children kills many more than the murderers who fall on scaffolds—than battles that redden earth's soil with soldiers' blood. It is calculated that, by its direct or indirect influence, drunkenness costs this country, year by year, of lives not less than sixty thousand, and of money not less than sixty millions—a sum greater by twenty times than all this Christian nation contributes for the purposes of education, for the maintenance and propagation of the Gospel. Is this to eat and drink to the glory of God? Alas! it becomes us to exclaim with Ezra, "I blush, and am ashamed to lift up my head." May God give us grace to amend our ways and doings, as those whom Christ charges with the care of his own sacred cause and of his Father's glory!

It was a precious legacy Jesus bestowed on John, the best-loved of the disciples, in his mother. Before his conception, Gabriel, leaving the throne of God, winged his way down to Mary's door, to astonish the humble virgin, not more by his appearance than by this strange address—"Hail, thou that art highly favoured! the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." After his conception, but before his birth, her cousin, whom she had gone to visit, received Mary as if she had been a queen—"Blessed," cried Elisabeth, as she gazed on her face, perhaps bent lowly at her feet, "blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" After his birth, the aged Simeon stood on the verge of another world, and holding the blessed babe in his withered arms, poured forth a strain equally inspired in its heavenly source and lofty in its glorious import; only that it closed with words of ominous meaning. A sword is to pierce the mother's soul. What sword? Long a mystery to Mary, the hour has come that it ceases to be so. It is now unsheathed, glittering before her dazzled eyes, buried in her quivering heart. Jesus, her Son, is hanging on the bloody tree, and dies amid the scorn of man, and to appearance under the wrath of God. The sword is piercing her soul. Jesus sees it; and all the son is moved within him. Pattern to the children of men, he forgets his own sorrows in his mother's; and, turning his eye from her fainting form to fix it on John, he commits her to the tenderest, kindest, and best-loved of his disciples, in these touching and most expressive words—"Behold thy mother!" A precious charge indeed! What danger was not John ready to face, what sacrifices to submit to, what self-denial and hardship to endure, that he might supply the wants of Mary, and shield a head so honoured from the storms and ills of life!

Had this legacy been bequeathed to us from the cross where he hung, bleeding to save us, had Jesus with dying look and voice committed his mother to our charge, he had not committed to us a trust more precious than we have. Christians have, indeed, a still greater, dearer charge. I speak not of pastors, to whom Christ says, "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs,"—of those, the ministers of the Gospel, to whose care, in souls purchased by his dying blood, he has committed

> Treasures greater far
> Than east or west unfold;—

nor of parents, to whom, as he commits in each child an immortal spirit to their guardian arms, he says, in the words of Pharaoh's daughter, "Nurse this child for me!" Not to one and another, not to this or that class, but to all his people, without distinction of age, office, or rank, he has committed the sacred cause of his own and of his Father's glory. How great the responsibility, how weighty, as well as how honourable, the charge of the humblest Christian! And since according to the tenor of his life God will be honoured, or dishonoured; since the divine glory will thereby be either promoted, or hindered; since sinners will thereby be either drawn to religion, or driven from it; since the hands of ministers will thereby be either strengthened, or weakened; and since in God's providence souls will thereby be either lost or saved, and the Christian himself become to others either the savour of death unto death, or the savour of life unto life—how should God's people feel the solemnity and awfulness of their position? Let them put forth their utmost efforts, and put up their most earnest prayers, that they may make their light so to shine before men that God may be glorified—that others may see their good works, and glorify their Father which is in heaven.

KING DAVID

AS THE PROPHET OF CHRIST.

That which distinguishes David not only from all earthly kings, but even from all the other pious kings of Judah, is the fact that he was not only a sovereign but a prophet. It is true, the prophetic office was never solemnly conferred upon him, as it was, for instance, upon Elisha, nor was it in his character of prophet that he appeared in public life. Yet to the Church he is not less known as a prophet than as a king; nay, his prophetic character is so much blended with his royalty, that believers may call him a prophet-king, just as Melchisedec is called a priest-king.

An eminent Swiss clergyman justly says that David "not only *uttered* prophecies, but *did* and *lived* prophecies;—that his person and position in history, his whole life and labours, were prophetic." * Of all the living types of Christ in the Old Testament, he was one of the most perfect. With the exception of Joseph, the son of Jacob, I do not know one man in the holy history whose life reflects with such minuteness and clear detail the image of the promised Messiah. His adversities foreshadowed the sufferings, his prosperity the triumph, of the spiritual King of Israel. While describing his own experiences, he could not help picturing, though less clearly, the experiences of Christ, who was to be born of him. The Holy Spirit so guided his pen, that David's individuality was often completely identified with that of his Divine Son; for his hallowed fancy, breaking through the limits of his own personal experiences, stepped over into those which were to be exclusively peculiar to Christ, and he described these with as great intensity of perception and power of utterance as if he had really experienced them himself. The Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews (vii. 9, 10) says that Levi, while yet in the loins of Abraham, paid tithes; and so we may say that Jesus, while yet in the loins of David, wrote his own history.

It is this close, let me say essential connection, with the person of Christ, which places David in the list of the few holy men chosen by God, and from whose names it pleased Him to borrow a title, when revealing Himself to his people. There are only five men mentioned in the Old Testament whose names were honoured in this special manner, viz., Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David. Much loved and highly honoured by God in other respects as Enoch, Noah, Moses and many others were, yet their names never occur as constituents of the title with which God chose to be known. He never reveals Himself as the God of Enoch or the God of Moses, but He is once called the God of Shem (Gen. ix. 26) and He reveals himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and as the God of David. These were the chief paternal ancestors of Jesus, and they formed, as it were, five pillars, which bore that golden chain predestined to end in the Rock of Ages, Christ, and thus, from the earliest times, connected our human race with Emmanuel, God with us.* Among these greatly favoured ones David was the most prominent, because in him the promises which were given to the other patriarchs obtained their highest expression. The light of Messianic prophecy, which hitherto had been more or less dim and diffuse, was in him concentrated and made so definite as to be reflected with even increasing lustre through all the revelations of later prophets.

The history of this extraordinary man cannot be well understood unless it is regarded as the history of one of the chief bearers of God's revelations. It is in this light that he is mainly presented to us by his sacred biographer. Had his life been written by such men as Herodotus or Tacitus, who concerned themselves solely with the social and political importance of their heroes, many of his deeds, of which we now know but very little, would have been copiously related; while many others, of which we now have detailed and accurate accounts, would scarcely have been mentioned even. Biblical history is distinguished from profane history in this, that it does not so much purpose to record the doings of men, as the history of the revelation of God to men and through men. The parts of a man's biography which it dwells longest upon are invariably those a mere historian would have passed over, but in which the man's relation to God's revelation is most clearly brought out. David's conquests, for instance, must have been considerable. The methods by which he subjected the immense territory between the frontiers of Egypt and the Euphrates must have given proof of uncommon military skill and prowess. Yet the sacred historian merely refers to them; points to them, as it were, in passing. His sufferings under Saul's persecutions, on the contrary, of which, probably, an ordinary historian would have made cursory mention, are in the Bible fully and graphically reported, because they formed the school in which the heart of that "man of God" was trained so as to make him truly a "man after God's heart." It is only from some small, almost incidental, scraps of the sacred record that we know of David's extraordinary talents as a politician, a general, and a poet; but oftentimes it is from the most elaborate pictures that we obtain knowledge of his confidence in God in times of trouble, and of his deep contrition in times of sin and guilt.

Though anointed by Samuel as king of Israel, as

* S. Preiswerk's "David," p. 3. This excellent lecture, to which the writer is indebted for some thoughts, is the second in a popular course upon the prophets (*Vorträge über die Propheten*), delivered by a number of Basle clergymen and theologians.

* Since the appearance of Christ on earth, God has exchanged his former titles for that of the "God and Father of Jesus Christ." All other names, however honourable and venerable, must disappear before this one. The former names derived their signification from their relation to his. I will not say that Christian preachers who, in their sermons or prayers, speak of or address God as "the God of Jacob," are guilty of an offence against Christ, but they countenance a strange anachronism. It is not seemly to connect God's character with a lesser name, where the highest name has been given. We do not meet with one passage in the New Testament which favours the idea that the Apostles ever called God the God of Jacob.

Saul's successor, yet, strange to say, David for awhile remained a shepherd. The performance of the solemnity at that early period may perhaps be best explained by bearing in mind the educational purpose God had in view. This young man, though designated for the highest place amongst men, was to exercise himself in perfect submission to, and constant dependence upon God, by "following the sheep" even till the moment the finger of the Lord should beckon him to come forward. That discipline was necessary for a youth, who, though undoubtedly gifted with extraordinary natural talents, might nevertheless be easily tempted to rely upon his own strength and wisdom. Such discipline would in any circumstances have been salutary; but it was especially necessary for a young man who was appointed to be a king in a theocratic kingdom, where perfect submission to the order of God was essential to the well-being of the State. It was through want of such a humble, devout spirit that Saul lost the throne; it was through perseverance in a humble, devout spirit that David kept it. Thus, while typifying by his profession as a shepherd the faithfulness and care of the great Shepherd of the sheep, David at the same time foreshadowed by his obedience the character of Him who "sought not his own will but the will of the Father who had sent Him" (John v. 30), and who was "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. ii. 8).

A remarkable feature in David's character was his love of music, especially of those tender melodies which are so congenial to the quiet of the shepherd's life. In a young man who evinced a courage which did not shrink from fighting even a lion and a bear, this was significant and striking. It showed that, powerful hero as he was, the key-note of his heart sounded peace and harmony. Gallantly he stood out against injustice and oppression; a more terrible antagonist the enemies of God knew not. Yet his was not the spirit of Ishmael, "whose hand was against every man, and against whom was every man's hand." If it were required, he could make the hills and valleys resound with the clangour of battle; but the harsh sounds of uncontrolled passion and the rude licence of war did not accord with his tastes. There were many noisy, harsh-sounding instruments in his semi-barbaric days: but his fancy was for the mellow, tuneful harp, whose strings he knew well how to strike. The sweet tones which he could draw from the chords drove away even the evil spirit of melancholy from Saul's soul. The humble shepherd, harp in hand, stood before the king, and proved able to conquer an enemy greater than he was. In this, David was a striking type of Him who, with the gentle breath of the Gospel, was to dispel the terror of death from sinners' hearts, and to destroy the works of the prince of this world.

It was his musical skill that first brought David to the royal Court. Here a new world must have disclosed itself to the keen eyes of the young shepherd. His conduct in later times showed that he had not witnessed it in vain. He returned to his sheep, to his solitude and his harp. Moses lived some years at the Court of Pharaoh, and then went to herd Jethro's sheep. So David spent some time at the Court of Saul, and returned to his calling; and he knew both were preparations for the destiny in store for him. While playing his harp in his solitude, he could remember witnessing the dangers and sorrows of a throne, resting secure upon the Word of God. He could reflect, too, how a poor man who fears God is richer and happier than a king and a Court which have swerved from the right way. To know this, was expedient for a young man who himself was one day to sit upon a throne.

Some time later we see David sent by his father as a messenger to his brothers in the camp. Israel was at that time at war with the Philistines, whose chief champion, Goliath, defied the armies of the living God. The indignation with which David heard the impious and insulting language of the giant showed that he was animated by a different spirit from that of Saul and his men. His glorious victory over the monster Philistine was the turning-point of his outward life. The shepherd then becomes a soldier. Saul cannot help honouring the young hero with a permanent situation at his Court, though inwardly he is consumed with envy of one he feels may be a formidable rival. That period of David's life now opens in which he typifies Christ as suffering under the persecutions of the prince of this world, who, consequently, is foreshadowed by the person of Saul. The anointed one who "abode not in the truth," and "kept not his first estate," but became a liar and a murderer, turns his deadly anger against the beloved of God, who has been anointed in his stead, and to whom the throne, the dominion, and all the power in the kingdom have been given. In the days of Christ "the common people heard Him gladly," till the worldly power had risen openly against Him. So David, in the commencement of his public life, was the favourite of the people, till Saul threw off his disguise, and declared himself his implacable enemy. David was then abandoned by the timid multitude, and left alone with the faithful few. The band of friends who, notwithstanding his having become an outlaw and an outcast, yet continued to believe in his divine unction, and to expect his future elevation to the throne, typified the Church of Christ, which, in the face of Christ's rejection by the world, persistently believes that He is the Messiah, the Anointed One. Among the few who clave faithfully to the fugitive hero, Jonathan, his brother-in-law, was undoubtedly the first,—standing alone in the unparalleled purity and nobility of his character. He certainly typifies the Church of Christ in her boundless love and faithful devotedness to her "Elder Brother, Saviour, and King." Jonathan knew well that David's success would be his ruin, and also that of his father's house. Yet such was his reverence for the anointed of God, and such his love for David, that he hated his own life, *i. e.*, his own personal interest and his father's house, for David's sake. In a typical manner, he thus illustrated that saying: "If any man come to Me and hate not his father and mother, he cannot be my disciple."

Adversity is the true school for great men. In it David learnt his lessons. He had ascended

to the highest position in the kingdom, had attained the seat next to the throne, but he was suddenly, as with one stroke, cast down into the dust again. He was almost killed by the javelin of his infuriated father-in-law; a lucky turn of his body saved him. Had it not been for the cunning artifice of his wife he would have been murdered in his own house by the messengers of Saul. He is deprived of his rank and his comforts, and he becomes poorer than the poorest. Even Samuel, the grey-headed venerable prophet, has it not in his power to shelter him permanently. He must flee from country and people, as if he were a malefactor. Perhaps it was in a moment of weakness that he resolved to take refuge with the king of the Philistines at Gath. Here he was welcome as the object of Saul's hatred, but suspected at the same time as the conqueror of Goliath. Affecting to be a maniac, he succeeds in escaping from his pursuers, only to be hunted like a stag on the mountains of Judah. Here, that little band of faithful companions, who formed the nucleus of his future military power, gathered round him. They were a poor, miserable-looking band of men, who in their distress and need applied to him for help, protection, and consolation. In this, they foreshadowed those poor and needy, those helpless and hopeless sinners, who were to go to Christ for salvation.

A long series of hardships, persecutions, and disappointments ensued, in which David and his friends often found themselves on the brink of despair or of perdition; and, but for the marked interference of that God in whom he trusted, he would have fallen a victim to Saul's implacable wrath. Here the fire of purification through which God led him attained its highest heat, and it is wonderful to see how here his faith rises ever higher and higher. The darker the shade the malignity of his enemy throws about him, the more gloriously shines the lustre of his piety, generosity, and true nobility of character. Though living a thousand years before the Gospel was preached, yet he proves himself to have known its fundamental principle, in that he spared, twice over, the life of his cowardly persecutor. He loved his enemy; he gave blessing for cursing; he recompensed not evil for evil, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously. We can understand how a man, who was led in such a way and showed such a spirit, would be the root out of which, one day, the Branch of Life was to grow.

This period of David's life has something extraordinarily attractive to our human feeling. It reads, in fact, like a novel: it is so full of plot and adventure. Yet we feel, from the quiet tone of its composition, the sobriety of its style, and the ingenious simplicity of its descriptions, that the narrative is no fiction, but plain fact. It is the history of that portion of David's life which, but for the sacredness of its character, we might be tempted to call his romantic period. Though it was really now that the foundation of his intellectual and religious development was laid, yet, to the casual looker-on, the development of his bodily capacities and natural talents appears in the foreground. Buoyant with youthful strength and enthusiasm, the hero reaches his full growth, displaying a splendour of knightly prowess and nobility such as the middle ages, even in its highest blossoming-time, cannot cope with. Those days of friendship and love engross all our thoughts and feelings when reading David's life in our youth. In later days we see him placed in circumstances where we can only follow him at a distance. Here, however, we think we could have taken our place by his side, feeling as he feels, thinking as he thinks; for this period contains nothing but what corresponds with our own experiences as friends and brothers, as strugglers through life's difficulties. Hence the truly beneficial effect which the study of David's life has upon the formation of our moral and religious character. We witness a human being subject to like passions as we are, and at the same time rising above them, and walking with God. This example, while rendering null the pretexts of our faint-heartedness and worldly-mindedness, strengthens our faith and excites our energy as soldiers of Christ. It could never have that effect if this period of David's life savoured in the slightest of what was mythical and unreal. The veracity and inspiration of the Bible are, perhaps, nowhere more evident than here. Notwithstanding that there is so much opportunity, and indeed temptation, to throw a sort of mythical halo round the head of a hero, the penman keeps entirely clear of all such fabulous exaggerations as characterise the early historical records of all other nations, rendering them richer in amusing poetry than in moral influence.

The times at which David came to the throne required a ruler who to the strength of a young man added the experience of a hero trained and strengthened in the school of adversity. With the death of Saul and Jonathan the throne became vacant, and the tribe of Judah felt no hesitation in acknowledging their much-respected kinsman, from whose sceptre they expected happier days than they had enjoyed under that of his deceased enemy. It was no easy matter, however, to take in hand the reins of such a government. There was war without and discord within. The battle in which Saul lost his life was a dreadful calamity to Israel, which seemed to lie in helpless exhaustion at the feet of its conquerors. Besides, the social condition of the people was very low. The incessant wars with the neighbouring Philistines had not only prevented the development of the national life, but also in such a measure drained the natural resources that industry was at a stand-still. Only a few years before this there was not a single smith to be found in the realm who was able to make a sword or a spear. A regular military organisation, without which nothing beyond a state of semi-barbarism is realizable, was not possible in such circumstances. Fortunately David possessed, in the men who had been his stanch companions in his troubles, a well-trained and exercised body of warriors, who could form the basis for a regular army. At their head were the three sons of Zeruiah, and the mighty but violent Joab. In these men he possessed a strong arm with which to fight his enemies abroad. But the greater their power and influence, the

more wisdom and prudence were required on David's part, to keep them harmless in the country itself. A powerful party still supported the cause of Saul, and were opposed to a king of the tribe of Judah. Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, was chosen king of the northern tribes, while David ruled only over the tribe of Judah at Hebron. The opposition king was an insignificant man; but he had a strong supporter in his late father's gallant field-marshal, Abner. Had David followed the advice of the sons of Zeruiah, he would have waged war with Ish-bosheth, and perhaps have conquered him. But by going to war he would, most likely, have estranged the people from his person, and never have gained their affections again. If he was to become king of the whole kingdom, he thought it was God that should make him so. He wished no throne founded in his brother's blood. So the two kingdoms continued for seven years; not in public war, it is true, but yet not in peace and friendship.

At length this unpleasant, and in many respects injurious, state of things was brought to an end. Two scoundrels murdered Ish-bosheth, and Joab murdered Abner. It was now shown how limited David's power really was, and how much circumspection he had to apply to prevent the outbreak of a civil war. Though with all his heart detesting and condemning the murder of the noble Abner, yet he did not punish the guilty Joab. "I am this day weak," he said, "though anointed king; and these men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too hard for me. The Lord shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness." Scripture does not comment upon this act of David. From affection towards his person we are prone to look upon it as an evidence of his wisdom and prudence. Still we should perhaps be more correct if we looked upon it as an evidence of what might be called the weak point in his character, to which the greater part of his troubles in later life may be traced back—I mean his want of a sense of justice and righteousness, strong enough to make him sternly look his friends in the face when they were doing wrong.

Not that he was void of a sense of righteousness. He manifested that very strongly on several occasions, when a traitor or an oppressor was to be punished. But it seems that when such passions as friendship and love came into play, he was not always able to resist the pressure of misguiding good-nature or of uncontrolled self-indulgence. No doubt the man who, after having heard Nathan's parable of the poor man's lamb, thus gives vent to his feeling of indignation, "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die," displays, at the moment, a strong sense of justice. But if that sense of justice had been as strong as it ought to have been, and as it has often manifested itself in other characters, he would not possibly have been able, deliberately and in cold blood, to order Uriah to be killed. It appears indeed that, owing to his habit of conniving at the misbehaviour of his friends and favourites, jurisdiction was rather imperfect under his reign. It must have been so before Absolom, when trying to steal the hearts of the people, could promise to settle their matters, since "there was no man deputed of the king to hear them." Nor does the glance which Scripture allows us to cast into David's family life give us the impression that the spirit in which his children were trained was as compatible with justice as it was with love.

We should be unjust, however, if we judged a man who lived in the shadow of the law of Moses by the light in which we are now enabled to live. David knew what was said "by them of old time," but he never saw in the flesh Him who had the authority of placing his "But I say unto you" above their precepts. We should be unreasonable if we expected of him a purity of moral sense such as can only be observed in those living under the full light of Christian revelation. Accustomed as we are to look upon David as the author of those psalms which present to the Church of God a treasure of knowledge which even the most advanced in Christian wisdom and experience cannot exhaust, we are apt to suppose that he also in his moral development must have reached a height which placed him at least upon a level with the most morally-developed Christian. History, however, relates facts of David's life which testify to the contrary. Nor is this to be marvelled at, if we bear in mind the important truth that, under the Old Testament dispensation, a man's prophetical gifts were not at all a just standard by which to measure the height of his moral development, or even the extent of his spiritual knowledge. As to the latter, the Apostle Peter distinctly tells us that the prophets, after having uttered their prophecies under the temporary inspiration of the Holy Ghost, had themselves to inquire and to search what the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify (1 Peter i. 10, 11). So we must believe that David has in his psalms uttered many a sentence the meaning of which was as obscure to him as it is clear now to us. There may also in the same psalms occur sentences which, by the prophetic light of the Spirit, describe a purity of moral perception characterizing a future dispensation, but which yet went far beyond David's own personal moral sphere, and were altogether strange to the dispensation in which he lived. Not to speak of the number of his wives and concubines, I will only point to this fact, that the same man who in Ps. v. 6, is assured that God "shall destroy them that speak leasing," spoke a lie to the priest Abimelech at Nob, when telling him that he was journeying on business for Saul. Nor does it seem that his conscience ever reproached him on account of that trespass; for it was even on the occasion of his having "changed his behaviour before Abimelech," that he wrote the 34th Psalm, in which, it is true, he exhorts others "to keep their tongue from evil, and their lips from speaking guile" (ver. 13), but utters not one word of repentance for having transgressed that commandment himself. It appears from this, that he did not look upon his then behaviour as a transgression against the moral law. On the contrary, he describes himself in the 4th and 6th verses as a man who at that moment "sought the Lord," and "cried unto the Lord," so that He "heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles."

David's subsequent behaviour at the Court of king

Achish at Gath, where he feigned himself to be a lunatic, and the double-tongued way in which he dealt with that king afterwards at Ziklag, also show that, according to *his* standard of morality, such words as "guile and leasing" must have had a more limited signification than we believe the Gospel allows. We must agree that, taking into account the low level of civilisation on which his age stood, David was indeed foremost among his cotemporaries. Not long before his time the people had been delivered up to a complete state of anarchy: "There was no king in those days in Israel, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges xvii. 6). Saul's government, which succeeded to this state of confusion, had not contributed much towards improving the moral condition of the people. In such a state of things, a man like David—who, as he tells us in the 51st Psalm, could with tears bewail his adultery and murder, and who revered the servants of God, who served no other God but Jehovah, and kept his oaths most conscientiously, who honoured his parents (during the days of his persecutions he brought them in safety to the land of Moab), and who sacrificed everything for the maintenance of religion—was, in a moral sense, from his shoulders upward, higher than any of the people.

But excellent as was David's moral character for the time in which he lived, it was not merely that moral character which made him "a man after God's heart." Even supposing his moral conduct had been as irreproachable as that of the young man who could say to Christ: "All these things have I kept from my youth up" (Matt. xix. 20), he never would have occupied such a high place among the Old Testament saints had not a higher motive than what we understand by a pure moral principle animated him. It was the decidedly pious, God-seeking and God-honouring disposition of his heart, which made him the true *David*—the beloved of the Lord. It was his faith in Jehovah, as the only God of heaven and earth, as the only source of salvation, happiness, and blessing. It is true he was a sinner like all of us, but he thereby became exactly one of the strongest proofs for the truth, without which we all of us should be lost, that a man may be a friend, a beloved one of God, *though* a sinner. In his life it is very clearly brought out that two men may deserve the name of sinner, and that they may yet differ like day and night as to the disposition of their heart. Saul and David both often transgressed the law of God, and, according to the standard of human judgment, David was perhaps even more guilty than Saul. But Saul fled with his sins away from God, proudly to retain them as his own; while David with his sins took refuge with God, in order to have them taken away. Both to Saul and to David sin was a temporary source of pleasure; but to David that pleasure soon changed itself into grief. Thus even his sins brought out all the clearer that the key-note of his soul was a thirst after holiness, a perfect peace of the heart through union with the Holy One of Israel. This "thirsting after God" characterised him throughout his whole life. We observe it in him from the first moment we make his acquaintance. It was because the Lord "looketh on the heart" that the young shepherd was preferred above his brethren. And no wonder. That young shepherd, when following the sheep, found his delight in tuning his harp to the praise of his God. It was not the prospect of being praised by the people, and rewarded by the king, that prompted him to take up his sling against Goliath, but his burning zeal for the honour of the God of Israel, whose holy name he had heard reviled. Thus as love to his God directed his enmity (Ps. cxxxix. 21), so it also guided his friendship. Had Jonathan not loved the Lord as he loved him, David would never have pressed him to his bosom. Accordingly, when his enemies had become so many that they "would daily swallow him up," it is in his God that he puts his trust (Ps. lvi. 2-4); and when his friends forsake him, it is in his God that he "encourages himself" (1 Sam. xxx. 6). To him God is his life's beginning and end, the only true foundation and rock. When he breaks out into exultation, it is because he knows himself near to Him, and when he pours out his heart in doleful lamentations, it is because he feels that his sins have made a separation between that God and his soul.

No wonder that such a man should have proved an instrument in the hand of the Holy Spirit to describe the person and character of the promised Messiah, in such a manner as no other prophet approached unto. No other prophet, Isaiah not excepted, pictures to us the inward life of the Saviour with that careful minuteness and tenderness of colouring, which makes many a psalm of David little else than a photograph of our Lord's experiences in the various stages of his life. Isaiah also describes our Lord's sufferings; but we have only to put the 53rd of Isaiah in juxtaposition with the 22nd Psalm, to notice at once the difference between these two unparalleled prophetic pictures. Isaiah chiefly depicts the sufferings in their outward form: he describes how the Lord was despised and rejected of men; how He was wounded and bruised, slain and buried; but he leaves it to the reader's imagination to picture out what the soul of Christ must have suffered. The whole of that prophecy is, in fact, like a vision, for the prophet, all through the chapter, speaks in the third person of the Holy Sufferer, whose wounded and bruised image is, as it were, before his eyes. So he has only to paint what he beholds. But the 22nd Psalm is no vision. Nor could most of the sufferings which are here described be so seen. They are invisible sufferings, mental agonies, excruciating torments of the inner man, which could not possibly be brought before another man by means of visible emblems. The man who is to describe such sufferings must, in some measure at least, have felt and experienced them; he must, to some extent, have known what it is to be "forsaken by God;" what it is to be in such a state of horror as to cry out, "My heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels." Still more so is this true where the mental sufferings of our adorable Substitute are described, as is the case in the 38th Psalm. These sufferings could never have been depicted so truly except by a man who had himself in some measure felt the unspeakable grief which a God-loving soul feels when, burdened

with the guilt of sin, it finds itself in the presence of that holy and just God, and experiences, not only outward tribulation, but also that inward anguish which comes of an awakened conscience. Now, what we know of David's life and experience gives us ground for looking upon him as a man who, so far as it was possible for a sinful man, on the one hand resembled Christ in his unquestionable love to God, and on the other resembled Him as a sufferer under the persecutions of wicked men, and also as a sufferer under the soul-crushing burden of sin. It is true, in David's case it was the burden of his own sins he bore, whereas in the case of Christ it was the burden of others' sins which was felt. It may be somewhat inconceivable to our limited understanding, but if we believe that Christ really suffered in our stead as our true substitute, we must also believe that He as really felt the painful effects of our sins upon his soul as we know He felt them upon his body. The fact that Christ, when hanging on the cross, took David's *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani* on his lips, places this truth beyond any doubt. On an immensely greater scale, and with immensely greater intensity, his soul must have felt itself in a position similar to that in which David's soul was when he wrote these words. But likewise must David, when writing them, have felt himself in a state of mind similar to that of Christ, though of course in an immensely narrower compass and weaker degree. It is owing to this identity between the person of David and that of Christ that the former could write in the *first* person while at the same time he was speaking of the latter. When exclaiming (Ps. xxxviii. 8), "*I* am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart," &c., he is describing his own personal suffering, but at the same time the future suffering of his great Son, whose sufferings stood to his in the same proportion as the boundless ocean stands to one of its constituent drops. But as these descriptions were not merely issuing from an impulse of David's own will (for "the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man," 2 Pet. i. 21), but from the moving influence of the Holy Ghost, the drop often swelled to David's mind as if essaying to take in the whole ocean. In other words, David's feelings and perceptions were often so extended and intensified under the agency of the Spirit as to render it evident to the enlightened reader, that One greater than David is speaking through him. Hence, his psalms abound with expressions which are evidently too strong to be understood only of his own experiences. These expressions must have so looked to himself, when he read them after the inspiration had subsided, and his mind had returned to something of its ordinary state. They then, certainly, constituted that portion of his writings which caused him to inquire and to search diligently what the Spirit that was in him did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ. In these hallowed inquiries he must especially have been engaged when reading those expressions in his psalms, in which he describes his faith and hope in the future glory.

As David was identified with Christ in his suffering, so he was in his hoping and believing. It was the same God on whom he relied as Christ put his trust in; and the glory which he looked forward to was the same which was constantly before the eyes of Christ. What he believed and hoped was, so to speak, a microscopic photograph of the faith and hope of Jesus. Here again the Holy Spirit often caused him, when writing down his psalms, to expand his inspired imagination beyond himself, and to burst through the limits of his own experiences into those of his divine Antitype. Undoubtedly he always believed that one day he would rise again from the dead; but he never could have believed that he would not suffer corruption. Yet, while expressing his faith that God would not leave his soul in hell, he at the same time exults in the prospect that God will not suffer his Holy One to see corruption. We have the authority of the Apostle Peter (Acts ii. 29-31) for our belief that David, through speaking in the first person, "spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." This is a clear instance of the unity, and at the same time of the difference, that existed between David and Christ. There is much in these expressions which David could apply to himself. Certainly, God would not leave his soul in hell, *i. e.*, in the Hades. Nay, he could feel assured that one day he would rise with an incorruptible body out of the pit of corruption. Still, the expressions, as they were written there before his eyes, were too strong to be exclusively applicable to himself. He has seen corruption, and he knew he would see it. But he also knew that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruits of his loins according to the flesh He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. So he must have come to the conclusion, that at least one part of that prophecy was only applicable to that great Fruit of his loins. "Seeing this before," the Apostle says, "he spoke of the resurrection of Christ."

To those who are able to compare spiritual things with spiritual, David may be said to be the Christ of the Old Testament and Christ the David of the New. The more we study the life and person of the one, the more we shall be able to understand the person and life of the other.

JOHN DE LIEFDE.

WHEN OUR CHILDREN ARE ABOUT US.

"Come to me, O ye children!
For I hear you at your play,
And the questions that perplexed me
Have vanished quite away.

"What are all our contrivings,
And the wisdom of our books,
When compared with your caresses,
And the gladness of your looks?

"Ye are better than all the ballads
That ever were sung or said;
For ye are the living poems,
And all the rest are dead."

Long ago, in the dawn of the world's history, in a distant country, there lived a man who had once been prosperous, happy, respected, in a very high degree; but who, all at once, fell into great poverty and trouble. He lost all his property, all his children, and well-nigh his own life. He stood one day, or sat on the ground, bemoaning himself among his friends, recalling with a fond sadness vanished scenes, and bygone years. He talked much and long—as men are apt to talk, in hours of confidence, with listening friends about them—of what he had been and done in other days. It is a melancholy tale of departed glory—a dirge such as, happily, very few men can sing over their own life. We listen the more eagerly to his wailing, because the sorrow is so vast and so exceptional. He mourns like a king discrowned and exiled. He lights up for us in the melancholy reminiscence, the palaces of pleasure that had been darkened, and the high walks of honour and usefulness he has now ceased to tread. He speaks of a "secret" once with him, now lost: of "a candle" which once shone in his tabernacle, but which now burns no more: of a Divine "presence" sheltering, sufficing, which then "preserved" him, but from which he seems now cast out. Then ran the oil out of the rock for his anointing: then butter washed his steps. When he went, in those days, to the gate of the city, there was reverence: when he took his seat in the street there were the tokens of a universal regard—young men standing aside, aged men rising up, princes keeping silence. As he moved about from place to place the air became vocal with benedictions—the poor, the fatherless, and the widow joining in sweet chorus to his praise,—and so on through the multiform aspects of a prosperity now withered and dead like autumn leaves. Who can but listen when so great a mourner speaks? Who can fail to sympathise with him in reverses so entire and desolating?

"But probably he has some chief comforts remaining. His children will be about him, to soothe his griefs, and beguile the sense of his losses. They—young and fresh—will stay their father in his great need, and ere long they will make life green about him again." Ah, no! This touches the tenderest point in all his sorrow. He takes up *their* names also into his lament. He tells us that *they* are all gone; and he secures, as he could in no other way, the freshest and homeliest sympathy of every true father and mother in the world, just by one short, thrilling note in his long, sad dirge of grief—"*When my children were about me!*" Is not that the tenderest touch of all? Does it not take us in a moment to our own homes, and back along the line of past years, and away to churchyards far and near, and up to heaven? Let us linger for a little on an expression so full of suggestiveness, and—not forgetting the Patriarch who gives us the seed for our thought—let us apply his words in different ways to ourselves.

I.

When our children are children, we should really have them "about us." Job's children (for by this time we all know that *he* is the mourner) were "about him" in the days of his prosperity. I do not know that we should be justified in supposing that he had his children in much closer personal association with him than was usual with godly parents of the time. It is certainly worthy of notice that they are named particularly at the opening and the ending of the book. We are told the number of his sons, and the names of his daughters. He tells us, too, how "fair" they were, and we seem to see the sheen of their Arabian beauty. He tells us of "sons" and of "sons' sons" even to "four generations." He "saw" them all. We feel that he took *delight* in seeing them, in having them "about him," when he was a young father, and when he was an old Patriarch.

The highest and godliest nurture still is that which keeps the children *beside* the parents through the earlier years of life, in the fresh formative time, when there are beginnings of things that will never end. When the little birds are in the nest the parent birds are seldom far or long away. The human instinct prompting to love, and care, and nourishment, ought to be as strong. It usually is for a while. But in many cases *only* for a while, a little while. Many things arise to interrupt the continuity, and impair the energy of parental presence and influence by that presence, with children. Many things—some of them without our will, some of them directly the fruit of our will or state.

The occupations of life with capable men and women are numerous, engrossing, and very exhausting. So that even a loving father, who is toiling for his children all day long, coming home spent at night, is not sorry to find that his children are two stories nearer heaven than he, and that he is not likely to see any more of them for the day. In the morning he must "take time by the forelock," and business by its opportunities, and men as he can find them;—he has no leisure for the children. So comes and goes many a precious day in which little hearts are forming themselves, and little lives are taking shape in character, thoughts growing into principles, feelings becoming settled emotions—all *without* so much as there might be of that calm and great thing—a parent's presence. Such a man has his

children in his house, but he has not got them "*about him.*" Nobody in the world would think of them as neglected children. All the neighbourhood knows them to be as clean as the morning and as fresh as the rose. The only pity is that father, and perhaps mother too, do not see so much as they should do of the beauty of the growing—do not catch the morning and evening and noonday fragrance of their own children, and do not shed on them more of that sweet and priceless element in a child's education—a parent's *present* care and love, so that the beauty may not fade, so that the fragrance may not die.

The child's education in many cases, surely in too many, brings on an early separation from home and parental presence. It is found not to be convenient, or judged not desirable, to have home and school together—going to school in the morning, coming home at night. But it seems to me, that where that is at all possible, it is by much the best arrangement for at least the earlier years of youth. Undoubtedly absence from home has its own advantages to the young. The power of such absence is sometimes wonderful, in developing character, increasing self-reliance, vivifying early memories, endearing the home from which absence is something of a daily banishment. But if that absence comes too soon, the probability will be so much less that the young scholar has in him the germs of *right* character to be developed; the youthful memories will be the fewer; the resistance to temptation will be the less; and the moral result of the whole more doubtful. It is God's way that the children, while young, should be "about" the parents. That was the way in the olden time. Happily it has been the way down through all time. It has ripened the richest fruits of goodness in human character. It has made the noblest men and women. Still it will be found, in all but exceptional cases, that home—be it ten[illegible] in all but except[illegible] of the city—and daily presence of father and mother—be they of high or low degree—are more for the child than any other persons or things that can be substituted. They are great days for after meaning, and far-off power and influence, the days when "our children are about us."

II.

When our children are about us, we should consider with Job that we are prosperous. We have at least this element of prosperity although the rest may be wanting, or may not be in such fullness as the Patriarch possessed them. The rivers of oil do not flow for you, perhaps. The city streets do not give reverence. No one refrains talking because you are present. You are very *un*like Job in some of these outward respects. But you are like him at least in this, that "your children are about you." And because they *are* yours, they are as much to you as his ever were to him. Perhaps you have one as bright as his Jemima (although Jemima was not born when he spoke thus, and the children mentioned here were all dead and gone), as bright as Jemima (the day); one as fragrant as Kezia (cassia), shedding perfume through the house; or one as plentiful in goodness as Keren-Happuch. *You* know what your children are; strangers do not. Nothing is more common in society than pleasantries about the partialities of parents; but perhaps few pleasantries have in general less foundation. That there *are* parents who can see no faults in their children, although these faults are patent to every one else, and who therefore allow them to grow up self-willed, rude, a nuisance to all about them, is unfortunately true. Such parents generally have, soon or late, in these very children, full punishment of their own blindness. But we are persuaded that the case in general is rather this,—that what strangers or unobservant neighbours would hastily call a parent's partiality, is really only a feeling produced, or a course of conduct drawn out by a parent's better knowledge. Only those who are in close relations with children can tell what they are. How they are tempted! How they struggle! How they overcome! How they do their noble acts, and also sink into their own little meannesses occasionally among the toys! in the playground! with their lessons! How shall a stranger or a friend presume to conclude that your boy is rude because he is salient? As well call the clematis rude that *will* climb over the wall; or the little burn that *will* have its leaps before it is quenched in the silent river. How shall he say that your girl is forward, because she is frank; or stupid, because she is shy? He had better be careful and not quite so sure. Children are great mysteries. Friends do not understand them. Teachers do not understand them. Theorists do not understand them. Foot rule experience will never measure them. Nor can the parental experiences of by-gone times serve much for living parents and children. Each child is a new problem to be solved. Each child is "a new thing under the sun"—the only new thing there is. All else is old. Matter is as old as creation; spirits are as new as the moment of time, or the creative inspiration of God from which they were born. Each child comes into the world charged with a manifold life, gifted and dowered with faculties, forces, laws, affections, sublime possibilities. A child is a great mystery, as yet unrevealed to any; but the nearest approach to an understanding of the mystery is just that thing which is called slightingly "a parent's partiality." No doubt there is the instinctive feeling which accounts for much. But there is also the better knowledge.

The children are about us, thus, as a part of our prosperity. So regard them. So enjoy them. Take heed that the affection, which we justify, is not merely human, but divine. Put them where this now childless man puts his, in the vivid but mournful picture he draws of his vanished joys, *in divine presence* in the house—"the Almighty with you, your children about you!" "Lo the children are an heritage from the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward." The blessing of the Lord is making you rich—rich indeed if you have "the secret," if you have "the children."

Children are not *only* a blessing, they are also a trouble and a care, and many parents dwell mostly on that side of the children. They see them through the shadows of the cares they have about them. They are vexed with their thoughtlessness. They are wearied many a time, as they well may be, with all

the toilsome and ceaseless attentions they require. They are discouraged by their little naughty ways. "Let us pass over to the other side," and see them in the light of the land from which they came, and to which, by God's help, we may lead them back. Look at the glory on their faces. See the sweet blossomings of better things, which *may* indeed be nipt, but which may also ripen, and all the more surely if you will think so, to richest fruit. Looking thus upon them from the side where "their angels" see them, "who do always behold the face of Our Father in heaven," you will forget the toil, and the worry, and the care; you will not remember against them former transgressions; you will forgive them all their sins; you will bring them up with you as into the old patriarch's tent, as into Jacob's Bethel; you will present them all, "the infant of days" included, before the Lord. And as a prosperous man or woman, as one whom the Lord hath blessed, you will say over the old words: "When the Almighty is with me! when my children are about me!"

III.

When our children are about us, we should tend them very carefully, and train them up in the way they should go, that when they are old they may not depart from it. Everything else that constitutes any considerable part of a man's prosperity, requires to be kept and nourished—his house, his pictures, his garden, his fields, his money, his friendships, his position in life, his character, all need watching and nourishing continually. Let him play the sluggard with any of them and they are so far lost. For they are parts of a world that "never continueth in one stay." It is eminently so with the children. We lose them every day even when we have them, if we do not keep them as a man keeps his treasure. They can only be kept by training, growth, development. They are houses—little "banqueting houses"—where our loves and hopes have sweetest entertainment. But if they are not kept, you will soon see the weather-stain, the gaping rent, the incipient decay. If the house is to wear and retain "the similitude of a palace," it must be "polished" day by day. They are little pictures, fairer than human hand ever painted, in which the gazing eye will find far depths, rich colourings, the endless play of light and shadow, the mantling of the individual expression, and a living beauty through the whole that cannot be described. But as the most valuable pictures grow vile with blots when hung within touch of the rude and careless, or hideous with cobwebs and dust when left in a deserted room, so those sweet living pictures soon catch the stains of rude commerce and careless society, when too much exposed to them; soon darken and degenerate if they are but neglected. They are gardens, fairer and more fragrant than Solomon's, in which he "planted trees of all kinds of fruit." But you will soon see the weed, the wildness, the overgrowth, if you do not dig, and cut, and bend, and train, and water. It is instructive that the best flowers and plants of the garden are mostly the *ultimate* forms and products of far simpler and wilder things. The beauty and the fruitfulness, the deeper colouring, the double blossoming, the affluent size, the luscious flavour—these are all refinements and elaborations of skill and taste. Well, a family is just a garden of God, where are those living immortal plants called children (who all have something of the wildness of nature in them), and by gracious help we are to nurture and raise them up into the finer and nobler forms of grace. We are to labour until we have them so that we can ask our best "Beloved" to "come into his garden to eat his pleasant fruits." If a garden be too fine an emblem for all conditions of human life, take the plainer emblem of the field. How beautiful and how bountiful is a harvest field when the corn is yellow-ripe, and the glad farmer walks behind the long row of reapers and watches the busy sickle and the falling swath! But what ploughing was in that field long ago, when the day was short and the snow was falling! What harrowing of the clods amid the chill spring showers! What plentiful sowing during seed-time! What anxious watching days when the weather was fitful! *Now*, "when the children are about us," is the time for the ploughing, and the harrowing, and the sowing, and the watching. By and by "cometh harvest," bringing over-payment of all toil, presaging the richer garnerage of heaven.

All Christain training is summed up in this: "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." This general exhortation has so many parts in it that we cannot even name them. But these are some.

Look to the health of the body, for that is the basis in this world of other things. No studies or accomplishments should be allowed to injure that; for that, when injured, will affect injuriously all the higher things.

Consider, as far as may be, the temperament and peculiarity of each. There is a divine individualism of each soul, before which, when we find it, we should bow down as in the presence of a pure work of God, and to which we should yield as we do to the great steady laws.

Give the mind knowledge of proper kinds, in due measures, at seasonable times.

Develop the affections, truly and tenderly, under the leadings and breathings of the royal law of love.

Try to put habits into the life of industry, carefulness, and benevolence, from the very first, that the powers may work by these more easily.

Provide for times of recoil and relaxation. Never be afraid of play—of what even might seem idleness to another if you are sure that it is wholesome rest. When are children to learn to think, how are they to get the *love* of prayer, if they have not their little spaces of quietness allowed them like others? Some of them I fancy have no great affection for "the little busy bee" that is always brought humming about their heads as a teacher. They will be apt to like the owl quite as well, which does nothing but *look* as he sits up on the tree, hooting at the silent night. But the bee herself is as idle and luxurious as any creature can be, for more than half the year. Let the bee be a winter teacher as well as a summer one, and join relaxation to activity.

Above all, try to secure the whole heart for God. Everything must bend to that. The whole manifold culture should grow up into that. Throw around them, as you may instrumentally, so much of the Fatherhood of God, that they shall not be able without a tremendous and distressing struggle to leave it, and when at last away from it shall not be able to live without it. Let them know, without mistake, from your own lips, in face-to-face communication, that the good Shepherd loves them, is watching them with kindly care, is calling them by name, and waiting for their following. When they *follow Him*, you may sing in gladness and thankfulness of heart. You may consider that God has given you plentiful harvest.

IV.

"When our children are about us," we should be careful, not only to teach but *to learn the lessons which they can teach us.* Children teach lessons which are taught in no other school than the one they keep; or at any rate in no other so well. They are Professors in Christ's College. He gives to each, a chair; and although their audience sometimes is but scant, and their prelections little heeded, they go on teaching still. Since the day when that little child, unknown by name to the world, in fame immortal, stood up in the centre of the eager group at the Saviour's bidding, and by his ingenuousness and simplicity gave his lecture to Disciples, Apostles, Pharisees, Fathers and Mothers, and *all* beholders, the children have been teaching in the kingdom; and they will teach until the last returning sinner enters as a little child into the kingdom of heaven.

They teach faith. What believers they are! They hardly ever doubt. How they trust your word, your wisdom, your strength, your love, as soon as you give them the least occasion. Your little boy or girl would cling to you in utter simple trust, and lie in your arms a little believer, if you stepped from the Table Rock at Niagara, or from a vessel's side into the sea.

They teach contentment. For they are pleased with simple pleasures. They are happy when the sun shines; and if the day is dark, they can find happiness under the clouds. They have not "*learned*" as yet, "in whatsoever state they are, therewith to be content." But they *are* content if the outward conditions of life are tolerably pleasant. They have no remembrance of the sorrows of yesterday, no apprehension of the tears of to-morrow.

They teach humility, for they do not "exercise themselves in great matters, or in things too high for them." Their plans are short and small. If they misgive—well. Never mind, they can build again. There is plenty of sand on the shore.

Ah, how well were it if we could learn from them in these respects! There is a whole group of virtues which our children, while yet they are about us, are teaching us, whether we are learning them or not. It is beautiful, and yet sad, to see the children teaching when the parents and others are not learning. The parents perhaps have their plans of social ambition, and are striving hard to rise. The children are content if the sun is bright, if grass is green, if flowers are pretty, if bread is sweet and water cool, if the floor is firm enough to walk upon, and the bed is soft enough for sleep. The parents have their cares and their fears lest they should have to go downward in the social scale. Because they are a little poorer than once, they are going to lose some of their friends. (What worthy friends they must be! and oh, what a sorrowful pity to lose them!) Or, they are going into a smaller house, because, perhaps, they do not any longer need the larger, or because it is now a little above their circumstances. They will go away sometimes into another neighbourhood, just that they may go down that little incline unseen. "The children" all this time would take any friends that were pleasant—cottagers' children, workmen's children, would do quite well. A few hours would suffice to begin a real friendship. They would go to any house that sheltered them, and be pleased with the little rooms as a nice change from the larger. Nay, they would go with you if you had not a house to go to at all. They would wander with you, cheerily enough, along country lanes, and beside hedgerows and old walls. They would sleep with you by hay-ricks and in harvest fields, or under the shelter of the trees, soothed and rocked to rest, unless the weather were too chill, by the music of the pines, and pleased by the new lamplight of the stars.

If it be said that a good deal of *such* contentment is the result of sheer ignorance, and therefore cannot be seriously proposed to reasonable persons for their instruction or imitation, a good answer is, that the cares and anxieties of grown-up people are largely the fruit of mere imagination and mistake. They conjure up difficulties which have no real existence; they fear evils that never come; they are poor often in imaginary poverty; sick with pains they never feel; dark when the sun is shining; dying and dead a hundred times before the real dying and the one only death "appointed" come. Surely, therefore, it were well if the care-furrowed faces of father and mother could in any way catch at least *a little* of the smoothness and openness and "sufficient unto the day" look, of their "children when they are about them."

V.

When our children are about us, we should anticipate the time when, as in the case of the Patriarch, they will all be away.

"How the children leave us, and no traces
Linger of that smiling angel-band—
Gone! For ever gone, and in their places
Weary men and anxious women stand."

Watch, and within the brief circuit of a year, sometimes even in the course of a few months, you will see a change in the little faces. Take photographs of them, and if you happen to lay them by for a few years, and then open the book, you will have a surprise. You will have something like the feeling—"Why, I have lost these children. Surely they have gone from me. *Has* God taken them?" No. They are "about" you still. They are beside you now, looking at the pictures, much amused that they should be pictures of themselves. *They* can see no resem-

blance to the image they see every day in the glass. So they vanish from us, even when they live, and we see them no more. The infant is the infant but for a little. The little girl with the ringlets is a wayfarer who is tarrying with you only for a night. She will go on again in the morning towards womanhood. And the sunny boy will keep her company on the way to his manhood. Very soon now you will see touches of the manhood and the womanhood on their faces. Then will come their loves, their marriages, their cares, their children—and you will be grandfather and grandmother before you know. Many are taking these honours continually while yet they are not old. Their children conspire to crown them without their leave, although, generally, much to their delight. Then a few years more, and your children's children will leave you as they shoot up into men and women. You will have to reach across *two* generations then to find the children.

Nor can we forget that there are always some who far outstrip the rest—who do not glide away on feet along the earthly ways, but who have wings woven in silence on which they fly up to the fields of heaven. We have spoken of the facial change as children grow to be men and women: but there is another change which sometimes comes on a young face, which betokens a growth quite out of this world, and a putting on of the beauty and glory of another. A change this, sad at first to see, sorrowful exceedingly to our earthly affections. Yet a change growing more and more fair to look on, a rebuke to our sorrow, a life-long memory to our love.

"Have we not caught that smiling
On some beloved face,
As if some heavenly sound were wiling
The soul from our earthly place:
The distant sound and sweet,
Of the Master's coming feet.

"We may clasp the loved one faster,
And plead for a little while;
But who can resist the Master?
And we read, by that brightening smile,
That the tread *we* do not hear
Is drawing surely near.

"Then, gently *enters* the Master;
Through the room his garments sweep,
And our trembling hearts beat faster,
And our eyes forget to weep:
For *now*, we can hear Him say,
'Thou shalt be there to-day.'"

And so we lose them. And many a Job stands amid the relics of the past, looking back, and plaintively or thankfully recalling the days when the children were about him. Well, but look forward. Antedate the time. Anticipate the inevitable severance, and work for the formation of the deeper, the immortal union. If you have wealth—heart property—in these children, *as children*, know it now; for the riches will "make to themselves wings, and flee away." If you have nurture to give them, suitable to their tenderness, preparation for their strength, give it now; in a little while they will be too hard and strong in nature's growth to take it. If there are lessons which the Master would have you learn of them while they are yet young, and which they cannot teach, nor you learn of them when they are older, then learn the lessons now, for soon the little faces will be seen no more at your table, the patter of the little feet heard no more in your rooms.

ALEXANDER RALEIGH.

THE THREE BOYS.

I.

THERE dwelt a child in a mountain cave,
Where all was sheltered, and calm, and still,
And a tranquil lake on its slumbering wave
Mirrored the form of each fir-clad hill.
Wild clusters of roses round it grew,
O'er which the breath of the south wind
blew;
And spots of greenness in wood or glade
Lay half in the sunshine and half in shade.
That home with an endless peace was blest;
No evil discord might mar its rest;
No fitful tempest-howl was heard,
Nor boding scream of ill-omened bird;
No sound but the music the streamlets make,
And the gentle plash of the rippling lake,
And the thrush's voice from the friendly trees,
And the nightingale's holiest melodies.
No sight but water, and rock, and wood,
All beauties of the field and flood;
And the deep blue sky which bends over all,
Where the stars hold nightly festival,
And the Eastern sun, like a glorious king,
Rides forth in his rare apparelling;
Or, fairer and gentler far than day,
The moon's soft beams on the waters play.

Such was the home of the mountain boy,
And it filled his heart with a solemn joy;
For Nature was there to feed his eye
With all her beauties of form and hue;
And his ear drank in her harmony,
As the thirsty flower drinks the evening dew.

And within was treasured a goodly store
Of volumes filled with a golden lore:
He read of the Truths which in every age
Have flowed from the lips of bard and sage—
And of men—his brothers—the great and brave,
Who were true and fearless, and strong to save.
He would trace from the dawn of the world's first
sun
The wondrous course which the ages run;
And as he turned from earth's outward things,
Rose up strange inner questionings:
His spirit searched itself—its eye
Looked out on all life's mystery.
His was all knowledge that draws its birth
From the works of God that are seen on earth;
And yet to him it was also given
To read high truths in the starry heaven.
His soul would pierce to the deep hid springs
Whence flows the tide of all human things,

And from the mountain-summits gaze
Through wreathèd mist and floating haze,
On the central law of the mighty maze.
He yearned, like the wise in the strange far East,
To worship Wisdom as Nature's priest.
Still soaring up from the things of sight
To the higher forms of the world of light,
Till his soul the way to its birth-place won,
Where Beauty, and Order, and Truth are one.

But he dwelt alone; there were none to share
His joys or sorrows, his hope or fear.
No answering heart, and no gentle eye
Told their tale of a human sympathy.
He never had known a father's voice,
He never had looked on a mother's smile;
In no brother's heart could his own rejoice,
No sister's fondness his thoughts beguile.
They had passed away in his life's first hour,
And were to him but as names of power.
His life flowed onward as it began,
Away from the presence and haunts of man.
The passing years of no changes told;
Though he grew in wisdom, his heart was cold.
Knowledge, and Beauty, and Truth were there,
But what could the absence of Love repair?

II.

There are different homes in this world of ours,
And many are noble, and great, and fair;
There are knightly castles, and ladies' bowers,
And courts of kings with their pomp and glare.
But one palace arose in an Eastern land,
More noble and great than all others to see;
You might deem it the work of a fairy hand,
From the trouble and toil of earth set free.

There were marble columns in stately pride,
In long deep avenues, side by side,
And forms of beauty, and emblems fair,
By the graver's cunning were sculptured there;
And the fragrant shrubs that rose between,
With their twinèd foliage, served to screen
From the golden light of a cloudless sky,
The sight which shrank from its brilliancy,
Here, through the length of the gorgeous hall,
Was heard the song of the fountain's fall;
And earliest flowers their odours shed,
Ere yet their life's fresh bloom had fled;
And birds of song from their warbling throats
Poured forth their free and rejoicing notes.

In this home of beauty there dwelt the heir
Of the lordly wealth that was treasured there.
He was young and happy; nor grief nor pain
On his bright clear brow had impressed its stain;
He never had known a desire denied,
Nor had felt the pang of a humbled pride.
There were countless vassals, who strove with awe
To obey the will which to them was law;
All eager and quick, at each word to raise
The pleasant cry of a courtier's praise.
All blessings of home were his—the bliss
Of a father's smile, of a mother's kiss;
And the strong deep love that knows nought of fear,
Of brothers true-hearted, and sisters dear.
So bright was the home of that kingly boy,
You might deem it filled with a priceless joy:
If Riches, and Power, and Pleasure could bless,
His was a perfect happiness.

But he never had known what it was to live,
Nor in what we enjoy, but in what we give.
He had never been taught that his love should spread,
And, like Heaven's own sunshine, on all be shed.
They thought it right that he should not know
The sorrows of men, in their want and woe;
They made his home like a charmèd spot,
Where trouble and suffering entered not;
And hence it was that no grateful poor,
Were gathered in troops round that palace-door;
No prayer of blessing arose to Heaven
For loving aid with a kind heart given.
His home was happy, his joy was free,
One flow of unbroken gaiety;
But, because this was so, he had no part
In the deeper joy of a human heart.

III.

And a third child dwelt in a cheerless room,
Which chilled the heart with its depth of gloom;
In the darkest street of a dreary town,
Where never the light of the sun flowed down,
And the blue of heaven was but faintly seen,
And no fields were there with their freshening green;
No song of birds from o'ershadowing trees,
And no scent of wild flowers on the breeze.
Thick clouds of smoke, and of vapours dim,
Were all the sky that appeared to him;
And all day long in his ears did meet
The vexing sounds of the bustling street.

Long years that boy on his couch had lain,
And his every limb was racked with pain;
On his white thin face was a shadowy gleam,
Like the light of the moon on a woodland stream;
And on wasted form and features pale,
The throbs of anguish had left their trail.
All life long he had known but sorrow,
Nor was his the hope of a brighter morrow;
The pain that began with the infant's breath
Must last till the touch of the Angel, Death.

He never had gazed on the heavens above,
Which tell us tales of a Father's love;
He never had learnt from the stars of night
The wisdom they bring from the worlds of light;
It was much for him, on a summer's day,
If one faint, and feeble, and struggling ray
Could cast the shadows athwart the gloom
That dwelt in that sick child's lonely room.
He never had heard the joyous sea
Peal forth its jubilant melody;
He never had gathered, in wood or glade,
The flowers that lurk in the hedge-row's shade;
Nor shared the vigour of those who breathe
The freshening air of the mountain heath.
One sickly stem of a town-grown flower
Was to him a treasure, which, hour by hour,
He would fondly watch as a token true
From that world of beauty he never knew.
But, 'mid all his sorrow, the boy was calm
As one who has gained a martyr's palm.
As the deep night silence round him flowed,
His heart, like the heart of an angel, glowed;
And the bells that told of the passing time,
Were to him as the everlasting chime.

A white cross hung on that lowly bed,
And when he looked on it, he smiled;
For he thought of the Christ who on it bled,
And that thought all anguish and pain beguiled.
He knew that his Lord, who once for him
Had known the woe, and the darkness dim,
Would help him get to his home above,
The o'ershadowing wings of a Father's love.

So the love that dwelt in his spirit pure
Could all pain and anguish of earth endure;
He only prayed that 'twere his to bear
His witness true of that Father's care.
His prayer was granted; and he could teach,
With a mightier magic than that of speech,
Of those truths of power, and that kingdom blest,
Where his yearning heart found its perfect rest.
Rough world-worn men would sit and learn
From his feeble lips till their heart would burn;

And the thoughts of long-forgotten years
Burst forth anew into cleansing tears.
The laughing children would leave their play
As he taught them how, and to Whom to pray;
And men of knowledge his presence sought,
To be by his patient suffering taught;
For then alone in their hearts they knew
That the hopes they read of were real and true.

Thou hast heard the tale of these children three,
How each was happy in his degree:
The lonely boy to whom wisdom gave
All knowledge that lies on this side the grave;
The joyous boy, who was born to be
The favourite child of luxury;
And the suffering boy, with his life-long pain,
Yet strong in his faith to count it gain—
Now tell me, which of these children three,
Were it thine to choose, thou would'st wish to be?

E. H. P.

SPOKEN FROM A CITY PULPIT, ON AN AFTERNOON AT HOME.

"And the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."—*Ephes.* vi. 17.

Upon another day,* it was my great privilege to speak to you on a subject which should always warm a Christian heart: to speak to you of the "Holy Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." We have seen how "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost:" how "All scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." In my text to-day, you may see our Bibles described in a different way. You find here how St. Paul, telling of the various parts of the Christian soldier's armour, makes mention of "The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." To the like effect is the imagery in a text in the Epistle to the Hebrews; where we read that "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword: piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Let me say here, that I do not intend to found my entire discourse upon the imagery suggested in the text: I wish that we may further expatiate over the subject of God's Word, and think of certain matters of special interest and importance at this present day. Yet let us first think of the truth that is particularly set forth in the description of the Word of God as "the sword of the Spirit." And thus thinking, and in all we say and hear, let us pray for the guidance, light, and love, of that Blessed and Divine Being by whose inspiration all Scripture was given at first through the holy men of God that wrote and spake it; and by whose continued agency it is still made efficacious to convert the sinner, and to cheer and build up the saint.

"The sword of the Spirit," says our text, "is the Word of God:" meaning not the sword the Holy Ghost uses himself, but the sword he gives us to use. This sword has been used by our Saviour himself. You all remember how, when Satan assailed Him, our Master foiled him and drove him away for the time, just with this weapon. Here is the story in the best of all words. "Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto Him, all these things will I give thee, if thou fall down and worship me." There, my friends, the tempter made his assault: and we know that he has been too successful in making men do what really comes to falling down and worshipping him,—as all wrong-doing does,—by temptation infinitely less than that. But the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, did, as it were, in that moment flash in his eyes, and disarm and defeat him: for "Then, saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth Him." That home-thrust drove him clean away. And let us, when we are assailed by Satan (and every temptation to think, say, or do wrong may justly be regarded as an assault by Satan or one of his emissaries)—let us defend ourselves with the same weapon which was so effectual in our Saviour's hand: let us defend ourselves with this weapon against all temptation. It is a great thing to have it always at hand: a great thing to have our memory so stored with little texts of Holy Scripture, that just at the right moment one fitted for the occasion may arise, to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path; to be a sword in our hand that shall pierce and slay the temptation, or put it to flight at least for the time. And indeed we know what a mighty weapon the sword of the Spirit has proved in many exigencies, besides those of personal temptation assailing the believer himself. It has driven away temptation to sin, temptation to doubt God, temptation to run madly and desperately down to ruin,—assailing some other soul. Now, when the devil was trying to make a poor sinful creature despair of God's mercy and Christ's love: when the devil drove such a poor sinner to the wretched mood which burst out in the miserable moan, "It is too late for me,—too late,—I am lost!"—oh what a blow was dealt on that cruel and wicked enemy, by one who had that ready command of the sword of the Spirit as to be able on the instant to say, "Then you are the very man Christ came to save: for the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost!" Many are the poor despairing souls from which that touch from the sword of the Spirit has sent the great adversary away! Yes, the sword of the Spirit *is* the Word of God. It is a grand thing to meet temptation with a text of Scripture: not to enter into a negociation with evil in any shape, nor to try to put a different face on what your heart tells you is wrong; nor to consider how near some pleasant wrong thing

* See page 169.

you can go without entirely abandoning right. Just hold by some plain precept of God's Word, and that will keep you straight. You may not be able to unravel the arguments by which your own sinful heart, or some bad companion, may try to persuade you that it is no great matter to deviate a little from the even path when so much profit or pleasure is to be got by it: but just hold by the Word of God: *that* never shades away the difference between right and wrong: hold by *that*, and you are safe. "The wages of sin is death." *That* puts an end for ever to all vain fancies that any sin is light. Then such a text as "Lie not one to another," makes short work of all proposals to make things pleasant by a little colouring or smoothing down of plain unvarnished fact.

I said, a little ago, that seeing God's Word is the sword with which the Christian can so effectually put down and drive away temptation, it is a great thing to have our memory well stored with precious little sentences of Holy Scripture. It is quite right to say *that:* we must use diligently all our natural powers. But do not fancy that a retentive memory, or a ready memory, or presence of mind, is the thing that will seasonably bring to remembrance the text of Scripture that is wanted. Neither are you to think that a clear perception of a text's meaning, or a readiness to give it all the consideration due to it, is the thing that will make it effectual to do what is wanted. No, my friends, what is needful to put the sword in your hands at the critical moment, and to make it do its work effectually, is the Blessed Spirit whose sword it is. It is that gracious One, who will bring to our thoughts the text that fits the time; and who will make it, not so many common words, but something quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword. You remember our Blessed Redeemer's promise, that the Blessed Spirit should be our Remembrancer. "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you!" I will not waste a moment of our little time in showing you that these words, first spoken by our Saviour to his Apostles, convey a promise that it is ours too. But, Christian friends, when in some exigency, some season of temptation or perplexity, or depression and doubt, the well-remembered words flash upon us, or steal gently into our heart, and everything is clear and hopeful, and we are calmed and strengthened and cheered, and feel that the short text is indeed God's message to us, —do not let us think that it is very lucky we thought of the right verse at the right time; do not let us be glad we have so good a memory, nor even stop at being thankful that on Sunday evenings when we were little children we were taught to get these inspired words to repeat to some one who is gone. No, let us look higher; and thank the Holy Spirit of God! And let us humbly ask Him always to suggest to us the message, the warning, the promise, the direction, in the moment we need it: and as we soldiers and servants of the Lord Jesus are assailed by our spiritual foes,—as the world, the flesh, and the devil seek to mislead and destroy our immortal souls,—to put into our hand, in the instant of peril, a weapon proved and mighty;—even "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God!"

And now, to go to another matter. How do we know that the Bible is the Word of God? Why do we receive this volume as such: as something quite different from all other books? Here are wise words from the Confession of Faith:

"We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverend esteem of the Holy Scripture: and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the word of God; yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts."

My friends, if ever words, true to the experience of thousands and thousands of hearts, were written in this world, you have them there. You have the evidence that convinces the head; you have the evidence that comes home to the conscience; and, thank God, that while the evidence that speaks to mere intellect does, in the highest perfection, belong mainly to scholars and logicians, the grander and better evidence,—the evidence that brings full persuasion and assurance,—is within the reach of every human being that feels he is a poor sinner, and opens the door of his heart to Jesus and seeks peace and rest in Him. You will never shake such a one, clinging to the cross, and relying on the kind and gracious Holy Spirit, by outside objections about various readings, and slips of transcribers, and that kind of thing: these do not come within a thousand miles of the stable, irresistible evidence *he* rests on!

Yet it is well to remember that there are clear and weighty lines of evidence for the inspiration, the authenticity, and the genuineness of Holy Scripture: lines of evidence sufficient for the conviction of every candid mind. There are those considerations which arise from the Bible itself, and which are named in that passage from the Confession of Faith: what may be termed the Internal Evidence that the Bible is God's Word: the "majesty, purity, light, life, and efficacy which is in it." Then there are the prophecies and miracles by which it is confirmed: the consent of the Christian Church: innumerable testimonies from apostolic ages downwards that the Bible has been received as inspired: that the books which make up the Bible were written by the men to whom they are ascribed; and that in all vital matters they remain as their writers left them. A host of volumes have been written by learned and good men, in which you may find all these arguments, and many more, drawn out at length; this is not the time nor place for setting such forth: but there is one thing that may properly be said. It is a very fit thing that those of you who have time and capacity for such researches should acquire some general knowledge of the grounds,

the less practical grounds, on which we hold the Bible to be the Word of God: but go into such investigations with prayer for God's direction, and in a truth-seeking spirit, not in a self-sufficient carping one: a man who wants to find objections may find them; however ample and clear the evidence may be. And further: I wish especially to say this to thoughtful young men; when you have plainly seen that the evidence that proves the Bible to be God's Word is sufficient, then let the question be settled for ever. Just put that conclusion (as it were) on a shelf in your mind; and refuse to take it down again, and to begin the matter over with every carping talker for talking's sake. You may not always have your arguments at hand for production: you may not always be ready on the instant to meet the objections of some ingenious companion: but you may well say to such a one, "Well, I don't feel able all at once to tell you all the reasons that convinced me the Bible is God's Word: I don't feel able to refute the difficulties you have started: but I know I found the reasons sufficient when I examined the question fully: and I saw through all difficulties *then:* and I tell you my mind is made up on that matter." Dear friends, always do what you can to lead an earnest seeker after truth through his perplexities: but if any one wants to make God's Word of Life a subject for quibbling dialectics, see you refuse to discuss so solemn a thing in so unfit a way. And always tell any friend who, in this unsettled age, may be perplexed with sceptical difficulties, that the way to make these vanish, is to pray the Holy Ghost to make him feel the vital power of our holy religion; and the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, lifted upon the cross, to draw all men to Him. Oh, when we are convinced of our sin, and our need of a Saviour: when we are brought in earnestness to ask "what must I do to be saved?" and to cry "God be merciful to me a sinner," how such a declaration as that "the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin," will commend itself to our conscience, more welcome than water to the dying for thirst: what witness of the Spirit we shall have then that these things—that all the blessed gospel of our salvation, must be true,—or how could we live!

Yes, brethren: the Confession of Faith is proved, by abundant experience, to be right when it says that after all, excellent and irresistible as the arguments may be that prove that the Bible is the word of God, "our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness with and by the word in our hearts." And oh, a thousand-fold better, the simple faith of one who just humbly rests in the belief of God's Word, because he feels something in his breast that tells him it must be true;—better that a thousand-fold, than the proud ingenuity of one who queries, doubts, and argues, till he lands himself in wretched scepticism, or in utter unbelief. Best of all, indeed, the faith which has its seat alike in the conviction of the understanding, the testimony of the conscience, and the assent of the feelings: but if we must make a choice between them, give us the assurance of the heart rather than that of the head. You remember the touching contrast drawn by an eloquent author, between the poor slave and the polished Roman philosopher, each in his day of bitter grief: how the one, if he had read the words of hope and promise on the sacred page, would have perplexed his head first with a hundred questions of authenticity of manuscript and correctness of translation: but to the other, there it lay, just what he needed, so evidently true and divine that the possibility of a question never entered his simple mind. Now *that* best evidence is within the reach of all: God grant it to every one of us! A few weeks since, in speaking to you upon another subject, I reminded you of the touching lines in which a Christian poet contrasts the philosophic infidel with the Christian cottager: they recur more suitably now; and some of you know, how when that good man Dr. Chalmers was Professor of Divinity, after he had set out before his students the evidence which may convince the head that the Bible comes from God, he was wont to sum up by saying that there is a better evidence by far; and you have it described and commended in the famous lines:

"She for her humble sphere by nature fit,
Has little understanding, and no wit:
Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true,—
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew—
And in that charter reads, with sparkling eyes,
Her title to a treasure in the skies.

"Oh, happy peasant! oh, unhappy bard!
His the mere tinsel, hers the rich reward.
He, praised perhaps for ages yet to come;
She, never heard of half a mile from home:
He, lost in errors his vain heart prefers;
She, safe in the simplicity of hers."

And now, leaving this matter with a prayer, that the Blessed Spirit may work in each of us, ever more completely, the demonstration that the Bible is from God, let us go on to think of a question which in these days cannot be passed without remark by any one who, in discoursing of God's book, desires to keep up with the progress of modern religious thought.

Here is the question. Is there progress from age to age, in men's understanding of the Bible? Have Christian people come, now, to see more in the Bible than Christian people used to see? And may it be expected that, as time goes on, Christian people will see more in the Bible than now we see?

My friends, all controversy tends to grow angry. When people have a very decided opinion on a subject, they find it hard to bear patiently with other people, who think differently. But no controversy is so ill-natured as religious controversy, and probably religious controversy never was angrier than in the discussion of this question. Let us lament that true religion, in many men, is alloyed with so much narrowness, bitterness, and unfairness; and let us pray for the guidance of God's Spirit to keep us free from these, and to clear our minds on this matter. It seems to me, that such as approach the question in an honest and teachable spirit, ought to find little difficulty in it.

Of course, all God's revelation to man is contained in the Bible. Nothing can be added to what is written there. But there is no doubt that people may come to understand the Bible better. Eastern travellers have told us many things about the country

and the people, which explain statements and allusions on the sacred page. In an old infidel book, you may find it said that the story of the sick man who was let down through the roof of a house to be healed by Christ, is absurd on the face of it. Then the writer goes on to show how impossible it would be to carry a sick man in a bed like our beds to the top of a house like our houses, and to take off the slates, and cut away the timbers of the roof, and lower the sick man into a room in that way. You see the infidel writer fancied that a bed in Judea is like a bed here, and a house in Judea like a house here. But every schoolboy could tell him now that a bed in the East was a light stretcher, just the most convenient thing to carry a sick man on: that an Eastern house had a flat roof, easy of access, and with a door lying flat which had but to be lifted up and there was the space below where Jesus was with the crowd of lookers-on. Now here is a case in which progress has been made in understanding the Bible. No one now would make that blunder into which the infidel writer fell through his ignorance. And here is one specimen of many in which modern research, and travels, and critical skill, have made men understand the Bible better.

So far, things are plain. But this does not touch anything vital. Can progress be made in vital matters? Is there any hope of discovering in the Bible some new doctrine that concerns salvation? Is there any chance of some day finding out that people have been wrong in thinking the Bible teaches that men are pardoned through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit? Well, brethren, there are those who to these questions would say, Yes. But to these questions we say, No! In things vital, things needful to salvation, all Christian people in all ages have understood God's Word alike; all Christian people will understand it alike till the end of time. We are justified through faith in Christ; we are sanctified by the Holy Ghost. There has been no progress; there will be no progress; in things like these. In matters not vital, it is a fact of the believer's experience that in a certain sense there is progress in understanding the Bible. What believer does not know that there is a richness, a depth of meaning, in the inspired Word, that cannot be exhausted by a single reading: that a believer may read his Bible, praying for the illumination of the Holy Spirit, every day through forty years; and always find a fresh grace, fitness, and beauty, at each fresh perusal. As the believer grows in grace, attains a holier spirituality, he will understand his Bible better: will discover that "there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed" in its gracious meaning. I feel quite sure that all Christians who have been Christians for years, could say, that now they find something in the Psalms they did not use to find. In the Bible, you know, there are things "which the angels desire to look into:" but oh, my friends, while you thankfully acknowledge all this, see you be not misled by the artful plausibilities of these modern days into thinking that the blessed doctrines which concern salvation, the things to our belief in which we trust our souls for eternity, are mere provisional, temporary truths, that may serve us now, but that some day will be pushed aside, and give way to something farther and better, to be drawn forth from the old pages of the Bible by the keener criticism and larger insight of a future age. Do not trust those who speak to you, however eloquently, of—"the Christ that is to be"— of some new and nobler system, into which our present Christianity is to pass and vanish. There never will be another Christ: never another Gospel. To the end of time, "The blood of Christ will cleanse from all sin;" and "in Christ Jesus neither circumcision will avail anything, nor uncircumcision; but a new creature." We may say assuredly, that till this world ends, the way of salvation will be what it is now, and has always been. "Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Who can forget St. Paul's awful words:—"Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed!"

And having said this, we may add, that while the interpretation has remained and will remain unaltered as to doctrines which concern salvation, Christian men have, as time has gone on, drawn from the Bible great principles which were formerly not supposed to be contained in it. Most of us, for instance, would say that the great principle of religious toleration,—the principle that no man should be punished by man for his religious belief,—is founded upon the whole principle of the Bible: but for centuries men did not know that: men burnt and tortured those who they esteemed as heretics; and thought they were doing God service. And just the other day the Pope published, in the astonished ears of Europe, that he is of that opinion still. *He* thinks that the principle that man is responsible for his belief only to his God, is a mischievous error, opposed to God's Word. Protestants have learned better, and some day the Church of Rome may learn better too. Then there are parts of the world in which men believe that negro slavery is approved by the Bible; there were ages in which everybody believed so: *we* have come to understand the Scriptures better; and we look for the day when the truth of God shall make all men free.

And now, my brethren, how shall I draw to a close these things which have been said about the blessed Word of God, better than by reminding you of what you all know well: by Whose kind help and light we should always read our Bibles. He who of old moved holy men of God to write the pages we know, is still ready to help us to understand them savingly; and to help us to read in such a spirit, that we shall find them to bear the words of eternal life. If we read our Bibles as a mere heartless task, they will do us no good: if we read them in a critical, fault-finding spirit, we may make them do us much harm. Now I tell you this is not a piece of systematic theology, away from actual life. It is not a bit more certain that the light of your lamp will fall this evening on the page of your Bible, as you read your chapters of it, than it is that the light of God's Holy Spirit will this evening shine that same page, if you heartily pray for it. And not all the commentaries and lexicons of scholars and divines will stand us in such

Drawn by E. Hughes. Engraved by J. Swain.

THE BITTER AND THE SWEET.

stead to make us feel the deep meaning and blessed comfort of God's holy Word, as the illumination of the Holy Spirit; there is nothing else in this world that will so bring it home to us. Now that is God's message to me, even me! And not all the old memories that gather round the book, which we have known since we knew anything,—and whose words will stay with us when all other words are forgot,—can so avail to warm and touch our hearts, as one breath of that kindly Sanctifier and Comforter! Dear friends, I shall be well content with the good these sermons on God's Word have done us, if we all resolve, now, even now, that when we read our Bibles, at least morning and evening every day, we shall just for a moment look up to God, and pray, "Fill me with Thy Spirit!" We cannot too often offer that prayer; we never can offer the prayer that is so sure to be answered! All grace is of Him, for whose coming it was expedient that even Christ should go; and when we do not know the grace we specially need, *He* knows; and if He dwell in us, He will work *that* in us! Let us offer that prayer daily, hourly—in every little pause in our work—Fill us with Thy Spirit!

"Dependent on Thy bounteous Breath,
We seek Thy Grace alone;
Through childhood, manhood, age, and death,
To keep us still Thine own!"

A. K. H. B.

THE BITTER AND THE SWEET.

Come, darling Effie,
Come, take the cup:
Effie must drink it all—
Drink it all up.

Darling, I know it is
Bitter and bad;
But 'twill make Effie dear
Rosy and glad.

Mother would take it all
For her wee elf—
But who would suffer then?
Effie herself.

If Effie drinks it,
Then, I can tell,
She will go out to play
Merry and well.

Drink, and then, darling,
You shall have this,—
Sweet after bitter:
Now, first, a kiss.

Ah, darling Effie,
God also knows,
When cups of bitterness
His hand bestows,

How His poor children need
Urging to take
Merciful draughts of pain,
Mixed for their sake.

He, too, gives tenderly
Joy after pain
Sweet after bitterness,
After loss gain.

I. C.

IN THE LIFE OF OUR LORD.

THE CALLING TO THE APOSTOLATE OF ST. PETER, ST. ANDREW, ST. JAMES, ST. JOHN, AND ST. MATTHEW.

Luke v. 1—11; Matt. iv. 18—22, ix. 9—17; Mark i. 16—20, ii. 14—22; Luke v. 27—39.

Extraordinary success naturally excites exaggerated hopes. A sudden blaze of prosperity has blinded the strongest human eye. Nor can you point to any great enterprise, signally successful at its outset, of which you will not find it true that those engaged in it were, for a short time at least, seduced into exorbitant expectations. If ever any success might have operated in this way, it was that which attended the close of the first year of our Lord's ministry. The whole population of Galilee, a community of from two to three millions, stirred to its depths, —the excitement spreading all around, reaching eastward beyond the Jordan, westward to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, southward to the hill country of Judea. It is no longer, as in the days that followed the baptism by the banks of the Jordan, an obscure Nazarene travelling with a few friends who had attached themselves to his person, it is the great Worker of miracles, the Healer of all diseases, the Caster-out of devils, surrounded and pressed in upon so closely by admiring and enthusiastic crowds, that to get a few quiet hours He had to steal them from sleep —to spend them in the mountain solitudes. It is no longer in the synagogue and on the Sabbath-days alone that audiences are to be found; everywhere and at all times assemblages, too large often for his addressing them, are ready to hang upon his lips. But you search in vain through all the wonderful excitement and popularity which followed our Lord in his first circuit through Galilee, for the slightest evidence that any false or exaggerated expectations were cherished. The specious appearances that then surrounded Him, never dazzled nor deceived his eye. He knew from the beginning how soon the sudden fervours of the first great commotion would subside—how soon the tide that swelled so high would ebb away. He knew that had He left them among whom He lived and laboured to themselves, had He done nothing to bind some of them to Himself by ties closer and stronger than any they naturally or spontaneously would have formed, He would at the close have been left alone. And therefore it was that at the very time when his popularity was at the highest, He took the first step towards knitting to Himself twelve chosen men in bonds which, with all the pains that He took Himself to forge and fasten, needed the welding forces of the day of Pentecost to make them strong enough to bind them everlastingly to Him.

To these twelve men an office, secondary only to the one He himself discharged, was to be assigned. They were always with Him, the spectators and reporters of all He said, and did, and suffered. They were to share and multiply his labours, to protect and relieve Him from the pressure to which He was exposed. For a short season He was to send them from his side, to teach and to work miracles as He did Himself, that a short fore-trial might be made of the work in which they were afterwards to be engaged. After his death they were to be the witnesses of the Resurrection, the expounders of that Gospel which needed the great decease to be accomplished ere in its full measure it could be proclaimed. By their hands the foundations of the Church were to be laid. Let us note, then, the first steps in their calling to this high office.

On his return from the Temptation, by the banks of the Jordan, and on the way thence to Galilee, five men—Andrew, John, Peter, Philip, and Nathaniel—had temporarily attached themselves to Jesus. Of these, only one—Philip—had been called to follow him by our Lord himself. The others were attracted by what they heard about Him, or saw in Him. At first, however, it was but a loose and uncertain bond that united them to Jesus. All the five were present, we may believe, at the marriage feast at Cana, and may have gone up with Him to Jerusalem, to the first Passover which He attended after his baptism. But they did not remain in constant attendance upon his person. After his first circuit of Galilee, when his fame was at its height, three of them had returned to their ordinary occupation as fishermen. With them a fourth became associated. As Andrew had brought his brother Peter to Jesus, we may imagine that the same service had been rendered by John to his brother James; so that all the four were already well known to Christ, had enjoyed much familiar intercourse with Him, and had appeared often openly as his followers. Perhaps it was the common bond of discipleship to Him which in the course of the year had drawn them into closer union with one another. Peter and Andrew had previously resided at Bethsaida, a town at the north-eastern extremity of the lake, but they had now removed to Capernaum, had entered into partnership with the two sons of Zebedee, and had been plying their craft together on the lake, when all the four were pointedly and specially summoned in a way they never before had been to follow the Lord.

The difficulties that many have felt in harmonising the narratives in the fourth chapter of Matthew and first chapter of Mark, with that in the fifth chapter of Luke, have led them to believe that two such summonses were given; that on the first occasion—the one referred to by Matthew and Mark—the four had answered the appeal by an immediate throwing up of their occupation by the lake side, but that they had again, and not long afterwards, resumed it, requiring a still more impressive instrumentality finally to sever the bonds. We are inclined rather to believe that all which the Evangelists relate occurred in the course of the same morning, and that it happened somewhat in this manner:

The day had dawned. From his solitary place of

rest and prayer, somewhere among the neighbouring hills, Jesus had come down to the quiet beach as the first light of the morning struck across the placid bosom of the lake. The unproductive toil of the night was nearly over with the fishermen. Out a little distance upon the waters, Peter and Andrew were seen, casting in their net for the last time as Jesus approached the shore. But his progress was interrupted by the crowds hurrying out of Capernaum, so soon as it was known that He was there. Through these crowds—stopping occasionally to address a few words to them—Jesus made his way to one or other of those small creeks or inlets, still to be seen there, where a boat could ride a few feet from the shore, and the people, seated on either side and before the speaker, could listen quietly to one addressing them from the boat. Here, in this creek two boats were drawn up, the property of the four—the two pairs of brothers already spoken of. The fishermen had gone out of them, and were mending their nets ; not so far away, however, but that one of them, Peter, noticing the Lord's approach, had returned. Entering into his boat, Jesus asked Peter to thrust out a little from the land ; and when this was done, he sat down and taught the people out of the boat. The teaching over, Jesus turned to Peter, and said to him, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught" —a singular command to come from one who knew so little—might be supposed to care so little, about the fisherman's craft. Still it came so decidedly from one whom Peter had already learned to address as Master, that, with a few words of explanation, indicative of the smallness of his hope, he prepares to comply with it. "Master," he says, "we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing ; nevertheless at thy word I will let over the net." He calls his brother, and launches out—lets down the net. At once such a multitude of fishes is enclosed, that the boat begins to fill—the net to break. Excited by what they had seen, James and John had by this time launched their boat, and Peter beckons them to come and help. They come, but all the help they can give is scarce sufficient. Both boats are filled, and almost sinking as they get ashore.

Peter had already seen Jesus do wonderful things—turn water into wine, eject the devil from the demoniac, raise his own wife's mother from the fever-bed ; but somehow this wonder came home to him as none of them had done—wrought in his own vessel, with his own net, in the way of his own calling, after his own fruitless toil. Never had the impression of a Divine Power at work in his immediate presence taken such a hold of him. Never had the sense of his being in close contact with One in whom such power resided come so upon his spirit. Astonishment, fear, humiliation—the impression, not of his weakness only, but of his sinfulness—of his unworthiness to stand in such presence—fill and overwhelm his open, ardent, impressible spirit. He falls at Jesus' knees, as He sat there in the boat, quietly watching all the stir and bustle of the fishermen ; and he gives vent to the feeling that for a moment is uppermost, as he exclaims, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" And ever still, when the first clear and overpowering revelation is made to any man of an Almighty Being compassing his path, besetting him before and behind, laying his hand upon him,—ever when the first true and real contact takes place of the human spirit with the living God as the Being with whom we have so closely and constantly to do, will something like the same effect be realised. So was it with him who said, "I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee ; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." So was it with him who said, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts."

"Depart from me." Nothing could have surprised Peter more than the Lord's taking him at his word—then and for ever after turning his back upon him. No man then living would have felt such a forsaking more. Wishing to express how unfit he felt himself for such a presence, Peter, with his wonted rashness, had said more than he really meant. He asks Christ to go, yet he clings to Him. "I am a sinful man, O Lord." Jesus knows that better than Peter does. Peter will know it better when the Lord looks at him in the judgment hall, and he goes out to weep over his denials. But Jesus knows, also, that it is because he is so sinful a man he must not be forsaken. And though he is so sinful a man, yet still he may be chosen to stand in closest relationship to his Master. "Fear not," said Jesus to him ; "from henceforth thou shalt catch men."

The words of direction, assurance, promise, addressed in the first instance to Peter alone, were soon repeated to his three associates. The shore was reached, the boats hauled up, the fish disposed of, James and John had carried the broken nets away to a little distance to mend them, when first to the one pair of brothers, and then to the other, Jesus said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." And immediately they left boats and nets, and two of them their father, and forsook all, and followed Him. It was not much we may think that they had to leave—not much, but it was their all ; and the promptness and entireness of their relinquishment of it shows what power over them the Saviour had already got—what a readiness for service and for sacrifice was already in them. And these were the four men who ever after stood most closely associated with Jesus—the four who stand at the head of every list of the twelve Apostles.

It was not indeed till some time after this that, along with the other eight, they were set apart to the peculiar office of the Apostolate. This calling of them away from their former avocations, this attaching of them permanently to his person, was a marked step toward their instalment in that position. It was the same with Matthew, the publican. The high road from Damascus southward to Judea and Egypt ran from the slopes of Mount Hermon down to the northern extremity of the Sea of Galilee, and for a short distance skirted along the north-western shore of the lake, passing through Capernaum. On the side of this road, close to the lake, stood the booth in which Matthew sat levying the toll on the passengers and their goods. He was one of a hated and degraded class. The payment of the taxes exacted

by the foreigners under whose rule they were, irritated to the last degree the Jews, who regarded it as a visible sign and token of their bondage. The strong feeling thus excited spent itself on all who had anything to do with the collection of these taxes. No Jew who desired to stand well with his fellow-countrymen would be a tax-gatherer. The office was commonly held by foreigners, or by those who cared but little for a purely Jewish reputation. Matthew was a Jew, yet he had become a publican, and now he is sitting at the receipt of custom as Jesus passed by. We know nothing of his personal character or previous habits. Considering that a year at least had passed since Jesus had first appeared as a public teacher in Galilee—that so prominent a part of his ministry had been conducted in the very neighbourhood in which Matthew lived—it may be regarded as a violent supposition that there had been no previous acquaintance and intercourse between him and our Lord. It would be more in keeping with Christ's conduct in other instances to imagine that, so far as his occupation had permitted, Matthew had already appeared as a follower of the new Teacher, had shown himself to have been favourably affected towards Him. However it was, Jesus saw in him a man who, under the right teaching and training, would be well suited for the high office He intended to confer upon him; and so, despite of the invidious office he now held, Jesus stopped as he passed by—said "Follow me;" and "he left all, rose up, and followed Him," throwing up thus a lucrative engagement, and casting in his lot with the small but growing band which Jesus was forming.

So soon as it was known that a publican had not only been seen in the following of Jesus—which might have occurred and occasioned no remark—but that Jesus had actually selected a publican and invited him to become one of his immediate attendants, a great commotion among the Scribes and Pharisees arose. It was a public scandal, an offence against all propriety, that one pretending to be a religious guide of the people—one preaching the Kingdom of God—should call a publican to his side, and take him into his confidence. Bad enough that He should be seen breaking the Sabbath Himself and encouraging his disciples to do so likewise, but to pass by all the respectable inhabitants of Capernaum—so many of whom were conspicuous for the strictness of their observance of all the Jewish ordinances—and to confer such a mark of favour upon a man with whom none of them would associate—what was to be thought of such an act? But the worst had not yet come. Either instantly upon his throwing up his office, or a few days thereafter, this Matthew makes a feast—a farewell one, it would seem—to which a number of his old friends and associates were invited, and there Jesus and his disciples were to be seen sitting among the other guests. The Pharisees could not stand this. They did not venture, indeed, to go openly and reproach Christ personally with it. They were smarting too keenly under the recent rebuke they had got from Him to have courage to do so, but they go to his disciples, and they say to them, "Why eateth your master with publicans and sinners?" Jesus does not leave it to the disciples to reply. As in so many other instances, He takes the matter into his own hands, and, half in irony, half in earnest, He says to them, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that be sick." They thought themselves the hale and healthy; they spake of these publicans and sinners as corrupt and diseased;—why, then, blame Him if He, as the great Physician, went where his services were most required? It was sinners, not the righteous, that He came to call to repentance. If they needed no repentance, why blame Him if He went to call those whose ears were open to his entreaties? But were they, indeed, so much better than those whom they despised? The difference between them was far more an outward, a ceremonial, than an inward, a moral, a spiritual one. Many of these poor publicans and sinners—excommunicated though they might be—very careless about religious rites—were men of simpler, truer, honester natures, kindlier in their disposition, and in a sense, too, more devout, than many of these pretentious pietists. "Go," said Jesus to those who imagined themselves to be righteous and despised others—"Go, and learn what that meaneth: I will have mercy and not sacrifice"—mercy rather than sacrifice if the two be put in comparison; mercy alone, and no sacrifice, if the two are put in opposition — mercy among publicans and sinners rather than sacrifice or any amount of ceremonial observances among Scribes and Pharisees.

But now another class interferes, to make common cause with the Pharisees. Some of the disciples of John the Baptist had early seen the superiority of Jesus, and at their master's own instance had enrolled themselves among his followers. But others stood aloof, having more in them of the old Judaic spirit—attracted as much by the ascetic habits of the Baptist as by anything about him—recognising in the fasts that he kept, the prayers that he offered himself and taught his disciples to offer, a return to a still purer and stricter piety than that even which the Pharisees practised. It was a strange and repulsive thing to such, at the very hour when their master was cast into prison and they were mourning and fasting more than usual on this account, to see Jesus and his disciples going about eating and drinking—nay, accepting invitations to festive entertainments in publicans' houses. St. Matthew tells us that these disciples of John went at once to Jesus with their complaint. St. Mark completes the picture by informing us that the Pharisees joined with them in the complaint. Nothing more likely than when the one saw how differently the discipleship of Jesus was developing itself from what they had expected, that they should fall back rather upon the austerity of Pharisaism, with its frequent fastings and many prescribed exercises of devotion—nothing more natural than that the Pharisees should seize upon the occasion and ally themselves with the followers of the Baptist, to aim thereby a fresh blow at Christ's authority and influence over the people. Christ's answer meets both sets of complainers. "And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but

the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast." (Matt. ix. 15.) In the last testimony that the Baptist had borne to Jesus had he not said, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom which standeth and heareth him rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice." The position that John had thus claimed for himself, those disciples against whom the complaint was lodged were now occupying. They were the friends of the bridegroom—standing and hearing and rejoicing —was it a time for them to mourn and to fast? The days were to come when the bridegroom should be taken away from them, then should they fast —the fasting flowing spontaneously, unbiddenly from the grief. There is no general command here prescribing fasting, but simply a prophecy, referring to a peculiar and brief period in the history of the Lord's disciples; a prophecy, however, rich in the intimation it conveys that all external acts and exercises, such as that of fasting, should spring naturally out of some pure and deep emotion of the heart seeking for itself an appropriate expression.

And now two short parables are added by Our Lord: the first we may regard as peculiarly applicable to the disciples of John, the other to the Pharisees. "No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse" (Matt. ix. 16). No man would take a piece of new, raw cloth, which would not keep its form afterwards, when wet would shrink, and sew it into the rent of an old garment; for ere long, when the new piece put in contracted, it would tear itself away from the old, and the rent would be made worse. And let not the disciples of the Baptist think that this new piece of their master's asceticism, with its new fastings and new prayers, was to be sewn, as they seemed to wish to do, with the old, worn-out, rent garment of Pharisaism. To try that, would be to try to unite what could not lastingly be conjoined; instead of closing up the rent, it would be to make it wider than ever. "Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved." (Matt. ix. 17). No man taketh old, dry, withered skin bottles, such as then were used, and filleth them with new wine; for the new wine would ferment, expand, and the bottles be burst, and the wine spilled and lost. And let not the Pharisees think that the new wine of the kingdom, the fresh spirit of love to God and man, which Jesus came to breathe into regenerated humanity, could be safely poured into their old bottles—into those forms and ceremonies of worship, dry as dust, and brittle as the thinnest and most withered piece of leather. No, there must be new bottles for the new wine, bottles that will yield to the pressure from within, and expand as the fermenting liquid which they contain expanded. And such new bottles as were thus required Jesus was finding—not in priestly men, chained up from childhood within priestly habits—not in those fixed and rigid Levitical institutions which the long years that had been draining them of their vitality had been stiffening into an immovable inflexibility: but in these fishermen, these publicans—natural, homely, unlearned men, open to imbibe his spirit in all its richness and expansiveness; and in those simple forms and institutions of Christianity, which, cramped by no formal and immutable injunctions, were to be left free to take such new outward shapes as the indwelling spirit might mould.

These two homely parables of Our Lord, so specially adapted as they were to the circumstances in which they were uttered,—the individuals to whom they were addressed—do they not carry with them a lesson to all times and ages of Christianity? Do they not remind us of the absolute incompatibility of the legal and the evangelical obedience—the spirit of the Law and the spirit of the Gospel? There is a religion, of which the Pharisaism of Christ's days was an exaggerated specimen—the very heart and soul of which consists in penances, and prayers, and fastings, —in worship offered, in duties done, in sacrifices made, in mortifications inflicted and endured,—all to soothe an agitated conscience, to win a peace with God, to eke out a hope of heaven. To this the faith that is in Christ our Saviour stands directly and diametrically opposed—the one offering as a free gift what the other toils after as a reward; the one inviting us to begin where the other would have us end; the one putting forgiveness and acceptance with God in our hand and calling upon us, in the free spirit of his redeemed, forgiven, adopted children, to live, and serve, and in all things to submit to our Father which is in heaven—the other holding out the forgiveness and the acceptance away in the distance, and calling upon us, in the spirit of bondage, to labour all through life for their attainment; the one the old tattered garment, the other the piece of the new made cloth.

And the wine of the kingdom, ever as it pours itself afresh from its fountain-head on high into the spirit of man, is it not a new wine that needs new bottles to contain it? If it be indeed the Spirit of Christ which is working in hearts that have been opened to receive it, may we not safely leave it to its own operation there, and allow it to shape the vessel that holds it as it likes? Both, indeed, are needed,—the outward form, the inner spirit; nor will any wise or thoughtful man rashly touch, or mould into different shape the first, thinking thereby to improve the second; but neither will he hinder or hamper the second if by its own proper motion it is going on gently to remould the first.

William Hanna.

TWO FESTIVAL ADDRESSES.

BY A PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY.

I.—THE LAST DAY OF THE YEAR.

The end of time is sure to come. Often, when looking round us, we fail to perceive any tokens of this; and the lesson of time's swiftness is lost upon us. The wisdom of numbering our days is far more admired than practised, and thousands live on and on as if things were certain to continue for ever just as they are now. Even the watchful Christian, with whom weeks and months pass away without his experiencing anything extraordinary in his life, is tempted to slacken his effort, and say to himself, "My Lord delayeth his coming;" while the scoffer loftily repeats, "Where is the promise of His coming?" But he must surely be in a deep sleep of the soul whom the voice of this evening does not seriously remind of the certain end of time. It should make us all see that time is no more destined to continue for ever than the world with its glory. The dying day of the year is an image of the dying day of time; and though we may suppose that centuries will elapse before that awful hour arrives, this evening proclaims in our ear, with trumpet note, that the end of time for each one comes with death. At this moment we are, maybe, buoyant with health and vigour, but as surely as the last stroke of the clock this year will soon be heard, so surely will our pulse soon throb its last; and where the tree falleth there it shall lie. That end will come for thee, O son of prosperity. "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further," will the Lord of life and death say to you; and the flowers of your youth will make room for funereal cypresses, the sound of your harp for doleful mourning, and the gaudy dress of your vanity for the white shroud of the grave. That end will come for you, O reckless runners in life's exciting race. "It is enough," the Lord of the vineyard will one day say; and at his word, the arm which is so untiring in activity will fall down, helplessly paralysed. And that end will also come for us, ministers of the Gospel! One day we shall ascend the pulpit for the last time. The great Husbandman, who committed the plough to us, will command us to withdraw our hand; and whether the evening shades are already falling round our life, or the sun has not yet reached his noon-day height, we shall not be permitted to sow one grain more, nor to pull out another thistle. I am repeating what we all know and what has often been said in a more eloquent manner than I can say it; but as long as my conscience tells me we forget it, I shall not dread the reproach of troubling you with needless admonitions. What? The solemnity of the last day of the year is increased by the circumstance that each time it sings to us the well-known death-song with fresh power;—a death-song to which, God knows, we have long shut our ears, but which we are compelled to listen to at least this evening. Oh last day of the year! Thou grave preacher! go on speaking to us of our frailty! Though you tell many a one what he wishes not to hear, yet we all feel that we are in need of such voices!

The end of time must soon come. We have a hundred times exclaimed "How quickly the year has flown!—where has it gone?" But soon we shall ask, "Where has our life flown to?" In vain we attempt to describe the flight of time by comparing it with the speed of an eagle, the flight of an arrow, the duration of a vapour, or the quickness of lightning. These motions, however quick, allow us a moment in which we may observe their course; but while you fix your attention upon time, the moment you want to observe is invariably that which is already no more. What a gigantic stride have we consequently made during the last twelve-months towards that bourne from which no one returns! In our very birth we brought with us the seed of death. It develops itself in us; it is even fed by the nourishment that sustains our body. With some the germ of corruption ripens after a moderate space of time; with others it comes to harvest suddenly; while again with some a short over-exertion of body or of mind causes it to rise like a rank poisonous weed over the feeble flower of life, killing and blasting it. The frail hut collapses as if touched by an invisible finger, and Death's cold hand writes "Finis" upon the last page of our life's volume. According to human calculation, it may be long before that final hour arrives; but you will find that, as in stories, the greater the number of pages in our book, the quicker the last leaves will be turned over. "To-day *my* funeral bell is tolled," the parting year cries; "to-morrow it will be *yours*." When the development of our strength is at its highest it is verging upon decay; and slow as was your progress in ascending life's hill, your descent will be all the quicker the higher you have mounted. The clock-work of life goes quick; each past hour takes one off the twelve. Soon the wheels will rust, the springs be broken, and the hands will cease pointing to the word—Eternity!

But tell us, O thou messenger of frailty, tell us at any rate upon how many hours of the day we may still probably reckon!

But here the last day of the old year gives no answer. Yet no; I am mistaken. The dying messenger has an answer from his Master. Alas! it sounds very gloomy:

"The end of your time," he cries, "will come unexpectedly, and like a thief in the night!"

As he utters these words, he points to the fresh graves of many who were with us twelve months since, and asks; "Which of these, on the preceding year's last day, thought that by the next he would be resting among the great congregation of the dead?" In the midst of labour or of rest, of enjoyment or of want, at the dinner-table where a

Belshazzar feasts, or in the dungeon where lingers the martyr, the King of Terrors steps in uninvited, and touches his victim with his inflexible sceptre, saying: "Thou art mine!" Alas! to which one of the many who this year have sunk into the grave did the "thief who came in the night" come just at the hour he was expected? The prepared ones, it is to be feared, were few. This is that gravest of truths which the Year's Last Day proclaims to us: "Nothing is certain here below save uncertainty!" Time carries us away, blindfolded; and while our wavering eyes seem to see something at a distance like a bright horizon, our foot suddenly dashes against—a tombstone!

This evening claims for the Lord our God our most fervent gratitude. Short and uncertain as is this life, it is yet a precious gift of God; and its value rises all the higher the more it is looked upon as a time of grace. Were this world the limit of our existence, I hardly know whether I would congratulate you on the fact of another year being added to your days. But we know that we live for another world, and that our present existence stands in close connection with that future eternity. How, then, shall we find words to praise the long-suffering of Him who again has fulfilled in our case that gracious word, "Let it alone this year also!" Hail to you, my fellow-struggler! the lovely light of the day of grace is still shining upon you! Still an opportunity is granted you to retrieve your misdeeds, to strengthen that which is weak, and to put right as far as you can what you have neglected. Rejoice, oh thou who art recovered from a dangerous disease! Perhaps the fatal sword was suspended by a thin thread above thy sick bed, but the Lord of your days drew it back into its sheath, and your end has not yet come. And who is there amongst us who will not admit that the Lord has left nothing untried to prepare us for the coming end? Bless the Lord, oh my soul! who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies! The angel whom John beheld with a rainbow upon his head, is an emblem of God's everlasting faithfulness. The present evening resembles that angel; it comes to us surrounded with innumerable proofs of God's mercy, which to the eye of faith are radiant with brighter hues than the rainbow. Must not every one of us answer in the negative the question, "Have you lacked anything?" And must not every one also say Amen to the beautiful utterance of Job, "Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit"? The Lord could not possibly do anything more to his vineyard than He hath done in it. For another three hundred and sixty-five days his word has spread the loveliest light over our dwellings and sanctuaries; each day of rest his servants have besought us to be reconciled unto Him; innumerable times the Lord of the Church has been standing at our door knocking. Brethren, do you not in all this recognise the purpose of the highest love, thus to prepare us for the end of time, that eternity should be blessed? It is true that I also see some before me to whom the past year is marked with black letters. They have dreaded the coming of this evening, for they said to themselves, We shall never forget this year. This hour finds them in mourning over a beloved one, or, what sometimes may weigh infinitely heavier, it finds them with a hidden wound in their soul which no earthly salve can cure. We sympathise with you, oh deeply afflicted ones! but you too, on this dark way of yours, must hear the voice from above, "Withdraw your heart from the world ere time leaves you alone for ever!" Oh, if the Lord puts thorns under our head, He does so to make us lift it up higher than any pillow of this perishable life! If He takes us to the dying bed of our beloved ones, He does so to teach us how to die, before we have dreamt out this life's fitful dream. Truly, we are saying far less than we ought to say, if, with the patriarch, we exclaim, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which thou hast shown unto me!" We ought through faith to add, "The paths of the Lord, even the hardest, have this year also been mercy and truth."

This evening also claims a contrite heart. Suppose the last hour of this year were the hour of your death; suppose the morning of the new year found you in the world of spirits, and your gain or loss for eternity were to be calculated according to your life's history during the past year—could you without a shudder think of the side to which the balance would incline? Brethren, the angel in the Apocalypse (x. 5, 6) who declared that there should be time no longer, held in his hand an open book. In the same manner the present evening appears before us as a messenger of God holding up before our eyes the register of our deeds. Could you turn over the leaves without being ashamed were only this single question put to you, "How often did you forget the end of time?" Oh, ye children of prosperity, perhaps one tear of grief has not glistened in your eye this year: but, alas! how many tears have you caused to flow? Ye young men, when you were walking along in the gladness of your youth, and in the sight of your eyes, did you never forget that God will call you to his judgment-seat for all these things? Ye rich in this world's goods, if God's finger appeared on the wall in the midst of your festival, what verdict, think you, would be written? Be faithful to yourselves and give account! Ye mourning ones, who have been standing by the dust of your dead, have you fixed the expectation of your own future upon safe grounds?

But the field of inquiry is far too vast to be so continued. Let me limit it within a narrower pale. Let me only put a few questions with regard to your purposes and intentions. You remember you were sitting at the Lord's Supper, and you avowed your union with God and Christ for the first time; or, renewing the covenant for your children, you stood by the baptismal font and said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." You heard the Gospel which called the lost, and you took the word of the prodigal son into your lips, "I will arise and go to my Father." Oh, lovely blossoms! But where are the fruits? And what do the silent walls of your closet testify about you? Has the Lord seen

you there regularly during this year? Was there no guile in your spirit when you appeared there before Him with the confession of your guilt? Did you tell Him all you ought to have told? And when He comes to put to the test all that has happened between your soul and Him, will you be quite at ease? Could you—— But why all these questions? Alas! if by the grace of God we have in some measure become acquainted with ourselves, and if we place the past in the light of eternity, who is there amongst us who must not in many respects think with fear of the lot of the withered fig-tree? Oh! let us lay our faces in the dust. While looking back upon so much labour of grace spent upon us in vain, may this year's last day not have to report of any of us, "I have left him unrepenting, careless, hardened!"

The last day of the year claims a conscientious watchfulness on our part. John describes the angel whom he beheld as "crying with a loud voice;" but not less loud is the tone in which the present evening reminds us of that saying of the Lord: "What I say unto you I say unto all: watch!" Watch? But perhaps there are not a few amongst us to whom this messenger of God has to cry first, "Awake, thou that sleepest!" This word is for you, careless one, sleeping on the brink of perdition; for you, insensible one, stubbornly despising the long-suffering of God; for you, backslider, to whom the Lord is saying, "Thou hast abandoned thy first love." Have all these earnest warnings been in vain? No longer harden your heart where so much combines to beseech you to consider your soul's state! To-day is the day of grace; nowhere is a morrow of grace promised to you. Come, then, let this last evening of the year find us at the feet of Christ, praying as we never prayed before; praying as if this were the last evening of our life. Let us take care lest we fall again into the false rest of self-deception. How would it be with us if, under that hallucination, we awoke in eternity! Oh let Christ be our life! then to die will be gain to us.

"Time will have an end;" thus speaks the last evening of the year; but the covenant of grace stands established for ever. Brethren, when can we better realise the value of this truth than at a time like the present, which points to an open register of our debts suspended over an open grave? Where—it is the final testimony of this year—where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; and the covenant of God's peace stands, though mountains and hills be moved. Did we not recently stay in the spirit at the manger of Bethlehem, and did we not hear the angelic anthem before we heard the oath which, to-night, we learnt from the lips of the angel of retribution? Truly, God has a good will toward men! If, then, there is any one amongst us who dreads the worst from the coming judgment, it is a delight to my heart once more to say to him, what perhaps twelve months hence I shall not be able to say nor he to hear: "Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." Yes, freely! Grasp that word as your only anchor, O thou who art lost in guilt and misery! Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool.

Blessed is he who, with this consolation in his soul, sees his years pass away! But, oh! poor suffering brother, whom this evening finds burdened with a heavy cross, must your soul be always bent down in sadness? This messenger of God has a kind word for you also: "The end will come," he says; but then he adds, "the morning of eternity approaches." To the eye of the Christian the evening of time blends with the dawn of eternity, and where the joy of the world ends, there the joy of the Church of Christ begins. A few years, and on earth there will be time no longer. Oh, my friends, we are accustomed to congratulate one another on New Year's Day; but if we look at this life in all its futility, and have our hopes fixed on a good foundation, we would rather congratulate each other on the Old Year's Evening, saying, "Hail, thou who hast come a step nearer to the end of thy strife!" Blessed are ye who this year fell asleep in Jesus; we cannot forget you, but we cannot wish you back either; it is so much better with you than it is with us!

And as long as our journey here below lasts, so long will faith rejoice that He in whose hands the end of time is, liveth everlastingly. We observe that the angel whom John beheld, sware by Him that liveth for ever. So the Old Year's Evening points us to Him who was before the mountains were born, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto. Our hearts rest in Him. In the midst of those dismal sounds that rise from the tomb of time, the joyful sound rings out, "Much is gone, but the best is left!" Much joy is past, but He who gave it is the same for ever, and the source of all those past blessings is not yet drained. Our life is shortened, but the word remaineth unchanged, "Thy loving-kindness is better than life." If in the hour of death everything forsakes us, his rod and his staff will comfort us. If our flesh and our heart fail, He will be the strength of our heart and our portion for ever. To Him be the last word of the year, even should it be also the last word of our life; and to his name be the praise for ever and ever.

II.—NEW YEAR'S DAY.

We are now in a position which none of us occupy for the first time, but many perhaps do so for the last time:—at the entrance of a new year. The curtain is once more raised; the unknown road lies before us, and a voice which no mortal being can resist, cries, Forward! New Year's Day! Is there a day among all the grave and merry days of our life, the high significance of which is, on the whole, less understood? It is an agreeable day to the young; a tedious one in the estimation of the elders; a restless day in the opinion of most, who see the bustle and hear the noise of merry-making. But

for how few is it a grave, decisive day! And yet futurity stands now before us like a mysterious form wrapt in an impenetrable veil, continually but silently beckoning to us. Certainly, it is calculated to make the Christian anxiously desire a word of instruction and encouragment for the ensuing journey of life. Yesterday was the last day of the old year, and a messenger of God, as it were, appeared before your eyes, pointing you to the end of time. To-day another messenger may be supposed to stand before you, having in his hand "the everlasting Gospel." Over the entrance of the year you see, as it were, in brightest characters, that Name in which the essence of that Gospel is contained, and without which it would be no "glad tidings."

New Year's Day is the name-day of Jesus. Perhaps this thought may strike you as strange. If so, then you cannot with attention have observed that in St. Luke's Gospel (ii. 21) it is clearly stated, that the name of Jesus was given to the Saviour on the eighth day after his birth. You must also be unacquainted with the pious custom, which for more than thirteen centuries has prevailed in the Christian Church, of remembering the Lord's circumcision on the first day of the first month. When, in the fifth century, the believers were but too often tempted to share the heathenish pleasures and dissipations with which the transition from one year into another was celebrated, famous fathers of the Church tried to give a higher tendency to this mirth, by making the civil festival a day for Christian remembrance. They reminded the Church that the Lord, a week after his birth, (which at a very early period was celebrated on the 25th of December,) received the sign of God's ancient covenant, and thus was put under the law, that He might deliver us from the bond-service of the law. They pointed to the name which at that time had been given to Him on his heavenly Father's authority, as the best foundation for hope and consolation amid the questions and cares which cannot but rise in our minds at the commencement of the year. They commended to the Church that circumcision of the spirit and the heart, and thus tried to lead their hearers to put off the old man, instead of participating in heathenish and sinful recreations. It was an excellent custom to begin the new year in the name of Jesus, and could not but promise peace and joy for the future.

It is a remarkable circumstance that this name was borne by an excellent teacher in Israel, by a celebrated high-priest, and by a princely hero. I refer to Jesus, the son of Sirach; Joshua, the high-priest, of whom mention is made in the prophecy of Zechariah; and the son of Nun, who conquered Canaan at the command of God. It seems as though that which was imperfect in each of them was to come out in the highest perfection in our Lord. We know Him, the Teacher sent of God, the High-Priest of the new covenant, the King of kings, who, striving unto blood, disclosed a heavenly Canaan for sinners; and you know that never a name was borne with greater right than this holy name of Jesus. The whole of his earthly life may be called an illustration and confirmation of what is expressed in his name. When we confess our Lord under the name of Jesus, we confess Him as the only all-merciful and all-sufficient Saviour. We call Him by that name, because He saves us, makes us enjoy such spiritual blessings as it hath never entered into the heart of man to conceive. Let us observe what the name of Jesus gives us, and what it asks of us at the commencement of the new year. Let us observe that the profession of that name is an invaluable new year's blessing, and an inviolable new year's duty.

We are in a world that changes every moment. As the days which lay between the memorial day of our Lord's birth and that of his circumcision have passed away, so the months and years of our life pass like dreams. How many changes are lying behind us, and those changes not always from the bad to good, but also—too often, alas!—from bad to worse! Some calculation which we thought could not fail, has failed nevertheless: now some friendship, which was to last till death, has proved shorter than the past year: some glad expectation, some castle we thought was built upon a rock, has disappeared like a cloud. Oh world, world! how dost thou boil and foam, like an ever-moving sea, which sooner or later takes everything into its bottomless depths! Yet we fear thee not. Nay, we rejoice with a joy full of glory, for we profess the name of Jesus. After a lapse of eighteen centuries, not one jot or tittle of the word spoken by the angel has fallen to the ground: "He shall save his people from their sins." Everything is not perishable. Here lies before us that living and everlasting Word, which implicitly or explicitly bears on each page that beautiful name to which the words of the old poet may well be applied—"Thy name is as ointment poured forth!" Ye mourning ones, who on the evening of the old year, nearly choked by your tears, sobbed, "Call me Mara, for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me!" have not lost everything. There is one Friend, one Helper and Saviour. With the name of Jesus on their lips, our pious ones have gone in peace, and when we see our last hour approach, we also will cling to that name, though that which is dearest to us should turn from us.

What has not changed since that name was first given to the son of Mary? More than fifty generations have pronounced it, either in mockery or adoration, and have departed to that place from whence there is no return. But that name yet shines as in the light of an eternal morning, it yet sounds as melodious in the ears of Christians as it did to those who first believed in it. And as is the name so is He who bears it, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. He has still that same willingness to supply spiritual wants which He displayed when, for the first time, He listened to the voice of the sick entreating his help. He has still that same faithfulness for his friends which He evinced when He loved his disciples to the end. So here indeed is something which does not change. It is his person, his word, his work. These stand like granite rocks, in the midst of the stream of time. In the sky, where clouds float restlessly to and fro, one fixed star shines down into our eyes: that star is the name of Jesus.

But New Year's Day points forward to a debt

which increases with every year. Alas! with how much more calmness would many of us look upon the quick speed of the years, if we were sure that our sins would decrease as our days increase. But our sins will increase, brethren; and the nearer we come to the hour in which we shall have to give account, the more our hope of being able to give account forsakes us. Sin is a poisonous plant, and the older it grows the deeper it strikes its roots into the impure heart. If we have truly learned to mourn over ourselves, the thought must pain us that again three hundred and sixty-five days lie before us, in which we shall every hour offend in so many things. Even the heart which has been made new, remains in many respects old, and in that old heart there dwelleth no good before God. No wonder that we often cast an anxious look at that ever-growing mountain of our shame. No wonder that we ask: Who shall deliver me, miserable one, from my own self? But rejoice, ye faint-hearted ones, for where sin has abounded, there grace has abounded much more. Yesterday, the past year brought in a thousand charges against us, but louder than those thousand sounded into the ear of God that voice: "It is finished, I have brought about reconciliation." Reconciliation! Ah, it is that which makes Jesus a Saviour.

But we rejoice with trembling; for in the feeling of our weakness we cast an eye upon the task which increases with every new year. The life of a Christian is not a life of laziness. It is true that in one sense our life is a resting upon that which once and for ever has been finished on the Cross; but in another sense it remains a life of incessant work and strife, and earnest running to obtain the crown. The more we feel that much is forgiven to us, the more we desire to fulfil our task; and therefore, on New Year's Day, we gird ourselves, that with fresh courage and increasing zeal we may perform what our hand finds to do. But how extensive the task is! and who are we who set about to fulfil it? The Lord has set us to a plough, from which we may not withdraw our hand, though the sweat should stream down our face, and our knees should stagger. First, there is the task of our daily work for the food that perishes, and for those who have the greatest claim upon our care. Then comes the task of benevolence, of living for others. This is that work by which the Lord knows his disciples and by which we wish that He may recognise us. Moreover, on some one of us perhaps a special task, a task of extraordinary weight, will be imposed, and of which he cannot think without trembling. Oh, every one who in any measure perceives what it means to suffer well, to fight well, would almost drop his hands in despondency and cry, "Who is able to do these things?" Who? Oh, brethren! rejoice with exceeding joy, for you profess the name of Jesus as your all-sufficient Saviour. What you cannot do, He can do for you; and as by his blood He has finished the work of your salvation, so He will by his Holy Spirit complete the work of your sanctification. Do not dread, then, the heavy burden which, as his disciples, you will have to carry through another year. Try to understand the full meaning of that word, "My grace is sufficient for thee, and my strength is made perfect in thy weakness." Do not say to yourself, "I am alone; I am getting old; I have little strength to dispose of, to do what I should like to do." Drop that *I*, and put *Thou* instead of it. The first question is, not, What *you* can? but what the Lord can. Not what you can do, but what He will do in you and by you. We do not this day take back one word of the profession which has so many a time proved a blessing to us. You may be weak, but you will never be forsaken; you may despair of yourself, but never of your Lord, who this year also will not rest till He has pulled up every weed in your field, and brought your harvest, ripened by Himself, into the barns of heaven.

We do not tremble at the future which this season always makes threatening to the sinner. No doubt the future, looked at as it is in itself, is not only uncertain, but dark. The prospect of all of us is wrapped in mist. The horizon to many of us is covered with dark clouds. Perhaps you have seen a worm gnawing at a lovely flower in your path, and you know that that worm will have finished its work ere this year draws to its close. Perhaps you have seen at a distance on your road a stumbling-block which you thought you would not be able to roll away or to avoid. We all of us, brethren, wish to-day that goodness and mercy may follow us; but to-morrow perhaps we shall exclaim, Who could have thought of such deliverances? And perhaps those amongst us who care least are first threatened. If to-day I could open the book of the future for only one single week, and if I could read it to you, I am certain that I should see faces which now are bright with joy turn pale as death. And as to the book of our life, who can tell how many of us are still calculating upon a long series of fresh chapters, although they are only a few lines from the end? But, brethren, we believe in the name of Jesus; we see the threatening storms abate, and a well-known voice sounds into our ear, "Fear not, I am the first and the last." What a thought is that for faith! There is One living in the universe whose office, whose calling, whose pleasure consists in nothing else than calling and leading us unto salvation! Whatever this year may bring upon me, it will all be instrumental in his hand for that end, and the most painful means will certainly be the best chosen. My enemies may rise against me, but they shall prove ministers unto my salvation. My dearest wishes may not be realised, but disappointments, even more than enjoyments prayed for with tears, will co-operate in ensuring my happiness. Strokes may come upon me which I cannot think of now without shuddering, but the Hand which shall inflict these is a Hand that will not crush but save me. Be welcome, then, thou new year of the Lord! To us thou art a year of his good pleasure. And blessed be thou, O Name praised above all names, which causest our cares to fly away even more quickly than our days. With Thee on our lips, and Thy Spirit in our hearts, we step on, not carelessly, yet without care, and say to our souls, Forward, in Jesus' name, forward!

It lies in the nature of things, brethren, that we who see so much change round about us, should also change with the years, in some respects at least.

Many an opinion of ours for which perhaps in former time we would have died, must be abandoned as untenable; and with the increase of experience we often feel compelled to reject as erroneous what hitherto we had adopted as true. Is it the same with the profession which we are now renewing at the commencement of this year? I think, brethren, I may reckon upon your unanimous consent, when I declare that a change in the great fundamental doctrines of our Confession, upon which our godly fathers calmly fronted eternity, would be no improvement. Let me therefore beseech you to be faithful in your profession of the eternal truth. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid. Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega in all the work of salvation. Inasmuch as that truth is not only lodged in your head, but living in your heart, I think, brethren, you have felt peace up to this day. What, then, can you do better than hold fast this profession without wavering? Some seem to be of opinion that in the sphere of religious and Christian life there ought from time to time to be a change similar to that which is seen in dress, custom, and fashion. They call that which formerly was deemed to be true, obsolete; and that which formerly was looked upon as an error, they would now receive as new light. As if for each century there could be a special truth, different altogether from former ones! As if human reason could now comprehend what it never before could fathom! As if the Christian Church could, with regard to the highest vital questions, for eighteen centuries have been led in the dark by the Spirit of the Lord! To discover on a sudden, in the second half of the nineteenth century, a truth in which not one of the Apostles or Reformers would recognise the Gospel! But for the matter having such a sad bearing, brethren, we should almost feel inclined to mock these people. But with great boldness we repeat the words of Paul, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, and not after Christ." Not that we are enemies of progress and development, or what pertains thereto. We, on the contrary, desire to rank foremost amongst the advocates of true enlightenment. We desire to promote that progress which does not begin with digging up the foundations, but goes on building upon those foundations laid by God himself. We desire to further that development by which we learn more and more to understand and to apply in every direction what God has revealed. But let this care for the preservation of truth be combined with cordial faith. Let our profession of Christ be a believing profession. As it was at the close of last year, so it will be at the beginning of the present year. They are not all Israel which are of Israel, and many a one who utters a pure and sound confession of truth, does no more than merely say, "Lord! Lord!" If there are amongst us those whose consciences tell them this is their case, we should in this new year, which for us may be the last, render ourselves guilty of gross unfaithfulness, if we let them go in peace in a way which cannot possibly lead to true peace. We must point out the imminent danger, for they live only for themselves, and have not yet become the property of the only Redeemer. They rejoice to-day in innumerable blessings, but they have hitherto despised the greatest of all blessings—Christ himself. Perhaps their name is found at the top of this year's register of spiritual death. Oh, what must become of them, if they continue thus from year to year! Oh wonderful long-suffering of God! You are not yet taken away in the midst of your sins. The lovely Gospel still sounds in your ears, instead of the trumpet of eternal judgment. Be quick, we beseech you, for your life's sake; for your days make themselves wings, and God knows how soon the night in which nobody can work will cast its dark shades over you. God is still in Christ, offering you his friendship; and this first day of the year is again a proof that He has no pleasure in your death. Come and give your hand to the Lord, and let this day be the day of a union not to be repented, with the only Redeemer. Thus may the old things pass away and all things become new.

Let us boldly profess the Lord Jesus. There is a time to keep silence; but the time to speak has now come for all those who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth. It is not likely that the spirit of apostasy which has gone out into the world, will be banished for good within the ensuing two weeks. Innumerable voices rise now-a-days to humble the Lord, and to exalt men. Let us, as his faithful disciples, feel our most holy calling to be witnesses of Jesus in this world, in word and deed. Such a bold profession does not promise us much rest here below. But the reproach which the Christian has to bear for Christ's sake becomes his honour in the estimation of the angels. Let us come out, then, boldly, though with the greatest discretion. Let us this year also try to promote the speedy coming of that day when every knee shall bow to Jesus, and every tongue shall confess that He is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

To the glory of God the Father! Yes, let our confession of the name of Jesus be glorifying to God. This is our highest, our only New Year's duty. Our stay here below is short, and we shall never return again. What, then, can be the end of this transient existence, which we number by years, but of which God has already calculated the hours? What else than that we, like Jesus, should answer to the sacred name which we bear? As He has proved a Saviour, so let us prove true Christians, and saved ones through Him. As He placed Himself under the law of the old covenant, so let us bend every day afresh under the law of his love, taking every morning his easy yoke and his light burden upon our shoulders. As his life was one continuous obedience, so let ours be one continuous thank-offering. On this day, more than ever before, let our resolve be to glorify God in body and soul, which are his. Whatever may be the names we have received at our birth, let them only be known to the angels in heaven as names of his friends. And may we, through grace, at the end of our journey, receive that new name which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.—Amen.

EVENING HYMN.

HELP me, my God and King,
Rightly Thy praise to sing,
And Thee for everything
Ever adore :

For all Thy light to-day,
Lighting my darksome way,
With its celestial ray
Going before :

For that rich heavenly food,
Feast of Thy flesh and blood,
Life, strength, and healthful mood
Quick'ning in me :

And for my safe retreat
From the world's storm and heat,
Under Thy mercy-seat
Hiding in Thee.

Lord, in Thy loving voice
Let my cold heart rejoice ;
Oh, may my ready choice
Make Thee my Guest !*

Sombre the night, and drear,
Oh, let me find Thee near,
My fainting soul to cheer
With quiet rest !

On that dear breast of Thine
May I my head recline,
And may that touch divine
Thrill through my soul !

Cleansing away all dross,
Counting all else but loss,
May I Thy sacred Cross
Take for my goal !

Strong in the strength of God,
Freed from my sinful load,
Daily to tread the road
Leading to Thee.

Shield, sword, and helmet—Thine,
Strength, courage, aid—divine,
Only this body—mine ;
So let it be.

Keen be the fight below,
Hard be the tempter's blow,
Nothing can overthrow
Whom Thou dost keep.

Waiting Thy great behest,
I lay me down to rest ;
Calm Thou my troubled breast,
Grant me sweet sleep.

E. S. D.

THE PASTOR'S WIDOW.

A FEW years ago our market was daily attended—unless, indeed, the weather was desperate—by an elderly woman, remarkable neither in face, attire, nor anything else. Her dress was always simplicity itself ; she was middle-sized, had rather a commonplace face at the first glance, but what drew my attention to her was the regularity of her attendance, for which there seemed no adequate reason, since she had, generally speaking, only a very small basket on her arm, and sometimes none at all. When she had made her purchase she did not go straight home like other people, but regularly made the circuit of the whole market ; and when the weather was fine and the stalls full, often visited some of them two or three times over. Unconsciously I took to observing what she was looking for, and what it was she bought ; she had never come in my way as a bargainer, never snapped up a pigeon or fowl I happened to want. Indeed, her purchases seemed all on a small scale ; belonging not to the animal but vegetable world, and even of vegetables she chose the cheapest and soonest cooked, and with them almost always a little fruit. At times too she would ask the price of flowers,—a little rose-bush or pot of pansies, and I noticed that very often the market-women would give her a few lettuce leaves unasked, whence I concluded that she kept a little bird, and in all probability lived alone. Now, purchases to this amount need not have detained her two minutes ; there must have been some other attraction in the market-place, and when once I began fairly to observe her, I soon discovered what it was.

Evidently, she took an infinite delight in the vegetables and fruits themselves, apart from any idea of eating them. But it was orchard-fruit that most fascinated her eyes and heart. Mere bush-fruit she seemed scarcely to notice, but apples and pears were her supreme delight,—there was a new exclamation at every kind she discovered. When the new ones came in, and new and old lay in the basket together, her new year seemed to begin, and she noted and named every fresh appearance, just as a field-marshal reviews his regiment.

I began, too, to notice how well the market-women knew her tastes. They would beckon to her to show her new kinds, and ask their names. There was, in short, a quite peculiar tie between this good woman and the market-wives, and a very friendly one. The interest that she took in their stalls, her admiration of fine fruit, her judicious discrimination of the relative merits of different kinds, and useful hints as to storing them, &c., were all pleasant to the sellers, who evidently liked to see her and to exchange a few good-humoured words, as a variety in the monotony of marketing.

One winter day, when it was bitter cold and slippery, it so happened that she fell down in going out of the market, and hurt her leg and arms very badly. She was soon raised up and set on her feet. No limb was broken. With great suffering she could contrive to walk, but not alone. Although I had very little acquaintance with her, I could not do less than offer her my arm, which she took gratefully, but with all sorts of excuses and apologies, such as were customary in my day, when every silly person had not yet got to believing that the world was created expressly for

* Rev. iii. 20.

him, and that his fellow-creatures were in it to wait upon his convenience. It seems to be considered old-fashioned now-a-days for one man to thank another; but what would you have? If people have left off gratitude to God, why not to each other?

I can tell you it was no easy matter to get the poor creature, who was in terrible pain, back to her own part of the town.

Her lowly room was indescribably clean and neat, and as I had rightly surmised, there was a bird in the window, who greeted us with cheerful chirps and twittering.

"You poor dear," she said, "you think you are going to get your salad, and I have none for you to-day."

Quite exhausted, she sank down on a chair.

"My Heavenly Father!" she murmured, "what am I to do now?"

It seemed that she was quite alone in the world. Only a charwoman came in once a day with wood and water. She did everything else for herself. She rented this one little room, but had nothing to do with any one of the other inhabitants of the house, no acquaintanceship with them, except a mutual bow if they chanced to meet in the doorway. Such complete isolation as this may go on pretty well for a time, but earlier or later something is sure to happen, and the question "What next?" often gets forced upon the lonely with a suddenness that takes away their very breath.

On this occasion it was I who put it, and not the half-fainting sufferer. What next, indeed? There I was, all alone; the charwoman would not come till six,—it was only ten now. Had I been at home I could have sent for help; but I was afraid of leaving her alone, and then, whom was I to call in this strange house? There was not even a bell in the room. In the midst of my perplexity, however, there was a knock at the door, and a merry childish face peeped in and said—

"Mamma sent me to see if she could be of any use to the old lady. She heard that she had come back poorly."

Here was an angel in time of need. She came in, and in the most compassionate way began to stroke the poor sufferer, who could not reply for coughing.

"Could your mamma come here herself?" said I, not noticing the shaking of the old lady's head, and the child was off before she could get out a word.

"Dear me!" she said at last, "what can you be thinking of! Such a distinguished lady!"

But the lady herself soon entered, distinguished no doubt, but a sweet-looking creature as well, who approached the invalid in the most sympathising manner, but bowed very stiffly to me. I set it down for pride, and thought to myself, "Ay, ay, they are all alike;" but later I found out it was shyness.

And now, what next? Why, first of all we decided that we must get her to bed, and then I would go and fetch my own doctor. The lady said she would have sent for hers, only he was rather too much run after, and when once he had laid out the order of his day, nothing could get him to depart from it: if they ran after him with the intelligence that his own wife was dying, she believed he was capable of saying, "She must wait, for I have still four patients down on my list." Meanwhile I fully expected the lady to send for her maid; but no, she took the matter in hand herself, to the inexpressible confusion of the worthy widow.

"Impossible—out of the question—the sheriff's lady—Madam, I beg, I entreat—I shall die of shame."

And when we came to her left foot we were nearly the death of her, for as the lady tried to draw off the stocking, she in the intensity of her distress and anxiety to prevent it, lost her balance and nearly fell off the chair. To be sure I caught her and broke the fall, but still the wrench she gave herself made her scream, and brought tears into her eyes. We had the greatest difficulty to get her into bed, but at last it was done, and she might have rested quietly but for her politeness and her scruples.

"And if I only knew what to do,—and she is not put out with me. She can do everything for me that I want."

Upon which the lady explained that the allusion was to the charwoman who came once a day, and that the widow thought that would be attendance enough. But this the doctor would not hear of. The case required far more treatment, and he proposed to have the patient carried at once to the hospital, where all the townspeople had a right to be received gratis. He was physician there, he said, and he could promise that she would be perfectly well cared for. But, to our great astonishment, the pastor's widow positively refused; she could not venture into such a large house, could not endure to be amidst numbers; it was impossible to live in a large room where there was no rest or sleep day or night; a little room was such a comfort in sickness. We all tried to overcome her objections, told her a few hours would reconcile her to the change, and vaunted the comforts of the institution,—even Lisette, the lady's maid, taking a lively part in the argument, for she feared her mistress's kindness would give her some trouble.

The good soul knew and felt that this repugnance of hers must strike us all as childish and unreasonable, and therefore her agitation became very great, when all at once the sheriff's lady interposed:

"Never mind, my dear madam, don't distress yourself; there is no necessity for anything of the kind. I can easily understand your liking better to be alone than with a dozen others: when you want to sleep, somebody else is sure to begin coughing. I should feel just the same. We shall be sure to find a good nurse."

The doctor was not one of those who are incapable of placing themselves in another person's situation, and get angry at the least difference of opinion.

"Very well, my good lady," he said, "I have not another word to say. If only we get Mrs. X. (he meant me) to look about for us, depend upon it we shall get a suitable nurse."

"Thank you for your confidence in me," said I; and the thing was settled. I went off to seek a nurse, who was, in the first instance, to call upon the doctor

for further instructions, and the lady undertook to sit with the patient in the meantime.

Thus, then, a so-called accident had brought together, and into friendly relations, persons who else would never have known each other; and but for it I should have been poorer in kindly memories and richer in prejudices.

The consequences of the accident were far more serious than the good woman at first anticipated. The human frame is pretty much like a bottle of wine, which will keep clear and beautiful to the eye for years and years if you let it stand undisturbed, but a rude shake or two will so completely change its aspect, you would hardly believe it was the same wine; nor will it soon clear again. And, in the same way, let an elderly person, who has long led a quiet uniform life, meet with any untoward accident that shakes the frame and changes the course of habit, ten to one some latent mischief will develop itself, so that the original accident becomes a secondary thing, and not unfrequently results in death. The widow had hoped to be up and about in the course of the next week, but she was sadly mistaken; she had to put off her hope from week to week, and meekly, though with many a sigh, had to resign it as each week came round. The injuries would not heal properly; the limbs seemed to lose their power, and by degrees a general debility set in. The doctor did what he could, but gradually took to an ominous shake of the head. The nurse was very kind; I had been fortunate in my choice; not only was she skilful in her office, but she got fond of the invalid, who suffered so patiently, never ordered her about, but humbly asked for what she absolutely required, and as much as possible respected her sleep.

The nurse, however, could not give up her whole time to one patient; she had several valuable clients whom she could not afford to lose, and therefore arrangements had to be made to prevent the invalid being left alone. The sheriff's lady and myself, between us, contrived that the solitary intervals should be very short indeed, and I must say that it was this lady who took the greater part of the responsibility, and that not by sending Lisette or any other deputy, but in her own person. Nay, even when she knew that I was there, she would come down with her work; and help to while the time away.

What struck us most of all about our widow was her entire and singular isolation. She asked for no one, sent to summon no one, nor were any inquiries made for her. Her bird seemed her only friend, and he would go on ruthlessly chirping till he got to her; and no lettuce leaves seemed thoroughly to please him but those he pecked from her hand. I must also except the market-women, who were greatly surprised at her absence, and expressed much concern when they heard of her accident, and sometimes sent her presents; and here and there one gave me a flower, another an apple, to take to her, saying they had put them aside expressly for her, knowing them to be favourites. The example being once set, so many came to offer me similar tokens of remembrance, that I should have wanted a maid to carry them; but I begged that they would not all give at once, but from time to time send a little present to the poor lady, who would not be among them again, I feared, for a long time, if ever. But, to be sure, the ecstacy of delight to the good soul was to think of being remembered; and then the beauty of the apples!—in short, every time I took her anything she used to cry with sheer happiness. So childish a spirit I never had met with in all my life. And what a precious treasure this childlike spirit is, the world little understands; 'tis one that passes understanding, like the peace of God. The so-called happiness that most of us are chasing, strays beyond the confines of both these, and is nothing but a will-o'-the-wisp or a haunting spectre.

It will be easily understood that we wished to know whether she had any relations or friends whom she would like to apprise of her condition; but we were afraid of asking her abruptly, for fear she might fancy we wanted to get rid of our services to her. To our individual inquiries on this head she replied, that there was no one but the guardian of the Orphans' Institute who knew her at all, and she would gladly let him rest as long as ever she could. Not that he was ill-intentioned, but he was a rough over-bearing man who could not tolerate the least opposition to his will; and would, if put out, run on as though life and death were in his hands. She actually trembled in speaking of him. But what was her consternation and alarm when she found out that this said despotic guardian was my cousin? I had all the work in the world to compose her, and convince her that I was in no way offended. I was fond of my cousin, indeed, but far too well accustomed to his infirmity to mind it being commented on or laughed at.

He was a man of the old-fashioned stamp, honourable and upright at heart, and in private matters gentle and pleasant enough; but once let him get on official ground, and clouds of majesty encompassed him about; contradiction was high treason; he became harsh, haughty, magisterial; in short, I could well understand the impression he had made on the quiet widow, though I wondered how the two had chanced to come in contact.

Everything combined to make me anxious to raise the curtain of her past, and to learn how she could possibly be the lonely creature she was. But it was not I alone who felt this curiosity; the sheriff's lady shared it to the full. One day I met her outside the room, and she began:

"Do tell me whether you really know as little as I do about the history of our good widow; I would give anything to have some insight into it. She never makes the least allusion to it, which increases my wonder."

"Just so with me," replied I.

"Now look here," she went on; "you are a person of courage and resolution; do devote this afternoon to finding out. It is such thoroughly bad weather, that we are sure that no one will disturb us, and 'tis just the time for listening to a story, and she is so kind I don't think she will refuse; and whatever she tells us, she can trust us to keep to ourselves."

So I consented; and as soon as we were both

comfortably seated and the knitting going on, I began:

"What would you have said, Mrs. ——, if I had brought my cousin in here to see you? I stumbled upon him almost at your door, and had half a mind to tell him he was but a sorry guardian after all, and looked very ill after his ward. What a face to be sure he would have pulled!"

But I soon repented of my mischievous speech, it threw the poor soul into such a state of alarm.

"Oh!" she cried, "if only I may be spared that! I do believe if I were to see him suddenly look in, the shock would kill me. What things he would say to me for not having announced my illness to him, and for refusing to go to the hospital; he would have me carried off there upon the spot."

After we had quieted and comforted her as well as we could, I went on to beg that she would tell us why she had such a dread of the worthy guardian, and also to give us some insight into her past life; we knew nothing about her but her name, and in our town the custom was to get full possession of a person's family history as far back as their grandparents before we could feel acquainted with them. At first she excused herself on the score of having really no history to tell.

"O dear!" she said. "How could such an insignificant creature as I am have met with anything remarkable?"

When we told her that this fact alone, of her knowing no one, and seeming to have dropped down out of the sky, was in itself truly remarkable, she said it was perfectly natural. She did not belong to our town, but to ——; and so she suddenly found herself launched upon her history: and once fairly off, she forgot her scruples.

"When I was young," she began, "I little thought of ever becoming a citizen of B——. I belonged to one of the small towns in which, as the proverb says, you may pour out a quart of cream at the higher gate and gather it again at the lower without losing a drop. My father was the gate-keeper, and had besides to look after the town clock, and to see that it kept good time. It was an important post, but a difficult one too, for the clock was old and had a trick of standing; and if my father did not find this out at once, the mayor, or the lawyer's lady, or some other of the first quality in the little town were sure to be down upon him, and send him flying off with a threat that if the time were not better looked after, a change would have to be made. Just under the gate my father had set up a little shop, both as a source of profit and amusement. There the very best matches were to be had, as well as other things,—tobacco, for instance, and coffee; and in winter, walnuts and chestnuts too. My father was a widower, and had no child but me, nor could he afford to keep a maid. He was not one of those who fuss themselves about time. He ate his dinner when it was ready, and did not expect it to be always to a minute, like the lawyer's lady, with her pointed nose. I often was rather perplexed what to do to make the two ends meet, but I was contented. It never occurred to me that we were badly off, and the Sundays were always beautiful days. There was church in the morning, and time for the most delightful meditations; and when Monday came, I began to look forward to the next Sunday. And so I lived on, quite happy, though quietly so. I had, indeed, very few playfellows, and was generally at home, where there was more than enough to do; but my father was very kind to me, and what better did I want? To be sure, I had my troubles every now and then,—if a flower I was fond of died, or my father gave me a slight reproof. One day—but really I do not know how to tell you this part; I must skip this," said the old lady, positively blushing.

But we were well aware that this would turn out the most interesting part of her story, and therefore we never ceased begging and coaxing till she began again. "One day—one day"—but she stammered over it a good deal, and it was some time before we could get her fairly started.

"One day, then—it was on a Thursday, and getting on to evening—a short gentleman made his appearance in my little shop, and inquired for tinder. I served him as I should any one else. He was a long time in choosing; I gave him my advice, and at length he went off without my thinking more about him than that he was a kind-mannered gentleman, had a lovely voice, and no doubt sang well. I wished I could hear him.

"The next Monday he again appeared suddenly before me, and quite startled me, for I had entirely forgotten him. He was full of praises of the tinder, and inquired whether we had tobacco as well, his being nearly done. I said we had; and he said as he had been so much pleased with the tinder, he might trust us as to tobacco, and I had to put him up a small parcel, which I did in fear and trembling, lest he should not approve it. At last Monday came again, and he too, saying he had never bought any tobacco so good as ours, strange to say; but it was not always the largest shops that had the best things, and in future he should get everything he could from us. I did not know what to say in reply; and but that he spoke so kindly, I should have thought he was surely laughing at us.

"In the evening I told my father that a gentleman had been to the shop, who meant always to buy his tobacco from us, and I should like to know his name. When my father had asked what he was like, and heard that he always appeared on a Monday, he pronounced that it must be the Helmsvale curate, who was in the habit of coming to town on that day, and got laughed at because he always bought a small bottle of some stomachic elixir at the apothecary's. It made me very angry, to think that people should laugh at so kind a gentleman; and next time he came I was the more attentive, because I felt sorry for him. He chatted, too, longer than usual, and when I called him Reverend Sir, seemed pleased at my knowing who he was. He told me that Monday afternoon was the only time he had for recreation; early on Tuesday he had to set to work again studying for the following Sunday.

"Now then I became fonder than ever of the Sunday, because Monday came next. All the week through I used to think, 'Oh, if Monday was but here!' and I was always in great alarm lest my father should send me out on a Monday afternoon, and the curate find no one in the shop, and so buy his tobacco elsewhere.

"On one occasion, just as he had pocketed his purchases, a sudden snow-storm came on. It got quite dark, and the snow blew in at the door, so that I could do nothing but shut it to and ask him to step into our room, for, with the door shut, we could hardly have turned round in the little shop. As it was, he was covered with snow, and I should have liked to have shaken it off, but did not, out of respect.

"From that time we got on more friendly terms, and he used to come, not only into the shop, but the room, to have a look at the rose-tree. My father thought a great deal of him, both because it was an honour to be on familiar terms with the clergy, and because he listened so patiently to my father's droll stories, and would laugh at them heartily, which was a new thing to my dear father, who hardly ever met with anyone who had not heard them before.

"Now people even began to tease me about a love affair. I looked upon it merely as one of their customary jokes, and laughed with them. All I feared was, that the curate might come to hear of it, and get his tobacco elsewhere, which would have been a loss any way, particularly to my father, who so enjoyed a talk with him."

At that we both smiled, and the sheriff's lady said,

"But you, my dear madam, would you not have been grieved, too, if the curate had left off his visits?"

"No doubt I should, afterwards," she replied, "but I was not conscious then of my own real feelings. To be sure, I used to think what a fine position a pastor's wife had: how she could have her own way in house and garden, and go about her parish like a queen amongst the other women, particularly if she had such a good, learned gentleman for her husband as the curate was. But that such good fortune could ever fall to me didn't enter my head, nor did he give me any room for thinking of it. He was not one of the young gentry, who pay compliments to every girl they meet. Nothing of the kind ever passed his lips; he was kind, but grave; always called me Miss Susan; never shook hands with me; never spoke of settling, or of future prospects, or bragged about his sermons; only sighed sometimes over his difficulty in composing them."

"Those men are the most dangerous of all, my dear lady," I broke in; "they only humble themselves that they may be praised by others."

"No, indeed no; that he never did; he was far too sincere for that; he was not like folks now-a-days. And it would have done him no good either. I could not have praised him, nor should I like to have told him what people said; that they were getting rather tired of him at Helmsvale: he had been there so long—not that there was much to find fault with, either, except that he was so short in stature.

"But one Monday came and did not bring him, and waiting and watching were all in vain; the whole week through not a creature came from Helmsvale of whom I might inquire whether the curate was sick. To be sure, he had missed one Monday before, but then he had told me of it beforehand, and taken two packets of tobacco. Ah! it was a long week, indeed, and my father and I did nothing but wonder what had happened to him. The following Monday the weather was so dreadful that we decided he never could come. However, on the mere chance, I thought I would make it twelve o'clock a little earlier than usual, so as to get our dinner well over and things all out of the way, and have time to—well, I will not say dress myself a little, my father would have given me a proper lecture for that—but at all events it could do no harm if I gave my face an extra wash, and chanced to put on the kerchief I wore on Sunday.

"As we were in the middle of our dinner, a knock came to the door, which indeed often happened, for people had a way of leaving things under our care, and my father called out, 'Come in.' And in came—his reverence the curate. Perhaps we had heard that he had been appointed to the living of Garnethill?

"No, indeed; and very kind we took it of the reverend gentleman that he should take the trouble of announcing this to us himself. But there was more to come, which quite overwhelmed both my father and me. He went on to ask me in marriage, and dwelt so beautifully on his being an orphan, and alone in the world, and that he wanted a wife to be father, mother, and all in all to him, that I can't help crying to this very day when I think it over. Then he told how that he thought he had found all he wanted in me, in such a way that my father wept out loud like a child, so that I did not know whether he was pleased or not. When he ceased speaking, neither of us could answer him a word. And thus I, a poor gate-keeper's daughter, was to become a pastor's wife, and a citizen of B——! It was too much for my head to take in: it did not seem real. I felt as if in a dream.

"My father was the first to get the use of his tongue, and he went on about the honour, and our poverty, and I, in my confusion, murmured something about not leaving my father, for how could the shop be carried on without me?

"Then came the best of all. If that was all the objection Miss Susan had to make, he said, he had anticipated it, and could, he thought, overcome it. He was about to propose that my father should live with us; it would be a great benefit to him if he could make up his mind to do so. There was glebe land with the parsonage that he should not know what to do with; he did not understand country pursuits, and my father did most thoroughly, he knew, and could therefore be of the greatest assistance to him.

"The next morning the news was all over the town, and before noon our own pastor came to tell my father that, having heard such a report, he felt it his duty to come and warn him of it, and he sincerely regretted that his daughter should have been so indiscreet as to carry on a flirtation with a curate. Then my father replied that I had done nothing of the kind, but that the curate had been appointed to a

living, and that quite unexpectedly I had become engaged to him yesterday. Our minister would not believe it, and thought we had mistaken jest for earnest; but when he was really convinced, he wished me grace to profit by my good fortune. But I was still, he said, far from being qualified for such a position, and gladly would he lend me all the assistance he could, and I might come to his house whenever I liked. He added that he must say he never should have expected such a thing: but it was true enough that still waters run deep.

"You can easily imagine the noise it made in our little town; but no one seemed to grudge me my happiness, not even those at the parsonage, where there were seven daughters. Everybody was kind to me, and seemed to think that my good fortune was an honour.

"I had to go over to B——, where I had never been before. It was a grand day for me, and I enjoyed it much, only with fear and trembling. He led me everywhere by the hand, else I should never have had courage to walk about, and it was a great relief to me when we left the gates behind us.

"The following day was the most important in my life; it was that on which our banns were given out, and we went to church together. After that we were busy, indeed. My father was resolved to leave none of our poor furniture behind. What we had, he said, we need not buy, and that was money saved at all events; added to which, under his auspices, the curate bought some very nice things; and as to presents, I had so many I was quite ashamed. I never could have believed people had been so fond of us. At first we thought we had better not have all our effects carried to the parsonage at once, but my father decided that the sight of such a load would inspire the parishioners with respect, and went with it a day before, to get all ready for us. The next morning we got quietly married, and that evening arrived at the parsonage.

"'Our new pastor's wife is still quite a child,' the villagers said; 'but she is one of the children who will turn out a good kind of woman; she has no pride.' Oh, no, indeed, I was not proud: I only felt that Heaven had opened and taken me in.

"Many laughed at us, no doubt, but we were not aware of it. And then we, especially my husband, had such a genuine goodwill to all men, that the laughter soon died down, and it was allowed that he was one of the right sort, and would help every one if he could. But it was my father who was the most looked up to. He had just the proper self-respect; sat quite at his ease in our mayor's company, and had always plenty to talk of, as well as plenty to do, for our glebe, and especially our orchard, kept his hands full. We lived very much to ourselves. The village was remote: nor had we much intercourse with the other pastors round; my husband was shy, and I still more so. I can quite understand that we were of little value in society; for, if not stupid, we could not prove ourselves the reverse. But we were none the less happy for that. My husband with his flock, my father with his fields, and I with my garden—the narrower our interests, the more engrossing they seemed, and the joy of one was shared by the other two. And our joys were new, day by day; each season brought baskets full, and we were like children in our delight over our crops. My husband often declared that he had never believed any human being could be so blest, and least of all himself.

"Nor was my father less happy than my husband: and moreover he ascribed all our prosperity to his own efforts. We should see, he said, how differently things would go on but for him; we were but a foolish inexperienced pair, and had no idea of management. And we fully believed him. We both felt that we were blest far above our deserts, and indeed I was so childish that I often felt quite ashamed of it, and almost sad in the conviction that it could never last. For small as our income really was, our wants being still less, we always felt ourselves to have all and abound, and I do not believe a happier household could have been found than ours for many, many a year.

"The first blow was my father's sudden death. He had retained his energies so completely that we never thought of losing him. He made a sad gap in our life; we missed him in every way. And then we had no children, and began to feel a conscientious scruple in living so completely to ourselves, while others were oppressed by family cares. We thought God meant us to come to this conclusion, and had sent my father's death to point us to it. Then we were childishly delighted to find a little orphan, to whom we both took—a lovely boy, with light curling hair; and we rejoiced in the thought of bringing him up well—the more so, that he came of a very wild stock. We got inexpressibly fond of the child; he was our little idol; never off the lap of one or the other, and allowed to have his own way in everything. Yes, indeed, we forgot our garden and our orchard in our new treasure; he might pull our best apples, or knock off the heads of our prettiest flowers: we could not make up our minds to thwart him, though we looked on in sorrow and dismay. We thought that he only behaved so ill because he knew no better, and would get more manageable by-and-by.

"But no; on the contrary, he grew worse and worse, ruder, and more defiant. Do what we would we could not elicit a spark of love or a trace of sorrow. He was a tyrant to all other children in the village, and brought down much censure upon us for our bad bringing up of him; in short, he was a heart-break to us every way.

"God knows what would have become of us all at last if our dear Lord had not mercifully taken matters into his own hand. He removed the boy out of our keeping: sent his angel, Death, to bring him away to Himself. We understood at last how gracious God had been in freeing us from a self-imposed responsibllity. He gave us no children. He knew our hands were too weak to rule them. Why should we have tried to be wiser than He, and to undertake duties He had not imposed? For all that He would not suffer a soul to be lost through our folly. The boy was not left to grow mature in

sin or to die hardened, nor we to the agonising conviction of his spiritual ruin lying at our door.

"This was our season of bitterest trial, and taught us to feel the incompleteness of this world. After it was over, our days again flowed on peacefully and lovingly, each brought some good and most sweet joy. We became very skilful in the cultivation of fruit and vegetables, and our garden supplied half our neighbours.

"And so it was, that a long series of years glided away, and we were already getting old, when my husband suddenly died. This blow I had never thought of. He had not been laid up at all, and scarcely seemed less well than usual. He was always rather given to doctoring himself, probably because he had been delicate from childhood, so that it seemed a thing of course that he should be slightly ailing, and a little more or less was not easily observed. It was a thunderbolt out of a cloudless sky when I so suddenly lost him. Then I discovered the whole extent of my love for him: that I had lived, as it were, in his life for nearly forty years: that he had been my father, my husband, my child—my all! And yet at first I could not estimate all that was buried in his grave. The village had become my world: I knew of none outside it. All my hope and consolation would have been in remaining there, with my dear trees, near my church, near his grave. The smallest room would have been enough for me, and I knew of one that suited perfectly. We had never saved any money; true, we had spent little on ourselves; but that people were aware of, and therefore they required the more, and we both were fond of giving, and so nothing could be put by. But when everything was sold, there was a small sum left; and besides, I had a claim on two widows' funds, and therefore hoped to be able to live on the proceeds. But the gentleman in office would not hear of it. He told me plump and plain that I was a stupid woman, and did not understand the case, and that when I had removed from the parsonage, and had everything to buy, I should have great difficulty in getting on; whereas, if I lived at B——, there were civil rights that I could have the benefit of. But I thought I should have died at the very idea of moving, and therefore had the courage to oppose him. 'Very well, try it,' said he; 'we shall soon see who is right.'

"Alas! he was right; but I will not go over all my sorrowful experience of how much kindness and consideration for me was buried in my husband's grave. I had to write and tell the guardian I could not make the two ends meet; to which he replied, 'of course not,' and he would look me out a lodging in B——. Ah! that was a season of weeping, and the consolations of my neighbours about the firewood gratis, and other perquisites, only made me more wretched. I began to fancy they were tired of me, and were glad I was going away, which distressed me bitterly, yet made my nerves easier. When at length the parting came, my heart nearly broke. The trees were all in full blossom, but many eyes, too, were wet, and many an old woman said to me: 'I shall not know what to do with myself when you are gone. Here we shall never meet again, but please God we shall elsewhere, and perhaps before long. I am breaking every day, and you are dreadfully pulled down of late.'

"And now I found myself in a broad stony street, and knew no one but the guardian of the widow and orphans' fund; and if I chanced to see him, I always felt as if he were the bear out of the pit coming to devour me. It was ungrateful of me, too, for he had cared for me like a father—had taken this room, and put all I wanted into it, and at the same time admonished me sharply not to become a useless gadabout, as most of the pastors' widows who came to B—— did. Alas! he meant well, but he little knew how wide of the mark he was. Timid by nature, and made more so by sorrow, I never made an acquaintance—nay, at first I never ventured out of my room, saw no trees, no flowers, heard no song of birds. I learnt then what is meant by dying of depression—of the feeling that you are forsaken by every living being, are nothing to anybody in all the world, made to live on without sympathy and without affection.

"And so for some terrible weeks I did live, and should soon have died, but that God in mercy put it into my head to bring some living thing or other into my room. I ventured as far as the market, and all at once found myself restored to a familiar world. I was acquainted with everything in the stalls, and accustomed to speak to country women. I bought a few flower-pots, and next my little bird, and later took to going daily to the market. That was my life, and when I got accustomed to walking about I soon found other places where I could enjoy trees and flowers, especially the beautiful churchyard and pleasure-gardens outside the town, where no one goes on working days. And so I gradually got reconciled to the town, but I made no acquaintance except the market-women, who were always kind to me.

"And so I lived a quietly happy life here, such as I did not believe it possible to know again: and if ever I fell into low spirits, my little bird would come and peck at me till I began to play with him. Then, I found my money go much further than in the country, for no one ever asked me for anything, so that sometimes I am ashamed of spending all upon myself, and think anxiously how I shall answer when God asks me what I have done for the poor. I have to confess to the guardian whenever he brings me my money, that I am far better off here than in Helmsvale. He never lets me off. He is a worthy man, but when I see him I never can help thinking of the bear in the pit. Once he invited me to dinner, but I am sure we were all equally glad when it was over. His wife is a smart, talkative lady, and I don't believe I got out ten words; and once back in my little room, I felt exactly as though I had been in the bear's den, and unexpectedly got out alive. I never was so stupid in my life. It is to be hoped they won't judge other pastors' widows by me; it would be wronging them greatly. But I am thankful no other invitations ever came, and I went on living in my quiet way, and very grateful for it to God, till He was pleased to visit me with this trial, and I found

out that I could no longer get on alone. And now how grateful to Him ought I not to be for having sent me his good angels in my hour of need."

Such was the widow's tale, but not told in the course of one afternoon, for talking tired her, and yet it did her good. In her intensely quiet life she had garnered up much of thought and feeling, of which she was scarcely conscious. Her heart was over-full: our sympathy unlocked it, and it evidently cheered and refreshed her to tell us what she had experienced.

But she grew more and more feeble. I think hers was naturally a very fragile constitution; healthy so long as day passed after day in the same quiet uniformity, but incapable of sustaining a sudden shock. Perhaps, too, there may have been some latent constitutional disease, which the accident rapidly brought to a crisis.

She lived on a little while, but it seemed as if her life were all spiritual. She expressed herself far more fervently. Her feelings appeared more lively than in the first part of her illness. She spoke much of making a little journey to Helmsvale when she recovered. She had such an intense longing after her beloved husband's grave, and she should like too to see how the trees had grown in the parsonage orchard, and whether there were any persons left who still remembered her. When I brought her home a present from any of the market-women, she still showed all a child's delight, and would almost weep for joy. But gradually, indeed, they ceased to remember her in the market. Everything gets forgotten at last; only to prevent her finding it out, I went on bringing her little gifts, as if from the women themselves, and each of them was a solace to her spirit.

It was the will of the Lord that she should die. One morning, just as the sun began to gild her little room, she gently slipped away, without even one deep-drawn breath; the bird alone, who was sitting on her pillow, witnessed her departure, fluttered wildly about her head, perched on her shoulder, sang as loudly as he could, as though he would waken her, and when he could not waken her drooped his wings and sat dull and listless in the same place without moving. In a few hours all his feathers looked rough, and in the evening when we were going to put him to roost as usual, we found he was gone to roost for ever; he lay dead on her shoulder where in life he had sat so constantly; he had followed his kind mistress; he could not endure to be without her loving care for a single day. It is but seldom man so clings to man. We miss and mourn each other, indeed; but hearts are not often torn to bleeding, to say nothing of their breaking outright.

Well, her loss left a large gap in my life too; a gap such as I seldom experienced, and for which my cousin, the guardian, took me severely to task. He could not, he said, comprehend my grieving thus after her: we were in no way related; not even in the same social circle; our acquaintanceship had not lasted for many months, therefore my depression was not natural, but affected, abnormal, sentimental: all the board of guardians of the orphan institution considered it in that light, and had discussed it with great disapprobation.

As the Pastor's Widow had no relations, no one took any notice of her death but the said board, who exactly filled the mourning-coach that followed her coffin. Thus her departure made no stir on earth; was passed over in utter silence. But so much greater was the joy in heaven of the angels who had long known and loved her, when she came to join them, and with them to bless and praise the Lord, as only they who are pure in heart may. J. G.

A HOUSE THAT BEATS THE PUBLIC-HOUSE.

A few weeks ago I had to visit the town of Colne, in Lancashire, as one of a deputation from a Missionary Society, and there I became acquainted with facts, and witnessed scenes, which I will describe to the readers of the Sunday Magazine.

In the year 1861 Mr. Robert Wildman, manager of the Craven Bank at Colne, was a teacher in the Wesleyan Sunday-school of that town. On a winter evening, as he passed one of the public-houses, he saw, issuing thence, a number of youths from sixteen to twenty years old, and as the gas shed its light on their faces flushed with drink, he recognised some of his old pupils in the Methodist Sabbath-school. "This, then," thought he, "is what becomes of our Sunday scholars." The more he inquired and thought on the matter, the more shocking became his discoveries, and the more painful the convictions to which he was driven. In the dancing-room, the low confectionery shop, and the beer-house, were to be found those who, lately Sunday scholars, should have risen through the school into the church. Could not this be corrected? The best preventive would undoubtedly have been religion. If only these youths had been converted, their religious decision would of course have repelled these temptations. But seeing that they were not devoted to Christ, could nothing be devised which would rival the attractions of the public-house, which would keep these young men under the influence of their Sunday-school friends, and lead eventually to a thorough conversion? Mr. Wildman was then conducting a week evening "Improvement Class for Young Men." His first attempt to realise his idea was by widening the circle of this class; but he found that just in proportion to the young men's need of amendment, was their prejudice against a meeting held on the premises of a place of worship. They would not come to a vestry, but they would go to some neutral room. One was hired over a donkey-stable, the rent required being sixpence per week. The young men of Mr. Wildman's class scrubbed the floor, whitewashed the walls, and made the place as nice as possible. When the door was opened on the first evening,

"there rushed into the room about a dozen of the kind of youths" our friend wished to attract. He tried to explain to them that he wished to be their friend, and sought their confidence. "He announced that, while he and his friends offered instruction in writing, reading, and accounts, as an inducement to gain their attendance, the ultimate aim was their spiritual advantage, which alone he judged to be real and abiding. He also stated that they had no intention of offensively forcing the subject of religion upon them, and that the school was entirely undenominational." The attempt was successful; the school grew till three successive removals into larger premises had failed to accommodate the still increasing attendance: and then the iron building in which the Institution has its present home, was specially erected for the purpose.

It is a long one-storied erection of corrugated iron, carrying on its gable a little bell-turret; but with the main entrance by a porch at the side. We step in, just noticing over the door a large gas star, lighted on gala nights; and we find ourselves in the men's reading-room. No one is allowed to frequent this room till he is eighteen years old. The walls are prettily papered, having very superior French prints, representing the seasons, inserted here and there into imitation-panels: and several plaster busts placed on brackets further adorn the walls. In the centre a tiny fountain is playing, in the midst of a little tank about four feet long by three feet wide, lined with white glazed tiles, and raised from the floor to about the level of an ordinary table. On two sides of this are pretty ferneries; on the other two sides, aquaria, whose curious inmates are a never-failing source of interest to the members. At right angles to the door, and so forming a screen from the draft, is a large cabinet, partially filled with stuffed birds, dried butterflies, and other contributions by the men themselves to this their own museum.

The tables are supplied with papers, and the requisites for chess and similar games; and there are spittoons on the floor, for smoking is allowed, though not the drinking of intoxicants. Our friend Wildman is evidently at home here. An old man is seated reading as we enter.

"Well, Joe, how are you?"

"Thank ye, Mister Wildman, I've got my thumb sprained. What mun I do with it?"

Evidently Wildman's advice about everything is thought worth having. Some plain directions about cold-water bandages are given; and we are just leaving the room, when our attention is claimed by a clear but rather peculiar call of "Penny bank! penny bank!" On looking round for the advertiser, we discover two noble parrots, the latest attractions of the room, one of which is constantly reiterating the advice of thriftiness, by calling attention to the "penny bank." And we now notice that on one side of the room is a large glass projection, which is thrown forward on the other side into the room adjoining, so serving both: this is a glass chamber, containing the library of 450 volumes, and the penny bank. Through a lavatory we pass into the room for youths between sixteen and eighteen; and we find it fitted in a similarly pleasant style, the differences being the absence of the fountain, and the presence, as pets, of two monkeys instead of parrots. One side of this room, moreover, is composed of moveable shutters, by the withdrawal of which it can be thrown into the large school-room on festival nights. The men's reading-room is never disturbed, in order that they may *always* be able to find a refuge there.

The large school-room is as handsomely fitted as are the other two. Some of the prints in the panels are very beautiful. One at the higher end, the subject of which is a group of game, is really an artistic production. Here the night school is carried on by voluntary teachers: all who are connected with the Institution under twenty-one years old being compelled to attend.

"Have you no difficulty in securing teachers?" we ask.

"Yes, indeed; we have considerable difficulty, but we manage to carry on."

The average number on the books last year was 385. The upper end of the school-room is occupied by a platform stretching entirely across it, necessary for the Saturday entertainments, the Sunday evening preaching services, and other public meetings.

For the idea of opposition to the public-house is thoroughly carried out. Penny readings were found attractive only to the more thoughtful class of working men; and Mr. Wildman was anxious to secure the attendance of those "for whom the beer-house and tap possess almost irresistible attractions." Accordingly on Saturday evenings the room is open for an "entertainment." The three brass bands of the neighbourhood are engaged to play on successive nights. The school singing-class performs in the intervals: and refreshments are served out to the people as they sit chatting or listening to the music. They are free to come and go as they please: and the entertainment closes at half-past ten o'clock.

No doubt this is going quite as far as an Institution with a religious object should do. But surely it is not too far. If the men were not at the school, they would be in vicious company. Many of them would probably reel home drunk from some public-house; while from this meeting they go home sober, and with a head clear for the Sabbath services. We all need amusement: the poor man must have cheap amusements. The only cheap amusements have hitherto been provided by the public-house. Surely he accomplishes a good work who outdoes the publican on his own ground, giving a low-priced entertainment without any of the noxious accompaniments of the ordinary working man's Saturday night. At all events, the experiment here has done well. "The room has been crowded with the identical class we hoped for. We have never been disturbed by the slightest exhibition of misbehaviour, while there has been no appearance of restriction." An oath has never been heard to drop from the lips of a single member while in the building: and large numbers of those who attend the Saturday evening's entertainment, are present at the Sunday evening's service."

This also is conducted by Mr. Wildman, with help, which he gladly welcomes, from members of various

Christian churches. The doorkeeper has orders to refuse admission to all whom he recognises as belonging to any regular congregation; and since the town is but small, everybody knows everybody else, and this restriction is tolerably effective. There assemble every Sunday evening some hundreds of persons, whose lack of clothing, or whose vicious habits render it extremely improbable that they would attend any ordinary place of worship. Indeed, on Sunday evenings the Iron School becomes a ragged church.

This large room, however, is devoted to still more various purposes. Here last summer was held a working man's flower show, when the place became fragrant with the delicate pets reared in many a cottage-window or allotment. And to stimulate the scholars of the night school, there was a writing exhibition, when the men's caligraphy was exhibited stretched on the sloping sides of a square frame, the centre of which was filled with beautiful flowers. On both of these occasions prizes were distributed to the successful competitors by some of the ladies of the neighbourhood.

By a side door we pass into the inquiry room; an addition to the main building, in which our friend gives advice on religious and other topics to any who may ask it. It serves, however, many other purposes: we find there a brass band in full blast, a company of the scholars preparing themselves for helping in the Saturday evening's entertainment; and their performance is very vigorous, and decidedly promising.

Returning to the school, we go down gangway steps into the basement. The ground on which the building stands slopes considerably, and the foundation-walls needed raising to a level to receive the iron building. All the space so gained is made available for cookery and baths. In the kitchen are prepared, also by voluntary labour, the refreshments for the Saturday evening visitors. Mr. Wildman's object was to give at the school, as nearly as possible, what the people chose to buy in the market. Hence he sells them hot peas, penny pies, tripe, buns, rice-pudding, potato-pie, tea and coffee, and ginger beer. This refreshment department is conducted on strictly teetotal principles.

Next to the kitchen is the bath-room, eighteen feet by fourteen feet, containing a vapour bath and three slipper baths. A little steam boiler outside provides hot water for them and the kitchen apparatus. The charge to males is twopence, to females a penny, if members of the school; to strangers a penny extra. The bath-men and bath-women give their services, and in the six months, January to June, 1865, 701 baths were taken.

Lastly, a Bible-woman is engaged, who works constantly in connection with the school, visiting and holding mothers' meetings. She has paid 3500 visits to the homes of the working people. The number on the books of the mothers' meeting is eighty-seven, and 60*l.* 17*s.* 1*d.* have been paid during the year for articles of clothing. A temperance society is, of course, one wheel of the machine; and on Sunday adult classes are held, with an attendance of eighty males and sixty females.

And now, what is it all doing? Here is a great machine, what is it turning out? The answer is best given by some sample facts.

The agency reaches the class aimed at. One who has been an abstainer for some time told Mr. Wildman, "I drank until I could not get drunk. I have gone to bed with twenty noggins of gin in me, and undressed myself with as much ease as if I had not tasted. I have retched in the morning until the blood has started from my eyes and mouth at the same time."

On asking two persons, who were signing the pledge, "Where do you live?" the reply was, "Nowhere." One explained, "I have not slept in a bed twice this last fortnight. The other nights I have lain on a sack in an outhouse." The other had broken up his home, sold his furniture, and sent his wife back to her friends, and did not know where he would sleep that night.

"Two others came to join us—drunk and bareheaded, one of them without a coat, his waistcoat and shirt in shreds—and together possessing only twopence, which, to get rid of them, the landlady at the beer-house where they had been drinking had given them to enter the school. They are now both of them as sober and respectably dressed as any working men in the town."

As is common in many of the manufacturing towns, the young people among the operatives were accustomed largely to patronise dancing-rooms in various parts of the town. There drink was sold to them, and incalculable mischief wrought to morals and decency. Since the Iron School has been established, every one of these has been shut up.

On Christmas-eve, 1863, the musicians at one of the public-houses "piped" for some time, but no dancers presented themselves, till at length the players themselves adjourned to the meeting at the Iron School.

An attempt to open the theatre that winter failed through the same influence. "The playgoers," said some of the band, "are all gone to school." The actors, after struggling for a week in face of empty benches, left the town in despair.

Best of all, many have become Christians: and have joined, as they are encouraged to do, some one of the recognised Christian churches. I had the pleasure of preaching to several of these, who were members of the church I was visiting.

There are three reasons for this success. One is, that "the children of light are," in this case, "as wise as the children of this world." As much care and capital are expended on this enterprise as would be necessary to the success of a business undertaking. The rooms are nicer than those of the public-house; the attractions are greater than those the publican can offer. In a word, the public-house is fairly beaten on its own ground.

It is not fair to expect that a social or religious mission will succeed in dim, dirty rooms, when the gin-palace is beckoning with its flaring lights and mirrors. Religion has not such strong alliance with the unregenerate heart, that she can afford to dispense with all legitimate aids and recommendations.

Yet this is not all. The social aspect of the Iron School is that which most strikes a casual observer;

but the underlying power is that of deep religious conviction, and intense religious earnestness. Everything is made to tend towards godliness. To make men godly is the grand aim: as religion personally experienced is the grand motive. And I am more and more convinced that working-men's clubs will only last, and be really useful, when they are conducted in a deeply religious spirit. The managers must have the great aim before them of making their institutions Christianising agencies. This is the secret of the success of the workmen's halls established by Mrs. Baily and Mrs. Wightman; and the lack of this is the secret of their very partial success almost everywhere else.

Then the school is Mr. Wildman's "hobby." He devotes himself to it with a zeal only equalled by that of his wife. A very blessed hobby it is; and wherever any great movement is carried on successfully, it is because some one or two men think, dream, pray about it every day and every night; which, I suppose, is making it their "hobby." O for more such "hobbies" and "hobby-riders!"

T. Bowman Stephenson.

PSALMS.

XCIII.—DOMINUS REGNAVIT.

God the Lord is King for ever,
Clothed with glory, girt with might;
He the earth has fixed, and never
Can aught change its station right.
Ere creation was, Thou reignest,
Thou art Lord the world before;
Thou from age to age remainest,
Thou art God for evermore.

Hark! the floods lift up their voices,
Ocean's waves aloud do roar;
Hark! the mighty sea rejoices,
Thunders praise upon the shore.
Thou o'er all hast domination,
Ever are Thy precepts sure;
In Thy holy habitation
Holiness shall aye endure.

CXXXVII.—SUPER FLUMINA.

Our harps upon the willows hung,
Euphrates' waters murmured by,
Remembrance silenced every tongue,
And brought a tear to every eye.

We sat and wept for Zion's woe;
And while our tears fell thick and fast,
Our harps, with mournful cadence slow,
Sighed in the breeze that o'er us passed.

How can we sing our songs divine
Far from the scenes that gave them birth?
While we in hopeless exile pine,
How can we raise the notes of mirth?

If I forget thee, O my land,
Or cease thy woes to ponder o'er,
May all its skill forsake my hand,
My tongue be silent evermore.

XXIX.—AFFERTE DOMINO.

Give to the Lord, ye nations,
All honour, worship, praise;
Pay Him your adorations,
To Him your voices raise.

The Lord commands the ocean,
His voice the waters know;
He stills their fierce commotion,
He rules their fitful flow.

The Lord creates the thunder,
His power the trees confess;
He rends the flames asunder,
He shakes the wilderness.

God is a King for ever,
His kingdom ne'er shall cease;
His own shall He deliver,
And bless them aye with peace.

W. H. L.

A WORD TO SAILORS.

The Psalmist says, "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep." This is a word for sailors. You see our gracious Lord remembers all classes of people, and He has prepared spiritual food for each of them in accordance with their particular tastes and wants. And this, I think, should be a great consolation to sailors, who, humanly speaking, appear to have more need of God's care than those who dwell on shore and have their houses built upon rocks.

When he says that sailors see the works of the Lord, the Psalmist does not mean that other people do not see them, for, thanks be to God, his works are to be seen everywhere, and thousands and millions who never saw the sea have nevertheless rejoiced greatly in the wonders of God's hand. But what the Psalmist means, in my opinion, comes to this: "No class of men have more ample opportunity of seeing the Lord's works than sailors have; for the deep reveals wonders of God's love, wisdom, and power, such as must strike them if they have eyes to see and hearts to observe." And what a great privilege this is!

Nor can this saying surprise us. Nowhere does man feel his utter dependence upon the great Creator of heaven and earth so much as at sea. When floating on a little piece of wood or iron in the midst of the furious waves, he knows only too well that one breath of God's lips would be sufficient to sink him to the bottom. And nowhere does nature appear in its majestic and terrifying activity so much as at sea. Ashore, it seems as though everything is done and made by man. The culti-

vated fields and the skilfully built houses show the works of his hand, and everywhere, even in the forest, there are traces of his presence and his skill. But at sea, with the exception of here and there a ship looming in the distance, nothing is to be seen but what God has made and what God is doing through the powers of his creation. When a billow rises high as a tower, threatening to engulph the ship as a man swallows an oyster, everybody must deeply feel that a stronger than human hand has raised that terrible water-giant and sent him on his race. Or when the sailors, as the Psalmist describes it so graphically and poetically "mount up to heaven and go down again to the depths, and their soul is melted because of trouble, and they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end," they surely see before their eyes the work of Him who "commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves."

On such occasions many an infidel, who when ashore sneered at religion and scoffed at prayer, has been brought to his knees to acknowledge with trembling lips that there is an invisible king into whose terrible hands he may fall. And many a sinner who, from spiritual blindness and deafness, could never see God's loving-kindness in the marvels of the fields nor hear his praises told by the singing birds, has yet had the eyes and ears of his soul opened by the majestic spectacle of the boundless ocean, or by the awe-inspiring music of a sea-storm.

A sea voyage has often been represented as an image of human life. The main characteristic of our life here below is instability; and it has been justly said, that here on earth nothing is steady save unsteadiness. Now this truth is nowhere so impressively illustrated as at sea. Water is an uncertain, ever-changing thing; and a ship floating in that fluctuating element experiences the most various and contrasted changes. When there is no wind, and the sea is calm as a mill-pond, the ship lies quiet and immoveable as a rock, moves smoothly as a sledge on ice; and when pacing up and down the quarter-deck one could almost fancy he walked on the roof of some rock-built castle. But suddenly a little breeze, often scarce more than a gentle breath, touches the mirror-like surface; a little swell comes up, and your rock-built castle is turned into a cradle, which sways and rocks to and fro, up and down, with everything it contains. The wind increases, a strong gale blows, and that same great water-castle, which seemed as though set on solid foundations, is tossed up and down as though it were a mere nut-shell. Now it seems to touch the sky, now to go down to the bowels of the earth. It is a perfect plaything of the furious waves. Such changes follow one another in constant succession, and perils of every kind may at any moment be encountered. But in all these vicissitudes, whether of calm or storm, those who have their eyes opened see the works of God; they observe his great wonders in the deep.

Let us fancy ourselves on board ship *in calm weather*. No cloud is visible in the sky. Brightly the sun shines upon the smooth glassy plain, his golden image reflected in thousands, even millions, of wrinkles, seeming to weave a carpet of emerald and silver across the boundless floor. The fresh, invigorating sea-air stirs the blood merrily, and stimulates the nerves; and all sorts of useful, necessary, but often postponed labour, are now heartily taken in hand. Here, surely, there is an opportunity for the sailor to think of the Lord and his works. He may open his ear to what this quiet lovely calm can whisper into his soul. It may remind him of that wonderful scene on the mount of Horeb, where Elijah the prophet experienced that the Lord was not in the storm, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in that still small voice which told that God is a God of love and mercy. Then, looking up to the sky, and beholding the sun filling the universe with light and life, he may say to himself, "Such is Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, without whom our life would be like an impenetrably dark night on a dismal barren ocean." But now our life is similar to the bright, cheerful calmness which at present is gladdening our minds; a life of peace with God and joy in God, because God, "who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

And while he is enjoying that charming stillness in the midst of the boundless ocean, he may think of heaven, his future home, and fancy what a lovely glorious place it must be, full of peace and calmness,—the very throne-hall of God. And he may reflect too, how happy and joyful all will be who, in the presence of that unspeakably amiable Saviour, experience the bliss of being where there is no sin, neither sorrow, nor pain, nor death, where no dismal clouds darken the sky, and no roaring storms fill the soul with anxiety and trouble. And perhaps, while he is allowing his thoughts thus to soar to the things which are above, he may be engaged in mending a sail, or in repairing the rigging, that he may be well prepared for coming storms. And certainly, there is great wisdom in that. A sailor who allows the time of calm to pass on unused is a bad seaman, and is, indeed, a fool. But what a foolish sailor on the ocean of this life must he be, who allows the day of grace to pass on without preparing himself for coming storm of death and judgment! What, for instance, should we think of the captain, who, while the weather is calm and the sea is quiet, would reason to himself in this way:—"I know there is a leakage in the bottom somewhere; my mainsail is also much torn, and the rigging is much damaged,—but it is calm weather, and everything goes smoothly and quietly on; there is no danger, and we will eat and drink, and be merry." Of course, we should call him a madman; but such madmen, I am afraid, are to be found on board many a ship. They feel strong and healthy at present, and live on in sin and license, as if there never would come a day in which their strength will break down, and their souls have to appear before a just and holy God. If there should be any such thoughtless individuals among us now, I would entreat them to consider it is now the day of grace; it is the acceptable year of the Lord; it is the season of calmness and peace, which God grants

for consideration and repentance. I beseech you, examine yourselves whether you are in Christ, saved from this world and its perdition. Look well to your hull, your sails and your rigging; look into your own hearts, and if you find that things there are not right before God, do not, I beseech you, neglect the calm quiet days which are granted to you, but go to Jesus, that He may take up his abode within you, and defend you on the day when the terrible storms of eternity will burst upon this world.

But lovely and agreeable as the calm at sea may be, the true sailor does not want it to continue. He does not go down to the sea merely to enjoy himself; but, "to do business in great waters." What he wants is the *fresh breeze* to swell his sails and push the ship briskly through the brine, carrying him with his cargo to the place of destiny. And the more powerfully that breeze blows, with steady, unremitting tenor, making the ship cut through the watery level like a joiner's plane across a board, a long track of foam and spray behind her, the more hearty is the captain, and the livelier, brisker, and more buoyant the smile that shines from the faces of the crew, who run to and fro and climb up and down in cheerful activity.

Now a sailor may stop here for a moment, and observe what an important thing it is to have the right wind blowing into the sails. He knows well that tacking is most tedious and troublesome work, and that many a good ship has come too late for the market, or got into serious difficulties, owing to the wind blowing from the wrong corner. The better the sails, the more powerful the masts, the stronger the ropes, the more useful are they in carrying the ship towards the desired haven, provided only the breeze blow in the right direction. But those same sails, and ropes, and masts, the better they are the more likely are they to carry the ship far away from the place of its destination if the wind be adverse. Just so is it with man, in reference to his everlasting destiny. He is like a fine ship, wonderfully made by the great Builder himself, and everything on board admirable. But alas! when he ate the forbidden fruit, the wrong spirit began to blow into his soul, the spirit that comes from below, and which is earthly, carnal, devilish. His bodily and mental faculties are excellent, his judgment is sharp, his understanding is clear, and reason is a wonderful power within him, by which he can follow the stars in their courses, make the powers of nature willingly serve him, and the brute creation loyally obey him. In a word, the sails, masts, and ropes of his ship are in perfect order, but the wind that whistles through his rigging blows right away from the harbour of peace and salvation, and right forward to the abyss of destruction and misery. In other words, it is not the love of God that moves him, but the love of self in its many forms—the love of money, the love of the creature, the love of carnal enjoyments and worldly pleasures. His bodily and mental faculties are at work day and night, in the service of a wrong and most pernicious motive; and just as a ship, flying before an adverse wind, with every knot moves farther from the proper point, so man, living and labouring in this ungodly spirit, finds himself every morning farther from heaven and nearer to hell. It is observed too that, when once this wrong spirit has taken possession of a man's heart, that heart becomes the worse the more profound his learning, the keener his intellect, and the sharper his power of judgment. It was not the poor ignorant people, it was the learned Pharisees, the sagacious Scribes, and the shrewd lawyers, who crucified our blessed Saviour. People often cry, "Only let us gather knowledge, cultivate science, and become well versed in all branches of human learning, and everything will come right, mankind will be happy and the world will be regenerated!" Well, I have not the slightest objection to science and learning; on the contrary I highly value them. But if one thinks these are the remedy for the evils of mankind, I would call him just such a fool as you, my friends, would call that man, who, when the wind was blowing from the wrong quarter, put up more sails or renewed the ropes. No, the root of our misery lies not in the head but in the heart. Let the spirit of pride, of selfishness, of worldly-mindedness, be expelled, and the Spirit of God, that Spirit of love and grace, will breathe into our souls, and then the rest will come round by itself. Let us love Jesus, let us as poor lost sinners humbly take our place at the foot of his cross, and allow the glad tidings of salvation through the blood of the Lamb to thrill through our souls. Then our ship will at once turn its stern hellward and its brow heavenward. Ay, my friends, *that* truly is the right breeze, and the stronger it blows the better for us. All our bodily and mental faculties will then the more powerfully co-operate to display the varied virtues of Christ, and to make us intensely enjoy the happiness of salvation and to glorify God, from whom all these things are.

But it is especially in the hour of danger that the sailor sees the works of God; when *the storm* raises its voice of thunder and turns the ocean into a boiling abyss, and when no star is seen above, and all seems wreck and ruin below,—then indeed the sailor sees the hand of God. Like a roaring lion the hurricane dashes upon the foaming tide. He lashes the waves with his terrible breath, driving them ahead like a frightened flock. Helpless, defenceless, the little nut-shell is pitched up and down like a straw tossed about in the air. Human skill is at its end. Ropes break, shrouds and stays fly away, masts crack, and the whole vessel creaks and groans. The rudder is blown off, and the strong framework is wholly given up to the mercy of the infuriated element. Suddenly is heard the heart-piercing cry—*Fire! Fire!* Smoke issues from the hold; soon it takes the shape of a column. Who can describe the despair, the confusion, the consternation, the wringing of hands. "To the boats! to the boats!" They are lowered, in convulsions of despair. Every one who can move his limbs jumps overboard, dashes into the dancing craft, and the oars are seized with spasmodic grasp. Already the ship is in a blaze. Ghastly is the glare that terrible firework throws over the tempestuous scenery around. Sparks and pieces of burning wood fly in wild confusion over the sea for miles around. Off dash the boats to escape that

"ALREADY THE SHIP IS IN A BLAZE."

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awful hell. And on little pieces of wood many costly lives are now floating about over the bottomless deep, longingly looking up to God, who alone can save them from immediate death!

Truly it is in such times of danger that those who go down to the sea and do business in the great waters, most clearly see the works of the Lord. And first of all they see what a powerful God He is, and how truly it is said of Him that He is mighty to destroy both soul and body. Indeed it is greatly to be marvelled at, that among sailors there are so many who sit in the seat of the scornful, and care neither for God nor his Word. It might be expected that the scoffer, the speaker of abusive language, the adulterer, and the profligate, would, least of all, be found among men who more than others are in the habit of witnessing the marvellous power of that God with whom we have to do. Truly that heart must be sadly hardened which, after having once witnessed a storm at sea, has not learned to fear the God of nature, and to tremble at his word. For that God addresses nobody in a more emphatic manner than He addresses a sailor, when speaking to him in the voice of the storm, and printing his majestic footsteps on the great ocean waves, He says, "I am God, and there is none besides Me! It is I who have created heaven and earth, the sea and all that therein is. It is at My rebuke—at the blast of My nostrils—that the channels of the waters are seen, and the foundations of the world are discovered. Therefore, O man, worm of the dust, fear thou Me, for it is I who can destroy; and come thou to Me, for it is I who can save." And blessed is he who opens the ears of his soul to listen to this voice; who, having learnt from the sea that its Creator is not a God to be mocked, abstains from jesting and foolish words; and who, having learned from the storm that man with all his strength and wisdom is before the Lord like a stubble before the whirlwind, desists from proudly lifting his hand against the Almighty.

The globe upon which we live is just like a ship in the midst of the ocean. It looks so firm, so solid, so secure; but it is in reality nothing but a speck of dust floating in the immense sea of space—in the boundless ocean of the universe. It only floats along at the command of God. When He beckons with his finger it will burst to pieces and disappear like a ship which, dashed upon a rock by the storm, sinks down to the bottom of the deep. Men will perish, and so will the works of men. Nothing, indeed, will stand against that future storm of destruction, which will rage on that day when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." In the annals of eternity it will be recorded that this frail vessel, called the earth, in which we are now sailing, disappeared on such and such a day and has never since been heard of. Nay, it will be reported that a terrible hurricane burst upon it, and that it got on fire and was for ever lost. The momentary question will be heard: "And are all hands lost with it?" The answer will be: "Only those were saved who took to the life-boat." And that life-boat, my brethren, is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

My friends, let us not be unbelieving. Let us not be like those foolish sailors who, because the weather continued calm for many weeks, averred that storms could not possibly arise any more. Now-a-days this world is full of infidels, who cry that God's Word is a fable, that there is no future judgment, nor a place of eternal punishment for the ungodly. Beware of such ungodly men. They are evil counsellors on board ship. Let us be prepared for the coming day, believing God upon his own infallible Word. See that your life-buoy be in its proper place, and in good order; so that you may put it on at once when the hour of danger comes. That life-buoy is faith in Jesus; the living faith of the heart in Him who alone is mighty to save. If you have that life-buoy, you are all right. If you know that Jesus is yours, and that you are his, the storm may roar, and the sea foam, and the ship be burnt, but you will be safe, like a child sleeping peacefully on its mother's bosom. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but he that believes in the Son hath life everlasting.

I daresay you have all heard that story of the little boy—the son of a mate—who, during a fearful storm, and while everybody was in fright, continued cheerfully playing with his toys in the cabin, and when asked how he could be so at peace, answered in a voice of surprise, "Why, isn't my father at the wheel!" And perhaps, too, you have heard of that good Christian man who, while everybody was running to and fro in despair, stood with a smile on his face, looking at the waves as they boiled and hissed around; and who, when asked what he was smiling at, answered in his simplicity, "Why, I am curious to see how the Lord will help us out here."

Oh, that we may thus rest in the Lord! Let us strengthen each other's faith in Jesus. Let us firmly believe that He really is our Saviour—our living, mighty, faithful Saviour—who loves us, who cannot forsake us, since He bought us at the price of his precious blood! Tempests however frightful will subside, and waves however terrible will be quieted again, for we know that it is Jesus who rebukes the winds and commands the sea. Many may be our tribulations in this life, but they will all pass away, for the Lord delivers his children out of them all. Only let us care to have Him with us on board, and our perdition will be impossible. When that day dawns on which the dark shadow of death will alight upon our souls and everything disappear before our sight, we shall not fear, for the Lord is our shepherd, who will guide us safely through the dark valley. Nay, it is then that we shall rejoice as we never rejoiced before, for terrible as the waters of death are, and horrifying as the deep of the grave is, yet the redeemed of the Lord will even in those waters see his greatest works, and even in that deep they will witness his marvellous wonders.

A MEDITATION ON SORROW.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PRAYING AND WORKING."

Sorrow envelops us like an atmosphere, clings to us like our thoughts. We cannot flee from it. It has grown up with our lives; if the child and the man have each their tears, the worn old heart is often wrung. Behind our sweet and tender joys it lurks like an assassin in the dark; it may start out at the next turn of a gentle life. Like a plague it hides in the sunshine, and drifts with the soft summer winds.

See how full the Bible is of mourners: Adam weeping over Abel, Jacob over Joseph, the oak of tears where they buried Rebekah's nurse, the lonely house at Bethany, Rizpah on the bare rock of Gibeah, and David, his heart ready to break over Jonathan and Absalom; women that wash the Saviour's feet with tears, and daughters of Jerusalem that lament through the sad streets up to Calvary; widows following the biers of their sons, and death-chambers of young girls where the silence is broken by a mother's sobs; and Peter in his bitterness; and Jesus Himself bowed over his friend's grave. For the life in the Bible is human life, no way transcendental or exceptional, and by the roots of that life there grow those bitter herbs of sorrow.

There is no promise of exemption from sorrow on earth, even in the Bible. We shall carry no grief with us into Heaven. Sorrows cease at death, like a shower that suddenly stops; we pass beyond them as men pass up through rain into the sunshine on the loftier slopes. Hold on till death only, and there will never be another. But here we must endure, be patient, have faith. In Christ or out of Christ sorrow is inevitable; we might as well expect four seasons a year without a cloud. And somehow we must meet it; with strength, courage, hope, if we will believe God's word; otherwise with murmuring, astonishment, angry questionings, a broken heart, puzzle, darkness, and foreboding.

The Bible finds this sorrow with us, explains it, reveals its place in God's order, opens to us the soul of goodness in things evil, brings us comfort; nay, it lifts up the sorrow into a holy instrument of God's will, and pours out blessings on the sorrowful. *What son is he whom his father chasteneth not? In the world ye shall have tribulation; these things have I spoken that in me ye might have peace. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people. I, even I, am He that comforteth you: the Father of Mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. He healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds. Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings.*

The church at Rome was once in tribulation; Paul, with his large, loving heart, would comfort them by the Spirit of God. He did not say, *The sky will clear;* nor, *Busy yourself and forget it;* nor, *Time will soften it;* nor, *It must come to our turn;* nor any of those speeches by which we only mean that "loss is common to the race."

But he said: *If we suffer, we suffer with Christ.* There is something in that; for the servant is not greater than his lord. And he said: *As certainly as we suffer with Christ, so certainly shall we be glorified with Him.* We know that Christ suffers; we believe that Christ is glorified. We know that we suffer; let us believe that we shall be with Christ where He is, and see his glory and share it. By sin we are heirs of sorrow; by grace we are fellow-heirs with Christ of glory. He said, moreover: *Such sufferings as we have are not worth comparison with the glories which shall be hereafter.* He did not speak lightly. He had suffered more than most, more perhaps than any to whom he wrote. But that *hereafter* was enough for him.

Yet, for the present, he went on to say: *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.* Now, I conceive that this is what he means; that afflictions are part of a system. *All things work together.* Sorrow does not strike blindly like an angry man. It comes as part of a plan of which no one can fathom the depth or the wisdom. Its entrance and departure are as accurately timed as the rising and setting of the sun. Its most sudden freaks and whims, its deadliest and seemingly most causeless successions, are systematic. There is a system in the minutest order of the world; in the dropping of a stray shower, the falling of an aerolite, the patch of sunlight on a solitary field, the sudden breeze that lifts the yellow leaves, a night's frost, a peal of thunder. Each seems isolated, accidental, or extraordinary, because we cannot conceive the vastness of the unity of Nature. And sorrows work into the larger plan of our lives by an order as careful and minute. A man's life and the circumstances out of which it is built are as much under the dominion of law as the soil or the seasons. These sorrows, with their strokes, rapid or slow, expected or sudden, seemingly needful or superfluous, are part of a subtle and intricate mechanism. They may sometimes seem eccentric; so do the orbits of certain comets that flit across our sky; yet those orbits, and the size of these bodies, their power of attraction, and their velocity, must have been arranged to a hair's-breadth. And the sudden and unaccountable trials that have threatened to derange our life and throw us off our balance, must needs be calculated with as much precision. We may pass among them safely and fearlessly; they will not hurt the growth of our spiritual nature. God has spoken to them that they shall *do his servants no harm.* There are the strangest elements in nature—opposite, antagonistic, singly hurtful; but they work up into that harmony, beauty, and procession that has beguiled men into believing that nature itself is a supreme intelligence. There are elements as diverse, strange, repel-

lant, and confused, in humanity; but they work up into the unity of the progress, development, and destiny of the world: and wrong cannot overflow the limits of God's setting, nor crime pass beyond the barrier of God's will. And so trials work up in the complex scheme of our spiritual education. They work with the rest of things, and from which they cannot be detached. It is not their solitary influence that is here fixed on; it is an influence that they share with all other circumstances that affect our lives. The discipline of life is presented as like medicines, compounded of substances that, singly, would be hurtful. In the sorrow considered apart there might be no healing. Even chastening is for the present always grievous. But the trial that blends with a thousand thoughts, and is arranged in its own place, may have virtue and potency to soothe, and comfort, and heal. That is the first ground of comfort, that our trials are part of a great system by which God is carrying on our lives.

And that system is under One under Whom are all things. Our plans have been often frustrated because we could not assure them in every part. There are events beyond our control. A merchant has sent a ship to the Indies, and has calculated with a nice sagacity the markets, the freight, the season, even the probable delays by weather. He waits at home expecting his gains; and everything has answered. But a storm wrecks the ship on its voyage and sends its cargo to the bottom of the sea. No nicety of calculation, no shrewd experience could dispose the winds. There may be faults in our agents. We must use them though they may not understand our views; may not be trustworthy, may not be prudent, nor brave, nor reliant. Men are often forced to use clumsy tools. The largest and wisest schemes have been frustrated by the incompetence and blundering of those who were to carry them out. The fault here is not in our will or power, but in another's. Yet there may be fault in ourselves. We may have been deficient in forethought. We have guarded against many contingencies, but omitted one. That one is often the simplest and most probable: it is often fatal. Scanning the entire horizon of possibilities, how often the keenest judgment has overlooked something. There are flaws in our control, flaws in our instruments, flaws in our forethought. But the control of God is perfect over everything. His plans can all be wrought. *He is wonderful in counsel, excellent in working.* He can arrest the tempest, direct the fire, rouse the earthquake, send forth the plague, stay the heavens from rain. There is not a force in nature that He may not use; nor a human will that He may not govern; nor an event that He may not control. Everything becomes plastic to Him; He can calculate every influence, and combine them at the right time, and stay them at the proper moment.

A person might plan a little trial for another, and it might end wholesomely and safely. But it might end in mischief. A hundred things might happen unexpectedly. The influences might have been miscalculated. When we operate on character we need the most delicate touch: and we are working with instruments we cannot fully govern, and upon what we do not fully understand. It is here we notice the infinite superiority of God: the absolute necessity for One to work who has everything in his hand. Think of what keen and deadly instruments He uses—every form of suffering, down to death; and mental and spiritual agonies. What supreme power and wisdom to keep all these in check, to hold the various reins of circumstance, to mete to every soul its own measure and no more! Realise the supremacy of God over his agents, and over all things; that frost and fire, and flood and drought, and sickness and pain, and sorrow and death, and peace and war, and the coming and going—the words and acts of every man, are subject to his will, to be used by Him in his servants, and sent on solemn and delicate mission to any heart He pleases. And when you think of the vast and intricate scheme of human life, and marvel how the trials of it are always to be kept within wise and loving bounds, and to have no more than their place in the one comprehensive aim of good, it will help your faith if you think also of that invisible but Omnipotent Worker who can make *all* things work together.

In each of these thoughts there is comfort; in the thought of an order beyond which nothing can pass, into which each sorrow is adjusted; and in the thought of a supreme hand that can mould all things to its purpose, and thus guarantee the stability of that divine order. They are like resting-places on the stairway up a grey cathedral spire, platforms on each of which you stop and breathe, and rest and enjoy the widening landscape, and the promise of the view that is to crown the whole, and grow familiar with a feature here and there. So, resting as we pass, in these lower thoughts—we reach the last: that *the end of all things is our good.* The particular sorrow may hurt, but the drift of the whole is good. And sometimes the very sorrow has wrought us good. We know that already by experience. It was good for our temper to suffer. It calmed, restrained, chastened it—made us less impatient, or fretful, or violent. Trial has been purifying us, from the throng of vulgar, animal desires, from restless cravings, from the stain of passion. It has done good by preventing us laying hold of the present world, loosening our attachments to it, setting us a little apart from its painted shows, out of its babble and haste. It has strengthened our sympathy with others. We have entered into the fellowship of sorrow. We have learnt to feel the common burden. We can comfort, for we know what it is to be comforted. But the most of what we know is by faith. We have not seen nor felt it yet. We have but caught a glimpse of the system here and there. If you ever spent a misty day upon the Righi you will have seen, through shifting rifts in the lower clouds, the edge of a lake, or the fringe of a wood, or the gay fragment of a town—vague transitory hints of a great world beneath. And such vague hints are the sum of what we know in part—visions into God's working that have been closed as suddenly as opened. We must hold on and wait, living in this as in everything else by faith.

The good will in some way be wrought out: nor need we insist that we must know how. The loss in some way will turn to gain; will be balanced and

checked by other things. It is not in our power to analyze the influence of every sorrow; to trace it out in its effects upon our character; it is not God's province that we should have the power; it is no element of the comfort held out here. We are apt to trust too much to special causes, to narrow in the width of God's plan to our own conceptions. We are apt to dwell upon particular trials, to draw from them special lessons and warnings, to look for special results, to let the sorrow for the time bulk unduly and warp or prejudice our judgment. We are taught here not to detach it from surrounding circumstances, from the general drift and order of life; that we cannot estimate it by itself. We are assured of what that drift and order means. Even when the heart is saddest, the pain and darkness at their worst, when no clue is to be had, there is this clear hope, that sorrow cannot turn to evil *to them that love God.*

To them that do not love Him the Bible reveals no comfort. They must take what they can find; bear up as others have borne; run to the same dry and broken cistern; listen to the same hollow sound of words. The principle is broadly stated; but there is no mistake about the condition within which it operates. If a man is driven to his own resources and must bear sorrow as if there was no God to help him, he is bound in honour to face the reason, and to acknowledge, it is because he does not love God.

NOTES FOR READERS OUT OF THE WAY.

Nothing for many a day has thrown such a cloud over the British Islands as the news of the negro insurrection in Jamaica, and the terrible measures connected with its suppression. Like the city of Shushan, when the posts went out, hastened by the king's commandment, to carry the decree of death against the Jews, to the uttermost limits of the empire, the people of Great Britain are "perplexed." They do not like to form a hasty judgment, and while the published evidence fails as yet to convince them that the severities that have occurred were indispensable, they dare not pass a sentence of condemnation that would involve the Governor, the Legislature, and all the other public officers of the island in the guilt of needless severity. The whole of the transactions will doubtless be investigated with careful impartiality; but let the result be what it may, it must be extremely painful. If, in spite of emancipation—in spite of Christian teaching and training—in spite of civilisation and organised government, it shall be found that a deliberate plot was laid to murder all the whites on the island at Christmas, and seize their property, the view this must give us of the negro race would be so terrible as to make their civilisation and conversion all but insoluble problems. On the other hand, if it should appear that without sufficient cause two thousand negroes have been shot or hanged, many thousands flogged, villages razed to the ground, and settlements depopulated, a grievous crime will have been committed, and a terrible stigma attached to the British name. Taking the view most favourable to the authorities possible, and accepting the position that no milder measures could have been adopted, we have to contemplate a miserable future for the island—a bitter jealousy between the two races, that must make ordinary intercourse very painful, and create a disastrous prejudice on the part of the negroes against Evangelistic labours. The crisis is one that may well make us thankful for an Almighty Controller of events, who ruleth in the raging of the seas, and maketh the wrath of man to praise Him.

Often though the question of Sabbath-observance has been debated of late years on the most prominent arenas, it has never perhaps been presented in so peculiar a phase, or been so loudly and keenly contested, as during the last six or eight weeks. The ground on which Dr. Norman Macleod would place the day of rest has been maintained by some able theologians, but has never been till now a subject of popular discussion. Holding that the ten commandments belong to a system of positive commands and ordinances which was essentially Jewish, and that under the higher dispensation of Christianity obedience to the will of God is secured, and secured more effectually, by the new spirit of delight in the law of God which is inspired by the Holy Ghost, Dr. Macleod has said that the Decalogue is abolished, and that the observance of Sunday does not properly spring from the fourth commandment, but from that free evangelical spirit that delights in the spiritual exercises suitable to the day, from the necessities of man's physical nature, and from the voice of the Church, that everywhere proclaims the high expediency and infinite blessedness of such an institution. To those unaccustomed to such views, the propounding of them has had quite a revolutionary sound, and the sense of danger has been all the greater, that Dr. Macleod, to say the least, did not take any pains to allay the sensibilities of a people who have been trained for generations in an opposite view of the obligation of the Sabbath, and have been accustomed to regard the fourth commandment as the great bulwark of the institution. The speech of the Rev. A. H. Charteris in reply to Dr. Macleod presented the other side of the question. Mr. Charteris said he could not get over *four* considerations in favour of the perpetuity of the Sabbath:—1. God blessed the seventh day at the beginning and sanctified it. 2. The fourth commandment begins with "Remember," showing that the Sabbath was no new thing. 3. It is in the Decalogue. 4. Our Lord says, "The Sabbath was made for man." In opposition to the argument that a system of positive commands stands necessarily opposed to a spirit of liberty, it was urged that on the contrary this very spirit of liberty finds its true exercise and highest delight in willing obedience to the commands. They were not to be viewed as painful restraints, but as the dictates of fatherly

wisdom and goodness; and this view was pre-eminently applicable to the law of the Sabbath, the beneficent and kindly character of which was apparent on its very surface.

The Sabbath question has recently been before the public in another connection. A deputation from a Sunday League, or "Trades Association," waited on Lord Granville to urge the opening of the Kensington Museum on Sundays, one argument being that the Raphael Cartoons had lately been removed thither from Hampton Court, and that the lovers of art now suffered from being unable to see them as formerly on Sundays. Lord Granville having said that he would take time to consider the subject, another deputation waited on him in a few days, consisting of working men connected with Lambeth, who took quite another view of the matter. The opening of museums and similar places, they considered, would be no real boon to the working man, but quite the reverse. They conceived that, as a great many attendants at such places would be compelled to pursue their ordinary labour on Sundays, the security of the day of rest to all classes of workmen would be taken away. Manufacturers might say to their men, "If the servants of the Museum attend at their employment on Sundays, why should you not be at yours as well?" Mr. Thomas Hughes, M.P. for Lambeth, accompanied the deputation, and made a frank and manly confession. His own views, he said, had been in favour of the Sunday opening of museums, believing that it would be a boon to the working classes; but he had had such overwhelming evidence that this was not the feeling of workmen themselves, that he now supported the opposite proposition. The workmen had a strong feeling of sympathy for their fellow-workmen, and as one of them remarked, they would rather sacrifice their own wishes than that any of their number should be compelled to labour on the Sunday. So strong was this feeling that, when the manager of a large gas-fitting establishment proposed to the men to declare their views for the opening of museums either on Sundays or on week-evenings, it was found that, without exception, the vote was for week-evenings. A somewhat stormy public meeting subsequently held in St. Martin's Hall gave an opportunity both to the friends and the opponents of the Sunday League to reiterate their views.

But it is not always found that so enlightened views prevail even among the men themselves. The "City Mission Magazine" for last month contains some interesting statements regarding a mission which is carried on to the gas-men of the metropolis. The number of men employed at the various gas-works is very considerable, and the establishments are scattered over a very wide surface. As most of the men are employed on Sundays, and a considerable proportion are Roman Catholics, the need of missionary labours among them is very urgent, but the unwillingness of many to avail themselves of these is correspondingly great. On the one hand, the men make the fact that they have to work on Sundays an excuse for their irreligious life; on the other hand, when they get a Sunday, they do not always make a good use of it. At the Ratcliff works the men struck on one occasion for a Sunday in the month. They were offered their choice of the monthly Sunday, or an extra day's pay if they worked right on. To a man they chose the extra day's pay. But the very want of a regular day of rest naturally unfits such men for appreciating an occasional one. They are unaccustomed to it; when they have it, they do not know what to do with themselves, and they resort to any kind of foolish indulgence that presents itself. The odd ideas on religion prevalent among some of them may be gathered from the remark of an Irishman to the missionary, which, grotesque though it was, was made quite in earnest: —"I have lost sweat enough to-day to atone for the sins of twenty years." Yet these very people sometimes show commendable anxiety to hear the Gospel. A missionary was accustomed to hold a meeting in a retort-room, beneath which was a place for collecting the coke when it was drawn from the retorts. He observed that the Irishmen left the retort-room when he began his meetings, and, as he thought, absented themselves on purpose. It turned out, however, that they went below. "They know," said the foreman, "that it would not do for them to be present where you are—the priest would not allow that; so they go underneath, and they can hear as well there as they could on the stage." Sometimes a very wonderful change is effected even on the most wicked and careless. At a meeting held in a school-room in Park Street, a man rose up and asked permission to speak. He had worked at that factory for many years. He was known well to them all. His youth had been spent in great wickedness, and his earnings thrown away in the public-house. He had been a prize-fighter, and was very fond of the business. One night he and his wife had been induced to go to Astley's, where a religious service was going on. He had paid little attention to the sermon, but one word was uttered which made him wretched. That word was Eternity. It pleased God before he left the meeting to reveal to him the grace of the Saviour, and enable him to trust in Him. Since then, as they knew, his life had been very different. He then, in a very earnest manner, showed them the value of the Saviour, and appealed to the men to turn to the Lord in a way that drew tears from many eyes.

Last month we drew attention to a remarkable series of letters on the religious condition and prospects of Italy that have lately appeared in the *Guardian* newspaper. We particularly noticed the writer's account of the evangelistic efforts of the Waldenses, and the remarkable position and influence of Dr. De Sanctis. The writer of the letters, in continuing the series, has given some interesting details of various endeavours after self-reform, within the bosom of the Italian Church. Father Passaglia, the great opponent of the temporal power of the Pope, he does not regard as likely to do much; in fact, the movement against the temporal power which he originated, and in which he got 9000 priests to join, was accompanied by such exorbitant demands for

spiritual authority that it injured the cause it was designed to promote. Besides, Passaglia, though a great scholar and a great theologian, is not a man to exert a popular influence, or lead a party to action. Canon Tiboni, of Brescia, formerly head of the theological seminary of that diocese, is one of the foremost of ecclesiastical reformers. He is what may be called an Italian Gallican. He would acknowledge the primacy of the Bishop of Rome (like Dr. Pusey); but he repudiates the special claims of the Pope. One of his most remarkable works is the "Secularisation of the Bible"—in favour, we gather, of its circulation among the people. Count Tasca, of Milan, a noble of high family, is a great admirer of the English Liturgy, portions of which he has circulated very widely. In anticipation of the cholera, and to prepare the people spiritually for that scourge, he lately printed, in Italian, 3000 copies of the English Litany. In his prefatory note he says, "The Litanies contained in the Golden Book of Common Prayer of the United Catholic Church of England and Ireland contain in themselves so great a love of God, so lively a confidence in the mediation of Christ our Saviour, so much faith in Divine Providence, and so ardent a charity for our neighbours, that it is no wonder our people received with so much favour the Italian translations twice distributed by me in former years." Perhaps the most celebrated reform missionary is Don Ambrogio, a priest of Piedmont, who goes about preaching in the open air in town and country, and disposing of New Testaments. "We ought to hope," he says, "that the principles of a national Italian Church which I uphold will be received, and will restore us to the true Church of Jesus Christ our Saviour." It must be remembered that in every respect, except his opposition to the jurisdiction of Rome, Don Ambrogio is a firm Catholic. Several of the clergy who have been suspended by ecclesiastical authority are permitted by the Government to preach in the churches. At Naples it is said that no less than six churches, attended by large congregations, are served by suspended priests. In the Ticino, and also at Tutra, the English prayer-book in Italian is used, and communion in both kinds administered monthly. At Genoa and at Messina there are also congregations under reforming priests.

Two journals are devoted to the exposition of the views of the reforming party. One is published at Florence, the other at Naples. The latter is the organ of the *Societa Emancipatrice e di Mutuo Soccorso del Sacerdozio Italiano.* A document recently issued by this society declares that the Italian nation feels an imperious necessity for religious reformation. These aspirations are to be dated from the times and teaching of such men as Savonarola, Arnold of Brescia, and Sarpi, whose spirit is still alive in every true Catholic heart. The object of the society is to bring back the Church "to true Catholic faith and doctrine." Among other things, it has supported the abolition of celibacy; approved of the complete abolition of the monastic orders; and again and again reminded the Pontiff that he is only Bishop of Rome, and Primate of Christendom. It calls for the Liturgy in the national tongue, with the free circulation of the Scriptures. The society has existed for four years, and has twenty-four branch societies; enrols 971 priests, 852 laymen, and 340 honorary members; embracing 102 parish priests, forty higher dignitaries, three ex-ministers of Italy, thirty-six deputies, and eleven senators. Baron Ricasoli, ex-premier and the immediate successor of Count Cavour, is an earnest promoter of the objects of the society. These reforming movements within the Church of Rome are not looked on with much favour by the Protestants, who think that the divine command is "Come out of her, my people," and that it needs a root-and-branch reformation to clear away the corruptions that have gathered round Rome.

Meanwhile, the Waldensian party are actively at work. Mr. Travers, formerly a missionary in Dublin, and now a student at the Waldensian College, in Florence, has been engaged in evangelistic labours among the soldiers at Naples. He tells us that his plan was to visit the guard-rooms and barracks during the day, and invite the soldiers to come and converse with him at night. They would come, and each invariably brought a companion. To those who could not stay, he gave tracts. Those who remained he seated in a circle, generally about six or eight, often more, and joined with them in the perusal of one or two chapters of Holy Scripture, each reading a verse, which Mr. Travers expounded. "In general they listen silently and in wonder, like children. Many were interested in the Word. One, a professed infidel, now a believer in Christianity, became my most regular attendant."

It is not very long since Italy and Spain were almost constantly coupled together as the barest regions of the spiritual wilderness, the very valley of the shadow of death. We have seen that faint streaks of light are appearing in Italy, and there are also a few similar indications in Spain. But the following extract from the correspondent of the *Times* in Madrid shows that the great mass of the Spanish people still lie "in deepest shades of darkness and of death:"—

"What the religious tenets of the great mass of the Spanish people have been hitherto I need hardly say; what they are at the present day may be easily summed up, for practical purposes, into cold unbelief and indifferentism on the part of the thinking classes, and into abject superstition on the part of the vast masses, who would probably give up everything sooner than their stolid conviction of the incompatibility of the marriage tie with the exercise of the Christian ministry. . .Truly the course of religious toleration has theoretically gained ground in Spain. The Queen has been, publicly at least, compelled to give up her ghostly advisers; the monks are things of the past (not so the nuns); Church property has been everywhere 'secularized'—*i.e.*, confiscated for the State's benefit; and by the recognition of the Italian kingdom, Spain has, as it were, renounced the Pope-King. Under the never very safe ægis of a Liberal Government, attempts are made to win over a small flock to the views of a rational reform, and some priests are even at the head of the movement. But all such endeavours must needs founder in Spain, as they do in France and Italy, against the utter unwillingness of the educated and half-educated people to give even

the most passing thought to the subject. 'Let the religion of the country be as it is, or let there be none,' seems to be the cry, and the physician who could well deal with mere spiritual disease, is utterly helpless and hopeless when confronted by blank spiritual death. Nothing would make me happier than to report progress were I at any time to fall in with its unmistakeable symptoms."

A correspondent of *Evangelical Christendom* gives an account of the recent missionary work in TURKEY. He considers the present state of missions as more favourable than it has been for many years. In Constantinople all the Protestant congregations are now much larger than they have been for a long time. The houses of the Christian Turks are constantly watched by Government spies, but there have been no persecutions like those of last year. In Bulgaria great numbers of the better-educated classes are already Protestants at heart, and would not hesitate to declare themselves such if they could hope to carry the masses with them. In Asiatic Turkey the work is rapidly advancing. A Protestant pastor has just been ordained over the congregation at Cæsarea in the heart of Asia Minor, and more than 700 persons were present on the occasion. In Aintab, Oorfa, Marash, and other places, the well-known success of the Protestant movement has been fully sustained; while in other places new Protestant communities have sprung up within a year. The people are fairly taking hold of the principle that they must support their own religious institutions, and not be for ever dependent on foreign aid. "In short," continues the writer, "there is everything to encourage the Church to new faith, and zeal in the great work of evangelizing the world."

It would appear that in the Roman Catholic Church in MEXICO a movement is going on, in favour of the English Liturgy, similar to that which has been noticed in connection with Italy. Last year the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States sent the Rev. Dr. Nicholson, one of their number, on a tour of observation through Mexico. The Missionary organ of that Church says:—"Dr. Nicholson not only surveyed the ground, but has really inaugurated our Church service there; and being obliged to return here for conference with the Foreign Committee, has left his mission in charge of one of the priests who have joined it—the Rev. Father Aguilar—whose accomplishments and devotion are well spoken of by those in Mexico who favour a reformation in the Church. Father Aguilar represents a multitude of devout priests and good people in the States of Mexico, who have cast out the Pope and Popery; and calling themselves true Catholics, but not Romanists, claim kindred with us, and adopt our Book of Common Prayer as their basis of union, exponent of faith, and guide to worship. . . The growth of the society has been wonderful, and its forces having been centralised by our missionary during his late visit, and its subordinates being now brought into union under a federal constitution, an executive committee, and a chief pastor, it bids fair to realise the aspirations of its friends, and accomplish the primal object of its institution, namely, 'to introduce into every part of Mexico a faith and worship in every particular like our own.'"

In NEW SOUTH WALES, a union has been effected among some of the Presbyterian bodies. The union is similar to that which occurred a few years ago in Victoria, and embraces the adherents of churches corresponding in Scotland to the Established, the Free, and the United Presbyterian.

The Church Missionary Society in its December paper records, with affectionate regret, the loss which the Society has sustained by the death of three honorary life governors who had rendered essential service to the Society:—The Rev. Henry Venn Elliott, M.A., Incumbent of St. Mary's Chapel, Brighton; the Rev. John Norman Pearson, M.A., first Principal of the Islington Institution (1825); and the Rev. H. Stowell, M.A., Incumbent of Christ Church, Salford, and Hon. Canon of Chester.

The recent meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions at Chicago had the following compact statement of their missions presented to them:—The total number of missions is 20; of stations, 104; of out stations, 248. Number of teachers, missionaries and helpers employed, 1103; number of churches, 180; church members, 23,338; schools, 369; pupils, 10,722. The interest of the meeting arose in a great measure from the presence of missionaries who had served a very long period. Dr. Goodell, of Constantinople, who had been above forty years a missionary, said—"I went in 1822 to be a missionary at Jerusalem; I have never been there. Now I set my face towards the new Jerusalem, taking Chicago by the way." Another missionary, from the South Seas, told the meeting that his son, who was born in the Sandwich Islands, had become a missionary to one of the most benighted tribes, and in the New Testament translated into their language had given his legacy to them and to their descendants.

Those who sigh for the romantic era of missions, and find the ordinary records of missionary progress prosaic or monotonous, should peruse, in the December number of the *Missionary Magazine and Chronicle*, the Journal of the Rev. A. W. Murray's visit to what are called the Lagoon Islands, in the South Sea. The missionaries of the London Society in the Navigators' Group were induced last May to send Mr. Murray, one of their number, to visit several clusters of small islands about 600 miles distant. Mr. Murray was accompanied by three native teachers, one of whom, Elekana, had been shipwrecked in 1861 on one of the islands, Nukulaelae; and, in return for the humanity and kindness of the natives, had given them some instruction in Christianity, and promised to come back. The people welcomed the missionary party with delight, but an event that had happened since Elekana's visit still left its gloomy shadow on their hearts. Two slave-ships from Peru had visited the island, and had first tried to lure the natives on board by proposing to carry them to some other island to make cocoa-nut oil, for which they were to be paid

liberally, and then allowed to return. Finding that this offer did not take, the captains of the two ships came ashore, accompanied by the mate of one of them, and gave out that the mate was a missionary, and that they wanted the people to go on board, to go where they would be taught the true religion, and afterwards be brought back to their own island. A negro of the name of Tom Rose, who had lent himself as the tool of the slavers, acted as interpreter, and, as he had been at one time a sort of religious teacher among the natives, their suspicions were not aroused. The people flocked on board the ships, through anxiety to be taught about God. Once on board, they were entirely in the power of their captors, and carried off to Peru. The population of the island was reduced from 300 to about 100. The portion carried off happily had with them some portions of the New Testament, which they had obtained in a singular way. When Elekana was wrecked on the island, he had a copy of a Rarotongan New Testament and hymn-book. The people were so eager for the Scriptures that they insisted on having the leaves of the New Testament portioned among them. He gave them two or three leaves apiece, and some of these they carried with them into the land of bondage, where it is devoutly hoped they will be the means of guiding them to the true liberty of the children of God. For the instruction of the remnant of the inhabitants of this island, Mr. Murray left a teacher, to their great delight. A second island, or rather group of islands —for the coral reef that girdles them encloses some fifteen, with a lagoon in the centre—was found to have been nearly depopulated in the same barbarous manner; but through their chief the remnant exhibited the same desire for instruction, hailing their visitors with the words, "We are all in darkness, and waiting for some one to teach us." Other three islands were visited, with populations of about 300, for the slavers had not been successful with them; but with only one of these three had Mr. Murray a teacher to leave. The remarkable thing about the whole of these people was, that they had all in heart abjured heathenism, and were waiting and longing for Christian teaching. But in what manner and by what means this remarkable spirit had been raised, can hardly be surmised. In the case of one of the islands, a Captain Stewart had visited the people, some ten years ago, and is believed to have taught them something, for the people after his visit burned their gods. But some subtle influence seems to have been at work with the whole of them, preparing them for the truth. It is a great advantage that these people are originally sprung from Samoa, for their language is pretty nearly the same, and the missionary agency from Samoa will avail for their evangelisation. Though the population be but small, the good to be accomplished by missionary effort may be much greater than would at first be supposed; for one of the islands, Nui, is connected with the Kingsmill group, which contains a population estimated at 60,000, and may become a channel of missionary influence to that large body of people.

Among recent books a prominent place is due to "The Zambesi and its Tributaries," the new volume of Dr. Livingstone's travels. The first object of the expedition described in this volume was to explore the Zambesi, its mouths and tributaries, with a view to their being used as highways for commerce and Christianity to pass into the vast interior of Africa. Besides its interest in connection with geographical science, natural history, and commerce, the volume is full of interesting views of the character and manners of the African races. It gives us much fresh insight into that darkest curse that ever fell on the human family—the slave-trade. It indicates some useful considerations bearing on the best course for missionary enterprise. And it has some touching details regarding the death of Bishop Mackenzie, and also of Mrs. Livingstone. But as we may have an opportunity of returning to this volume, we shall not dwell longer on it at present.

"Thoughts at Seventy-nine" is the title of a little volume which the venerable and estimable author of "Thoughts on Devotion" has lately issued. Besides a few minor pieces, the volume is made up in the main of four essays, the most striking of which are those on "New Testament Precepts" and on "Conscience and its Perversions." The essay on New Testament precepts handles in a judicious and satisfactory manner a number of questions that are apt to cause difficulty to conscientious Christians. The extent and nature of the duty of self-denial, in connection with the accumulation and expenditure of wealth, is very plainly set forth, the ascetic view of self-denial being shown not to be the Christian, and the Christian view being harmonized with that enjoyment of God's gifts which He designs for those on whom He bestows them. There is much useful and salutary truth in the essay on "Conscience and its Perversions."

In Missionary Biography "Ten Years in South-Central Polynesia, being Reminiscences of a Personal Visit to the Friendly Islands and their Dependencies, by the Rev. Thos. West," assures us that the notion of the coral reefs being built up from the foundation by the coral insects is a mistake, and that they only perform their function on the surfaces of those volcanic ridges that have already attained such an elevation as suits their habits. While giving some information on physical subjects, this book chiefly describes the rise and progress, and triumphs of Christianity in the Tonga group, under the Wesleyan missionaries. It appears that connected with the mission there are now 18 ministers, assisted by more than 800 local preachers, 214 day-school and 676 Sunday-school teachers. The usual attendance at worship is 26,166. The Romish missionaries here as elsewhere have established themselves in the wake of the Protestants, and Polynesia has its Romish bishop. King George, himself a preacher, is a nursing father to the Protestant Church, and is represented as exercising an enlightened sway, and as the author of a constitution which works most favourably for the people.

Drawn by R. Barnes. Engraved by J. Swain.

"SHE KEPT HER EYES DOWN THE WHOLE TIME."

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ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BY THE VICAR.

XI.

I NEVER asked questions about the private affairs of any of my parishioners, except of themselves individually upon occasion of their asking me for advice, and some consequent necessity for knowing more than they told me. Hence, I believe, they became the more willing that I should know. But I heard a good many things from others, notwithstanding, for I could not be constantly closing the lips of the communicative as I had done those of Jane Rogers. And amongst other things, I learned that Miss Oldcastle went most Sundays to the neighbouring town of Addicehead to church. Now I had often heard of the ability of the rector, and although I had never met him, was prepared to find him a cultivated if not an original man. Still, if I must be honest, which I hope I must, I confess that I heard the news with a pang, in analysing which I discovered the chief component to be jealousy. It was no use asking myself why I should be jealous : there the ugly thing was. So I went and told God I was ashamed, and begged Him to deliver me from the evil, because his was the kingdom and the power and the glory. And He took my part against myself, for He waits to be gracious. Perhaps the reader may, however, suspect a deeper cause for this feeling (to which I would rather not give the true name again) than a merely professional one.

But there was one stray sheep of my flock that appeared in church for the first time on the morning of Christmas Day—Catherine Weir. She did not sit beside her father, but in the most shadowy corner of the church—near the organ loft, however. She could have seen her father if she had looked up, but she kept her eyes down the whole time, and never even lifted them to me. The spot on one cheek was much brighter than that on the other, and made her look very ill.

I prayed to our God to grant me the honour of speaking a true word to them all; which honour I thought I was right in asking, because the Lord reproached the Pharisees for not seeking the honour that cometh from God. Perhaps I may have put a wrong interpretation on the passage. It is, however, a joy to think that He will not give you a stone, even if you should take it for a loaf and ask for it as such. Nor is He, like the scribes, lying in wait to catch poor erring men in their words or their prayers, however mistaken they may be.

I took my text from the Sermon on the Mount. And as the SUNDAY MAGAZINE is intended chiefly for Sunday reading, I will write my sermon just as if I were preaching it to my unseen readers as I spoke it to my present parishioners. Hear me, then, in truth, and for truth.

The Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixth chapter, and part of the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth verses :—

"'*Ye cannot serve God and Mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life.*'

"When the Child whose birth we celebrate with glad hearts this day, grew up to be a man, He said this. Did He mean it?—He never said what He did not mean. Did He mean it wholly?—He meant it far beyond what the words could convey. He meant it altogether and entirely. When people do not understand what the Lord says, when it seems to them that his advice is impracticable, instead of searching deeper for a meaning which will be evidently true and wise, they comfort themselves by thinking He could not have meant it altogether, and so leave it. Or they think that if He did mean it, He could not expect them to carry it out. And in the fact that they could not do it perfectly if they were to try, they take refuge from the duty of trying to do it at all; or, oftener, they do not think about it at all as anything that in the least concerns them. The Son of our Father in heaven may have become a child, may have led the one life which belongs to every man to lead, may have suffered because we are sinners, may have died for our sakes, doing the will of his Father in heaven, and yet we have nothing to do with the words He spoke out of the midst of his true, perfect knowledge, feeling, and action! Is it not strange that it should be so? Let it not be so with us this day. Let us seek to find out what our Lord means, that we may do it; trying and failing and trying again—verily to be victorious at last—what matter *when*, so long as we are trying, and so coming nearer to our end!

"*Mammon*, you know, means *riches*. Now, riches are meant to be the slave—not even the servant of man, and not to be the master. If a man serve his own servant, or, in a word, anyone who has no just claim to be his master, he is a slave. But here he serves his own slave. On the other hand, to serve God, the source of our being, our own glorious Father, is freedom; in fact, is the only way to get rid of all bondage. So you see plainly enough that a man cannot serve God and Mammon. For how can a slave of his own slave be the servant of the God of freedom, of Him who can have no one to serve Him but a free man? His service is freedom. Do not, I pray you, make any confusion between service and slavery. To serve is the highest, noblest calling in creation. For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

"But how can a man *serve* riches? Why, when he says to riches, "Ye are my good." When he feels he cannot be happy without them. When he puts forth the energies of his nature to get them. When he schemes and dreams and lies awake about them. When he will not give to his neighbour for fear of becoming poor himself. When he wants to have more, and to know he has more, than he can need. When he wants to leave money behind him, not for the sake of his children or

relatives, but for the name of the wealth. When he leaves his money, not to those who *need* it, even of his relations, but to those who are rich like himself, making them yet more of slaves to the overgrown monster they worship for his size. When he honours those who have money because they have money, irrespective of their character; or when he honours in a rich man what he would not honour in a poor man. Then is he the slave of Mammon. Still more is he Mammon's slave when his devotion to his god makes him oppressive to those over whom his wealth gives him power; or when he becomes unjust in order to add to his stores.—How will it be with such a man when on a sudden he finds that the world has vanished, and he is alone with God? There lies the body in which he used to live, whose poor necessities first made money of value to him, but with which itself and its fictitious value are both left behind. He cannot now even try to bribe God with a cheque. The angels will not bow down to him because his property, as set forth in his will, takes five or six figures to express its amount. It makes no difference to them that he has lost it, though; for they never respected him. And the poor souls of Hades, who envied him the wealth they had lost before, rise up as one man to welcome him, not for love of him—no worshipper of Mammon loves another—but rejoicing in the mischief that has befallen him, and saying, "Art thou also become one of us?" And Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, however sorry he may be for him, however grateful he may feel to him for the broken victuals and the penny, cannot with one drop of the water of Paradise cool that man's parched tongue.

"Alas, poor Dives! poor server of Mammon, whose vile god can pretend to deliver him no longer! Or rather, for the blockish god never pretended anything—it was the man's own doing—Alas for the Mammon-worshipper! he can no longer deceive himself in his riches. And so even in hell he is something nobler than he was on earth: for he worships his riches no longer. He cannot. He curses them.

"Terrible things to say on Christmas Day! But if Christmas Day teaches us anything, it teaches us to worship God and not Mammon; to worship spirit and not matter; to worship love and not power.

"Do I now hear any of my friends saying in their hearts: Let the rich take that! It does not apply to us. We are poor enough? Ah, my friends, I have known a light-hearted, liberal rich man lose his riches, and be liberal and light-hearted still. I knew a rich lady once, in giving a large gift of money to a poor man, say apologetically, "I hope it is no disgrace in me to be rich, as it is none in you to be poor." It is not the being rich that is wrong, but the serving of riches, instead of making them serve your neighbour and yourself—your neighbour for this life, yourself for the everlasting habitations. God knows it is hard for the rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven; but the rich man does sometimes enter in; for God hath made it possible. And the greater the victory, when it is the rich man that overcometh the world. It is easier for the poor man to enter into the kingdom, yet many of the poor have failed to enter in, and the greater is the disgrace of their defeat. For the poor have more done for them, as far as outward things go, in the way of salvation than the rich, and have a beatitude all to themselves besides. For in the making of this world as a school of salvation, the poor, as the necessary majority, have been more regarded than the rich. Do not think, my poor friend, that God will let you off. He lets nobody off. You, too, must pay the uttermost farthing. He loves you too well to let you serve Mammon a whit more than your rich neighbour. "Serve Mammon!" do you say? "How can I serve Mammon? I have no Mammon to serve."—Would you like to have riches a moment sooner than God gives them? Would you serve Mammon if you had him?—"Who can tell?" do you answer? "Leave those questions till I am tried." But is there no bitterness in the tone of that response? Does it not mean, "It will be a long time before I have a chance of trying *that?*"—But I am not driven to such questions for the chance of convicting some of you of Mammon-worship. Let us look to the text. Read it again.

"'*Ye cannot serve God and Mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life.*'

"Why are you to take no thought? Because you cannot serve God and Mammon. Is taking thought, then, a serving of Mammon? Clearly.—Where are you now, poor man? Brooding over the frost? Will it harden the ground so that the God of the sparrows cannot find food for his sons? Where are you now, poor woman? Sleepless over the empty cupboard and to-morrow's dinner? "It is because we have no bread," do you answer? Have you forgotten the five loaves among the five thousand, and the fragments that were left? Or do you know nothing of your Father in Heaven, who clothes the lilies and feeds the birds? O ye of little faith! O ye poor-spirited Mammon-worshippers! who worship him not even because he has given you anything, but in the hope that he may some future day benignantly regard you. But I may be too hard upon you. I know well that our Father sees a great difference between the man who is anxious about his children's dinner, or even about his own, and the man who is only anxious to add another ten thousand to his much goods laid up for many years. But you ought to find it easy to trust in God for such a matter as your daily bread, whereas no man can by any possibility trust in God for ten thousand pounds. The former need is a God-ordained necessity; the latter desire a man-devised appetite at best—possibly swinish greed. Tell me, do you long to be rich? Then you worship Mammon. Tell me, do you think you would feel safer if you had money in the bank? Then you are Mammon-worshippers; for you would trust the barn of the rich man rather than the God who makes the corn to grow. Do you say—"What shall we eat? and what shall we drink? and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" Are ye thus of doubtful mind?—Then you are Mammon-worshippers.

"But how is the work of the world to be done if we take no thought?—We are nowhere told not to take thought. We *must* take thought. The question is—what are we to take or not to take thought about? By some who do not know God, little work would be

done if they were not driven by anxiety of some kind. But you, friends—are you content to go with the nations of the earth, or do you seek a better way?

"*What* then are we to take thought about? Why, about our work. What are we not to take thought about? Why, about our life. The one is our business: the other is God's. But you turn it the other way. You take no thought of earnestness about the doing of your duty; but you take thought of care lest God should not fulfil his part in the goings on of the world. A man's business, once he is in a right relation to God, is just to do his duty: God takes upon Himself the feeding and the clothing. Will the work of the world be neglected if a man thinks of his work, his duty, God's will to be done, instead of what he is to eat, what he is to drink, and wherewithal he is to be clothed? And remember all the needs of the world come back to these three. You will allow, I think, that the work of the world will be only so much the better done; that the very means of procuring the raiment or the food will be the more thoroughly used. What, then, is the only region on which the doubt can settle? Why, God. He alone remains to be doubted. Shall it be so with you? Shall the Son of Man, the baby now born, and for ever with us, find no faith in you? Ah, my poor friend, who canst not trust in God—I was going to say you *deserve*—but what do I know of you to condemn and judge you?—I was going to say, you deserve to be treated like the child who frets and complains because his mother holds him on her knee and feeds him mouthful by mouthful with her own loving hand. I meant—you deserve to have your own way for a while; to be set down, and told to help yourself, and see what it will come to; to have your mother open the cupboard door for you, and leave you alone to your pleasures. Alas! poor child! When the sweets begin to pall, and the twilight to come duskily into the chamber, and you look about all at once and see no mother, how will your cupboard comfort you then? Ask it for a smile, for a stroke of the gentle hand, for a word of love. All the full-fed Mammon can give you is what your mother would have given you without the consequent loathing, with the light of her countenance upon it all, and the arm of her love around you.—And this is what God does sometimes, I think, with the Mammon-worshippers amongst the poor. He says to them, Take your Mammon, and see what he is worth. Ah, friends, the children of God can never be happy serving other than Him. The prodigal might fill his belly with riotous living or with the husks that the swine ate. It was all one, so long as he was not with his father. His soul was wretched. So would you be if you had wealth, for I fear you would only be worse Mammon-worshippers than now, and might well have to thank God for the misery of any swine-trough that could bring you to your senses.

"But we do see people die of starvation sometimes?—Yes. But if you did your work in God's name and left the rest to Him, that would not trouble you. You would say, If it be God's will that I should starve, I can starve as well as another. And your mind would be at ease. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed upon Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." Of that I am sure. It may be good for you to go hungry and bare-foot; but it must be utter death to have no faith in God. It is not, however, in God's way of things that the man who does his work shall not live by it. We do not know why here and there a man may be left to die of hunger, but I do believe that they who wait upon the Lord shall not lack any good. What it may be good to deprive a man of till he knows and acknowledges whence it comes, it may be still better to give him when he has learned that every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.

"I *should* like to know a man who just minded his duty and troubled himself about nothing; who did his own work and did not interfere with God's. How nobly he would work—working not for reward, but because it was the will of God! How happily he would receive his food and clothing, receiving them as the gifts of God! What peace would be his! What a sober gaiety! How hearty and infectious his laughter! What a friend he would be! How sweet his sympathy! And his mind would be so clear he would understand everything. His eye being single, his whole body would be full of light. No fear of his ever doing a mean thing. He would die in a ditch rather. It is this fear of want that makes men do mean things. They are afraid to part with their precious lord—Mammon. He gives no safety against such a fear. One of the richest men in England is haunted with the dread of the workhouse. This man whom I should like to know, would be sure that God would have him liberal, and he would be what God would have him. Riches are not in the least necessary to that. Witness our Lord's admiration of the poor widow with her great farthing.

"But I think I hear my troubled friend who does not love money, and yet cannot trust in God out and out, though she fain would,—I think I hear her say, 'I believe I could trust Him for myself, or at least I should be ready to dare the worst for his sake; but my children—it is the thought of my children that is too much for me.' Ah, woman! she whom the Saviour praised so pleasedly, was one who trusted Him for her daughter. What an honour she had! "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Do you think you love your children better than He who made them? Is not your love what it is because He put it in your heart first? Have not you often been cross with them? Sometimes unjust to them? Whence came the returning love that rose from unknown depths in your being, and swept away the anger and the injustice? You did not create that love. Probably you were not good enough to send for it by prayer. But it came. God sent it. He makes you love your children; be sorry when you have been cross with them; ashamed when you have been unjust to them; and yet you won't trust Him to give them food and clothes! Depend upon it, if He ever refuses to give them food and clothes, and you knew all about it, the why and the wherefore, you would not dare to give them food or clothes either. He loves them a thousand times better than you do—be sure of that—and feels for their sufferings, too, when

He cannot give them just what He would like to give them—cannot for their good, I mean.

"But as your mistrust will go further, I can go further to meet it. You will say, 'Ah! yes'—in your feeling, I mean, not in words,—you will say, 'Ah! yes—food and clothing of a sort! Enough to keep life in and too much cold out! But I want my children to have plenty of *good* food, and *nice* clothes.'

"Faithless mother! Consider the birds of the air. They have so much that at least they can sing! Consider the lilies—they were red lilies, those. Would you not trust Him who delights in glorious colours—more at least than you, or He would never have created them and made us to delight in them? I do not say that your children shall be clothed in scarlet and fine linen; but if not, it is not because God despises scarlet and fine linen or does not love your children. He loves them, I say, too much to give them everything all at once. But He would make them such that they may have everything without being the worse, and with being the better for it. And if you cannot trust Him yet, it begins to be a shame, I think.

"It has been well said that no man ever sank under the burden of the day. It is when to-morrow's burden is added to the burden of to-day, that the weight is more than a man can bear. Never load yourselves so, my friends. If you find yourselves so loaded, at least remember this: it is your own doing, not God's. He begs you to leave the future to Him, and mind the present. What more or what else could He do to take the burden off you? Nothing else would do it. Money in the bank wouldn't do it. He cannot do to-morrow's business for you beforehand to save you from fear about it. That would derange everything. What else is there but to tell you to trust in Him, irrespective of the fact that nothing else but such trust can put our heart at peace, from the very nature of our relation to Him as well as the fact that we need these things. We think that we come nearer to God than the lower animals do by our foresight. But the very glimpses we get of the future, both in this life and that which is to come—what are they designed to do, but to make us more earnest and diligent in present duty? Is not this what we are taught in these words: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest"? We are like to Him with whom there is no past or future, with whom a day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, when we live with large bright spiritual eyes, doing our work in the great present, leaving both past and future to Him to whom they are ever present, and fearing nothing, because He is in our future, as much as He is in our past, as much as, and far more than, we can feel Him to be in our present. Partakers thus of the divine nature, resting in that perfect all-in-all in whom our nature is eternal too, we walk without fear, full of hope and courage and strength to do his will, waiting for the endless good which He is always giving as fast as He can get us able to take it in. Would not this be to be more of gods than Satan promised to Eve? To live carelessly-divine, duty-doing, fearless, loving, self-forgetting lives—is not that more than to know both good and evil—lives in which the good, like Aaron's rod, has swallowed up the evil, and turned it into good? For pain and hunger are evils; but if faith in God swallows them up, do they not so turn into good? I say they do. And I am glad to believe that I am not alone in my parish in this conviction. I have never been too hungry, but I have had trouble which I would gladly have exchanged for hunger and cold and weariness. Some of you have known hunger and cold and weariness. Do you not join with me to say: It is well, and better than well—whatever helps us to know the love of Him who is our God?

"But there *has been* just one man who has acted thus. And it is his Spirit in our hearts that makes us desire to know or to be another such—who would do the will of God for God, and let God do God's will for Him. For His will is all. And this man is the baby whose birth we celebrate this day. Remember that being in the form of God, He humbled himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and even the condition of a babe. Was this a condition to choose—that of a baby—by one who thought it part of a man's high calling to take care of the morrow? Did He not thus cast the whole matter at once upon the hands and heart of his Father? Sufficient unto the baby's day is the need thereof; he toils not, neither does he spin, and yet he is fed and clothed, and loved, and rejoiced in. Do you remind me that sometimes even his mother forgets him—a mother, most likely, to whose self-indulgence or weakness the child owes his birth as hers? Ah! but he is not therefore forgotten, however like it may look to our half-seeing eyes, by his Father in heaven. One of the highest benefits we can reap from understanding the way of God with ourselves, is, that we become able thus to trust Him for others with whom we do not understand his ways.

"But let us look at what will be more easily shown—how, namely, He did the will of his Father, and took no thought for the morrow after He became a man. Remember how He forsook his trade when the time came for Him to preach. Preaching was not a profession then. There were no monasteries, or vicarages, or stipends, then. Yet witness for the Father the garment woven throughout; the ministering of women; the purse in common! Hard-working men and rich ladies were ready to help Him, and did help Him with all that He needed.—Did He then never want? Yes; once at least—for a little while only.

"He was a-hungered in the wilderness. 'Make bread,' said Satan. 'No,' said our Lord.—He could starve; but He could not eat bread that his Father did not give Him, even though He could make it Himself. He had come hither to be tried. But when the victory was secure, lo! the angels brought Him food from his Father.—Which was better? To feed himself, or be fed by his Father? Judge yourselves, anxious people. He sought the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and the bread was added unto Him.

"And this gives me occasion to remark that the same truth holds with regard to any portion of the future as well as the morrow. It is a principle, not a command, or an encouragement, or a promise merely.

In respect of it there is no difference between next day and next year, next hour and next century. You will see at once the absurdity of taking no thought for the morrow, and taking thought for next year. But do you see likewise that it is equally reasonable to trust God for the next moment, and equally unreasonable not to trust Him? The Lord was hungry and needed food now, though He could still go without for a while. He left it to his Father. And so He told his disciples to do when they were called to answer before judges and rulers. 'Take no thought. It shall be given you what ye shall say.' You have a disagreeable duty to do at twelve o'clock. Do not blacken nine and ten and eleven, and all between, with the colour of twelve. Do the work of each, and reap your reward in peace. So when the dreaded moment in the future becomes the present, you shall meet it walking in the light, and that light will overcome its darkness. How often do men who have made up their minds what to say and do under certain expected circumstances, forget the words and reverse the actions! The best preparation is the present well seen to, the last duty done. For this will keep the eye so clear and the body so full of light that the right action will be perceived at once, the right words will rush from the heart to the lips, and the man, full of the spirit of God because he cares for nothing but the will of God, will trample on the evil thing in love, and be sent, it may be, in a chariot of fire to the presence of his Father, or stand unmoved amid the cruel mockings of the men he loves.

"Do you feel inclined to say in your hearts: 'It was easy for Him to take no thought, for He had the matter in his own hands'? But observe there is nothing very noble in a man's taking no thought except it be from faith. If there were no God to take thought for us, we should have no right to blame any one for taking thought. You may fancy the Lord had his own power to fall back upon. But that would have been to Him just the one dreadful thing. That his Father should forget Him!—no power in Himself could make up for that. He feared nothing for Himself; and never once employed his divine power to save Him from his human fate. Let God do that for Him if He saw fit. He did not come into the world to take care of Himself. That would not be in any way divine. To fall back on Himself, God failing Him—how could that make it easy for Him to avoid care? The very idea would be torture. That would be to declare heaven void, and the world without a God. He would not even pray to his Father for what He knew He should have if He did ask it. He would just wait his will.

"But see how the fact of his own power adds tenfold significance to the fact that He trusted in God. We see that this power would not serve his need—his need not being to be fed and clothed, but to be one with the Father, to be fed by his hand, clothed by his care. This was what the Lord wanted—and we need, alas! too often without wanting it. He never once, I repeat, used his power for Himself. That was not his business. He did not care about it. His life was of no value to him but as his father cared for it. God would mind all that was necessary for Him, and He would mind the work his father had given Him to do. And, my friends, this is just the one secret of a blessed life, the one thing every man comes into this world to learn. With what authority it comes to us from the lips of Him who knew all about it, and ever did as He said!

"Now you see that He took no thought for the morrow. And in the name of the holy child Jesus, I call upon you, this Christmas Day, to cast care to the winds, and trust in God; to receive the message of peace and good-will to men; to receive the Holy Child himself, as He came to make peace by his life and his death, to show you the Father and bring you to Him; to yield yourselves to the Spirit of God, that you may be taught what He wants you to know; to remember that the one gift promised without reserve to those who ask it—the one gift worth having—the gift which makes all other gifts a thousandfold in value, is the gift of the Holy Spirit, who will take of the things of Jesus and show them to you—make you understand them, that is, and cause you to feel them—so that you shall see them to be true, and love Him with all your heart and soul, and your neighbour as yourselves."

And here, having finished my sermon, I will give my reader some lines with which he may not be acquainted, from a writer of the Elizabethan time. I had meant to introduce them into my sermon, but I was so carried away with my subject that I forgot them. For I always preached *extempore*, which phrase I beg my reader will not misinterpret as meaning *on the spur of the moment*, or *without the due preparation of much thought*.

"Oh man! thou image of thy Maker's good,
What canst thou fear, when breathed into thy blood
His Spirit is that built thee? What dull sense
Makes thee suspect, in need, that Providence
Who made the morning, and who placed the light
Guide to thy labours; who called up the night,
And bid her fall upon thee like sweet showers,
In hollow murmurs, to lock up thy powers;
Who gave thee knowledge; who so trusted thee
To let thee grow so near Himself, the Tree?
Must He then be distrusted? Shall His frame
Discourse with Him why thus and thus I am?
He made the Angels thine, thy fellows all;
Nay even thy servants, when devotions call.
Oh! canst thou be so stupid then, so dim,
To seek a saving* influence, and lose Him?
Can * stars protect thee? Or can poverty,
Which is the light to heaven, put out His eye?
He is my star; in Him all truth I find,
All influence, all fate. And when my mind
Is furnished with His fulness, my poor story
Shall outlive all their age, and all their glory.
The hand of danger cannot fall amiss,
When I know what, and in whose power, it is.
Nor want, the curse of man, shall make me groan:
A holy hermit is a mind alone.

* * * * *

Affliction, when I know it, is but this,
A deep alloy whereby man tougher is
To bear the hammer; and the deeper still,
We still arise more image of His will;
Sickness, an humorous cloud 'twixt us and light;
And death, at longest, but another night."

I had more than ordinary attention during my discourse, at one point in which I saw the downbent

* Many, in those days, believed in astrology.

head of Catherine Weir sink yet lower upon her hands. After a moment, however, she sat more erect than before, though she never lifted her eyes to meet mine. I need not assure my reader that she was not present to my mind when I spoke the words that so far had moved her. Indeed, had I thought of her, I could not have spoken them.

As I came out of the church, my people crowded about me with outstretched hands and good wishes. One woman, the aged wife of a more aged labourer, who could not get near me, called from the outskirts of the little crowd :

"May the Lord come and see ye every day, sir. And may ye never know the hunger and cold as me and Tomkins has come through."

"Amen to the first of your blessing, Mrs. Tomkins, and hearty thanks to you. But I daren't say *Amen* to the other part of it after what I've been preaching, you know."

"But there'll be no harm if I say it for ye, sir?"

"No, for God will give me what is good, even if your kind heart should pray against it."

"Ah, sir, ye don't know what it is to be hungry *and* cold."

"Neither shall you any more if I can help it."

"God bless ye, sir. But we're pretty tidy just in the meantime."

I walked home, as usual on Sunday mornings, by the road. It was a lovely day. The sun shone so warm that you could not help thinking of what he would be able to do before long—draw primroses and buttercups out of the earth by force of sweet persuasive influences. But in the shadows lay fine webs and laces of ice, so delicately lovely that one could not but be glad of the cold that made the water able to please itself by taking such graceful forms. And I wondered over again for the hundredth time what could be the principle which in the wildest, most lawless, fantastically chaotic, apparently capricious work of nature, always kept it beautiful. The beauty of holiness must be at the heart of it somehow, I thought. Because our God is so free from stain, so loving, so unselfish, so good, so altogether what He wants us to be, so holy, therefore all his works declare Him in beauty; his fingers can touch nothing but to mould it into loveliness; and even the play of his elements is in grace and tenderness of form.

And then I thought how the sun, at the farthest point from us, had begun to come back towards us; looked upon us with a hopeful smile; was like the Lord when He visited his people as a little one of themselves, to grow upon the earth till it should blossom as the rose in the light of his presence. "Ah! Lord," I said, in my heart, "draw near unto thy people. It is spring-time with thy world, but yet we have cold winds and bitter hail, and pinched voices forbidding them that follow Thee and follow not with us. Draw nearer, Sun of Righteousness, and make the trees bourgeon, and the flowers blossom, and the voices grow mellow and glad, so that all shall join in praising Thee, and find thereby that harmony is better than unison. Let it be summer, O Lord, if it ever may be summer in this court of the gentiles. But thou hast told us that Thy kingdom cometh within us, and so Thy joy must come within us too. Draw nigh then, Lord, to those to whom Thou wilt draw nigh; and others beholding their welfare will seek to share therein too, and seeing their good works will glorify their Father in Heaven."

So I walked home, hoping in my Saviour, and wondering to think how pleasant I had found it to be his poor servant to this people. Already the doubts which had filled my mind on that first evening of gloom, doubts as to whether I had any right to the priest's office, had utterly vanished, slain by the effort to perform the priest's duty. I never thought about the matter now.—And how can doubt ever be fully met but by action? Try your theory; try your hypothesis; or if it is not worth trying, give it up, pull it down.—And I hoped that if ever a cloud should come over me again, however dark and dismal it might be, I might be able notwithstanding to rejoice that the sun was shining on others though not on me, and to say with all my heart to my Father in Heaven, "Thy will be done."

When I reached my own study, I sat down by a blazing fire, and poured myself out a glass of wine; for I had to go out again to see some of my poor friends, and wanted some luncheon first.—It is a great thing to have the greetings of the universe presented in fire and food. Let me, if I may, be ever welcomed to my room in winter by a glowing hearth, in summer by a vase of flowers; if I may not, let me then think how nice they would be, and bury myself in my work. I do not think that the road to contentment lies in despising what we have not got. Let us acknowledge all good, all delight that the world holds, and be content without it. But this we can never be except by possessing the one thing, without which I do not merely say no man ought to be content, but no man *can* be content—the Spirit of the Father.

If any young people read my little chronicle, will they not be inclined to say, "The vicar has already given us in this part hardly anything but a long sermon; and it is too bad of him to go on preaching in his study after we saw him safe out of the pulpit"? Ah, well! Just one word, and I drop the preaching for a while. My word is this: I may speak long-windedly, and even inconsiderately as regards my young readers; what I say may fail utterly to convey what I mean; I may be actually stupid sometimes, and not have a suspicion of it; but what I mean is true; and if you do not know it to be true yet, some of you at least suspect it to be true, and some of you hope it is true; and when you all see it as I mean it and as you can take it, you will rejoice with a gladness you know nothing about now. There, I have done for a little while. I won't pledge myself for more, I assure you. For to speak about such things is the greatest delight of my age, as it was of my early manhood, next to that of loving God and my neighbour. For as these are *the* two commandments of life, so they are in themselves *the* pleasures of life. But there I am at it again. I beg your pardon now, for I have already inadvertently broken my promise.

I had allowed myself a half-hour before the fire with my glass of wine and piece of bread, and I soon fell into a dreamy state called *reverie*, which I fear not

a few mistake for *thinking*, because it is the nearest approach they ever make to it. And in this reverie I kept staring about my book-shelves.—I am an old man now, and you do not know my name; and if you should ever find it out, I shall very soon hide it under some daisies, I hope, and so escape; and therefore I am going to be egotistic in the most unpardonable manner. I am going to tell you one of my faults, for it continues, I fear, to be one of my faults still, as it certainly was at the period of which I am now writing. I am very fond of books. Do not mistake me. I do not mean that I love reading. I hope I do. That is no fault—a virtue rather than a fault. But, as the old meaning of the word *fond* was *foolish*, I use that word: I am foolishly fond of the bodies of books as distinguished from their souls, or thought-element. I do not say I love their bodies as *divided* from their souls; I do not say I should let a book stand upon my shelves for which I felt no respect, except indeed it happened to be useful to me in some inferior way. But I delight in seeing books about me, books even of which there seems to be no prospect that I shall have time to read a single chapter before I lay this old head down for the last time. Nay, more: I confess that if they are nicely bound, so as to glow and shine in such a fire-light as that by which I was then sitting, I like them ever so much the better. Nay, more yet—and this comes very near to showing myself worse than I thought I was when I began to tell you my fault: there are books upon my shelves which certainly at least would not occupy the place of honour they do occupy, had not some previous owner dressed them far beyond their worth, making modern apples of Sodom of them. Yet there I let them stay, because they are pleasant to the eye, although certainly not things to be desired to make one wise. I could say a great deal more about the matter, *pro* and *con*, but it would be worse than a sermon, I fear. For I suspect that by the time books, which ought to be loved for the truth that is in them, of one sort or another, come to be loved as articles of furniture, the mind has gone through a process more than analogous to that which the miser's mind goes through—namely, that of passing from the respect of money because of what it can do, to the love of money because it is money. I have not yet reached the furniture stage, and I do not think I ever shall. I would rather burn them all. Meantime, I think one safeguard is to encourage one's friends to borrow one's books—not to offer individual books, which is much the same as *offering* advice. That will probably take some of the shine off them, and put a few thumb-marks in them, which both are very wholesome towards the arresting of the furniture declension. For my part, thumb-marks I find very obnoxious—far more so than the spoiling of the binding.—I know that some of my readers, who have had sad experience of the sort, will be saying in themselves, "He might have mentioned a surer antidote resulting from this measure, than either rubbed Russia or dirty *glove*-marks even—that of utter disappearance and irreparable loss." But no; that has seldom happened to me—because I trust my pocket-book, and never my memory, with the names of those to whom the individual books are committed.—There, then, is a little bit of practical advice in both directions for young book-lovers.

Again I am reminded that I am getting old. What digressions!

Gazing about on my treasures, the thought suddenly struck me that I had never done as I had promised Judy; had never found out what her aunt's name meant in Anglo-Saxon. I would do so now. I got down my dictionary, and soon discovered that *Ethelwyn* meant *Home-joy*, or *Inheritance*.

"A lovely meaning," I said to myself.

And then I went off into another reverie, with the composition of which I shall not trouble my reader; and with the mention of which I had perhaps no right to occupy the fragment of his time spent in reading it, seeing I did not intend to tell him how it was made up. I will tell him something else instead.

Several families had asked me to take my Christmas dinner with them; but, not liking to be thus limited, I had answered each that I would not, if they would excuse me, but would look in some time or other in the course of the evening.

When my half-hour was out, I got up and filled my pockets with little presents for my poor people, and set out to find them in their own homes.

I was variously received, but unvaryingly with kindness; and my little presents were accepted, at least in most instances, with a gratitude which made me ashamed of them and of myself too for a few moments. Mrs. Tomkins looked as if she had never seen so much tea together before, though there was only a couple of pounds of it; and her husband received a pair of warm trousers none the less cordially that they were not quite new, the fact being that I found I did not myself need such warm clothing this winter as I had needed the last. I did not dare to offer Catherine Weir anything, but I gave her little boy a box of water-colours—in remembrance of the first time I saw him, though I said nothing about that. His mother did not thank me. She told little Gerard to do so, however, and that was something. And indeed the boy's sweetness would have been enough for both.

Gerard—an unusual name in England; specially not to be looked for in the class to which she belonged.

When I reached Old Rogers's cottage, whither I carried a few yards of ribbon, bought by myself, I assure my lady friends, with the special object that the colour should be bright enough for her taste, and pure enough of its kind for mine, as an offering to the good dame, and a small hymn-book, in which were some hymns of my own making, for the good man—

But do forgive me, friends, for actually describing my paltry presents. I can dare to assure you it comes from a talking old man's love of detail, and from no admiration of such small givings as those. You see I trust you, and I want to stand well with you. I never could be indifferent to what people thought of me; though I have had to fight hard to act as freely as if I were indifferent, especially when upon occasion I found myself approved of. It is more difficult to walk straight then, than when men are all against you.—As I have already broken a sentence, which will not be past setting for a while yet, I may as well go on to say here, lest any one should remark that a

clergyman ought not to show off to his people, and teach them bad habits at the same time by making them look out for presents—that my income not only seemed to me disproportioned to the amount of labour necessary in the parish, but certainly was larger than I required to spend upon myself; and the miserly passion for books I contrived to keep a good deal in check; for I had no fancy for gliding devil-wards for the sake of a few books after all. So there was no great virtue—was there?—in easing my heart by giving a few of the good things people give their children to my poor friends, whose kind reception of them gave me as much pleasure at least as my giving of them gave them.—Now to effect a junction of the broken sentence.

When I reached the cottage, I found not merely Jane there with her father and mother, which was natural on Christmas Day, seeing there seemed to be no company at the Hall, but my little Judy as well, sitting in the old woman's arm-chair (not that she used it much, but it was called hers), and looking as much at home as—as she did in the pond.

"Why, Judy!" I exclaimed, "you here?"

"Yes. Why not, Mr. Walton?" she returned, holding out her hand without rising, for the chair was such a large one, and she was set so far back in it that the easier way was not to rise, which, seeing she was not greatly overburdened with reverence, was not, I presume, a cause of much annoyance to the little damsel.

"I know no reason why I shouldn't see a Sandwich Islander here. Yet I might express surprise if I did find one, might I not?"

Judy pretended to pout, and muttered something about comparing her to a cannibal. But Jane took up the explanation.

"Mistress had to go off to London with her mother to-day, sir, quite unexpected, on some banking business, I fancy, from what I——I beg your pardon, sir. They're gone anyhow, whatever the reason may be; and so I came to see my father and mother, and Miss Judy would come with me."

"She's very welcome," said Mrs. Rogers.

"How could I stay up there with nobody but Jacob, and that old wolf Sarah? I wouldn't be left alone with her for the world. She'd have me in the Bishop's Pool before you came back, Janey dear."

"That wouldn't matter much to you, would it, Judy?" I said.

"She's a white wolf, that old Sarah! I know," was all her answer.

"But what will the old lady say when she finds you brought the young lady here?" said Mrs. Rogers.

"I didn't bring her, mother. She would come."

"Besides, she'll never know it," said Judy.

I did not see that it was my part to read Judy a lecture here, though perhaps I might have done so if I had had more influence over her than I had. I wanted to gain some influence over her, and knew that the way to render my desire impossible of fulfilment would be, to find fault with what in her was a very small affair, whatever it might be in one who had been properly brought up. Besides, a clergyman is not a moral policeman. So I took no notice of the impropriety.

"Had they actually to go away on the morning of Christmas Day?" I said.

"They went anyhow, whether they had to do it or not, sir," answered Jane.

"Aunt Ethelwyn didn't want to go till to-morrow," said Judy. "She said something about coming to church this morning. But Grannie said they must go at once. It was very cross of old Grannie. Think what a Christmas Day to me without Auntie, and with Sarah! But I don't mean to go home till it's quite dark. I mean to stop here with dear Old Rogers—that I do."

The latch was gently lifted, and in came young Brownrigg. So I thought it was time to leave my best Christmas wishes and take myself away. Old Rogers came with me to the mill-stream as usual.

"It mazes me, sir," he said, "a gentleman o' your age and bringing up to know all that you tould us this mornin'. It 'ud be no wonder now for a man like me, come to be the shock o' corn fully ripe—leastways yallow and white enough outside if there beant much more than milk inside it yet,—it 'ud be no mystery for a man like me who'd been brought up hard, and tossed about well nigh all the world over—why, there's scarce a wave on the Atlantic but knows Old Rogers!"

He made the parenthesis with a laugh, and began anew.

"It 'ud be a shame of a man like me not to know all as you said this morning, sir—leastways I don't mean able to say it right off as you do, sir; but not to know it, after the Almighty had been at such pains to beat it into my hard head, just to trust in Him and fear no thing and no body—captain, bosun, devil, sunk rock, or breakers ahead; but just to mind Him and stand by halliard, brace, or wheel, or hang on by the leeward earing for that matter. For, you see, what does it signify whether I go to the bottom or not, so long as I didn't skulk? or rather," and here the old man took off his hat and looked up, "so long as the Great Captain has his way, and things is done to his mind? But, how ever a man like you, goin' to the college, and readin' books, and warm o' nights, and never, by your own confession this blessed mornin', sir, knowin' what it was to be downright hungry, how ever you come to know all those things, is just past my comprehension, except by a double portion o' the Spirit, sir. And that's the way I account for it, sir."

Although I knew enough about a ship to understand the old man, I am not sure that I have properly represented his sea-phrase. But that is of small consequence, so long as I give his meaning. And a meaning can occasionally be even better *conveyed* by less accurate words.

"I will try to tell you how I come to know about these things as I do," I returned. "How my knowledge may stand the test of further and severer trials remains to be seen. But if I should fail any time, old friend, and neither trust in God nor do my duty, what I have said to you remains true all the same."

"That it do, sir, whoever may come short."

"And more than that: failure does not necessarily prove anyone to be a hypocrite of no faith. He may be still a man of little faith."

"Surely, surely, sir. I remember once that my

faith broke down—just for one moment, sir. And then the Lord gave me my way lest I should blaspheme Him in my wicked heart."

"How was that, Rogers?"

"A scream came from the quarter-deck, and then the cry: 'Child overboard!' There was but one child, the captain's, aboard. I was sitting just aft the foremast, herring-boning a split in a spare jib. I sprang to the bulwark, and there, sure enough, was the child, going fast astarn, but pretty high in the water. How it happened I can't think to this day, sir, but I suppose my needle, in the hurry, had got into my jacket, so as to skewer it to my jersey, for we were far south of the line at the time, sir, and it was cold. However that may be, as soon as I was overboard, which you may be sure didn't want the time I take tellin' of it, I found that I ought to ha' pulled my jacket off afore I gave the bulwark the last kick. So I rose on the water, and began to pull it over my head—for it was wide, and that was the easiest way, I thought, in the water. But when I had got it right over my head, there it stuck. And there was I, blind as a Dutchman in a fog, and in as strait a jacket as ever poor wretch in Bedlam, for I could only just wag my flippers. Mr. Walton, I believe I swore—the Lord forgive me!—but it was trying. And what was far worse, for one moment I disbelieved in Him; and I do say that's worse than swearing—in a hurry I mean. And that moment something went, the jacket was off, and there was I feelin' as if every stroke I took was as wide as the mainyard. I had no time to repent, only to thank God. And wasn't it more than I deserved, sir? Ah! He can rebuke a man for unbelief by giving him the desire of his heart. And that's a better rebuke than tying him up to the gratings."

"And did you save the child?"

"Oh yes, sir."

"And wasn't the captain pleased?"

"I believe he was, sir. He gave me a glass o' grog, sir. But you was a sayin' of something, sir, when I interrupted of you."

"I am very glad you did interrupt me."

"I'm not though, sir. I've lost summat I'll never hear more."

"No, you shan't lose it. I was going to tell you how I think I came to understand a little about the things I was talking of to-day."

"That's it, sir; that's it. Well, sir, if you please?"

"You've heard of Sir Philip Sidney, haven't you, Old Rogers?"

"He was a great joker, wasn't he, sir?"

"No, no; you're thinking of Sydney Smith, Rogers."

"It may be, sir. I am an ignorant man."

"You are no more ignorant than you ought to be. But it is time you should know him, for he was just one of your sort. I will come down some evening and tell you about him."

I may as well mention here that this led to week-evening lectures in the barn, which, with the help of Weir the carpenter, was changed into a comfortable room with fixed seats all round it, and plenty of cane-chairs besides—for I always disliked forms in the middle of a room. The object of these lectures was to make the people acquainted with the true heroes of their own country —men great in themselves. And the kind of choice I made may be seen by those who know about both, from the fact that, while my first two lectures were on Philip Sidney, I did not give one whole lecture even to Walter Raleigh, grand fellow as he was. I wanted chiefly to set forth the men that could rule themselves, first of all, after a noble fashion. But I have not finished these lectures yet, for I never wished to confine them to the English heroes; I am going on still, old man as I am—not however without retracing passed ground sometimes, for a new generation has come up since I came here, and there is a new one behind coming up now which I may be honoured to present in its turn to some of this grand company—this cloud of witnesses to the truth in our own and other lands, some of whom subdued kingdoms, and others were tortured to death, for the same cause and with the same result.

"Meantime I only want to tell you one little thing he says in a letter to a younger brother whom he wanted to turn out as fine a fellow as possible. It is about horses, or rather, riding,—for Sir Philip was the best horseman in Europe in his day, as, indeed, all things taken together, he seems to have really been the most accomplished man generally of his time in the world. Writing to this brother he says—"

I could not repeat the words exactly to Old Rogers, but I think it better to copy them exactly, in writing this account of our talk:

"At horsemanship, when you exercise it, read Crison Claudio, and a book that is called *La Gloria del' Cavallo*, withal that you may join the thorough contemplation of it with the exercise; and so shall you profit more in a month than others in a year."

"I think I see what you mean, sir. I had got to learn it all without book, as it were, though you know I had my old Bible, that my mother gave me, and without that I should not have learned it at all."

"I only mean it comparatively, you know. You have had more of the practice, and I more of the theory. But if we had not both had both, we should neither of us have known anything about the matter. I never was content without trying at least to understand things; and if they are practical things, and you try to practise them at the same time as far as you do understand them, there is no end to the way in which the one lights up the other. I suppose that is how, without your experience, I have more to say about such things than you could expect. You know besides that a small matter in which a principle is involved will reveal the principle, if attended to, just as well as a great one containing the same principle. The only difference, and that a most important one, is that though I've got my clay and my straw together, and they stick pretty well as yet, my brick, after all, is not half so well baked as yours, old friend, and it may crumble away yet, though I hope not."

"I pray God to make both our bricks into stones of the new Jerusalem, sir. I think I understand you quite well. To know about a thing is of no use, except you do it. Besides, as I found out when I went to sea, you never can know a thing till you do do it, though I thought I had a tidy fancy about some things

beforehand. It's better not to be quite sure that all your seams are calked, and so to keep a look-out on the bilge-pump ; isn't it, sir ?"

During the most of this conversation, we were standing by the mill-water, half frozen over. The ice from both sides came towards the middle, leaving an empty space between, along which the dark water showed itself, hurrying away as if in fear of its life from the white death of the frost. The wheel stood motionless, and the drip from the thatch of the mill over it in the sun, had frozen in the shadow into icicles, which hung in long spikes from the spokes and the floats, making the wheel—soft green and mossy when it revolved in the gentle sun-mingled summer water—look like its own grey skeleton now. The sun was getting low, and I should want all my time to see my other friends before dinner, for I would not willingly offend Mrs. Pearson on Christmas Day by being late, especially as I guessed she was using extraordinary skill to prepare me a more than comfortable meal.

"I must go, Old Rogers," I said ; "but I will leave you something to think about till we meet again. Find out why our Lord was so much displeased with the disciples, whom He knew to be ignorant men, for not knowing what He meant when He warned them against the leaven of the Pharisees. I want to know what you think about it. You'll find the story told both in the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew and the eighth of St. Mark."

"Well, sir, I'll try ; that is, if you will tell me what you think about it afterwards, so as to put me right, if I'm wrong."

"Of course I will, if I can find out an explanation to satisfy me. But it is not at all clear to me now. In fact I do not see the connecting links of our Lord's logic in the rebuke he gives them."

"How am I to find out then, sir—knowing nothing of logic at all ?" said the old man, his rough worn face summered over with his child-like smile.

"There are many things which a little learning, while it cannot really hide them, may make you less ready to see all at once," I answered, shaking hands with Old Rogers, and then springing across the brook with my carpet-bag in my hand.

By the time I had got through the rest of my calls, the fogs were rising from the streams and the meadows to close in upon my first Christmas Day in my own parish. How much happier I was than when I came such a few months before ! The only pang I felt that day was as I passed the monsters on the gate leading to Oldcastle Hall. Should I be honoured to help only the poor of the flock ? Was I to do nothing for the rich, for whom it is, and has been, and doubtless will be so hard to enter into the kingdom of heaven ? And it seemed to me at the moment that the world must be made for the poor : they had so much more done for them to enable them to inherit it than the rich had.—To these people at the Hall, I did not seem acceptable. I might in time do something with Judy, but the old lady was still so dreadfully repulsive to me that it troubled my conscience to feel how I disliked her. Mr. Stoddart seemed nothing more than a dilettante in religion as well as in the arts and sciences—music always excepted. While for Miss Oldcastle, I simply did not understand her yet. And she was so beautiful ! I thought her more beautiful every time I saw her. But I never appeared to make the least progress towards any real acquaintance with her thoughts and feelings.—It seemed to me, I say, for a moment, coming from the houses of the warm-hearted poor, as if the rich had not quite fair play, as it were—as if they were sent into the world chiefly for the sake of the cultivation of the virtues of the poor, and without much chance for the cultivation of their own. I knew better than this you know, my reader ; but the thought came, as thoughts will come sometimes. It vanished the moment I sought to lay hands upon it, as if it knew quite well it had no business there. But certainly I did believe that it was more like the truth to say the world was made for the poor than to say that it was made for the rich. And therefore I longed the more to do something for these whom I considered the rich of my flock ; for it was dreadful to think of their being poor inside instead of outside.

Perhaps my reader will say, and say with justice, that I ought to have been as anxious about poor Farmer Brownrigg as about the beautiful lady. But the farmer had given me good reason to hope some progress in him after the way he had given in about Jane Rogers. Positively I had caught his eye during the sermon that very day. And, besides—but I will not be a hypocrite ; and seeing I did not certainly take the same interest in Mr. Brownrigg, I will at least be honest and confess it. As far as regards the discharge of my duties, I trust I should have behaved impartially had the necessity for any choice arisen. But my feelings were not quite under my own control. And we are nowhere told to love everybody alike, only to love every one who comes within our reach as ourselves.

I wonder whether my old friend Dr. Duncan was right. He had served on shore in Egypt under General Abercrombie, and had of course, after the fighting was over on each of the several occasions—the French being always repulsed—exercised his office amongst the wounded left on the field of battle.—"I do not know," he said, "whether I did right or not ; but I always took the man I came to first—French or English."—I only know that my heart did not wait for the opinion of my head on the matter. I loved the old man the more that he did as he did. But as a question of casuistry, I am doubtful about its answer.

This digression is, I fear, unpardonable.

I made Mrs. Pearson sit down with me to dinner, for Christmas Day was not one to dine alone upon. And I have ever since had my servants to dine with me on Christmas Day.

Then I went out again, and made another round of visits, coming in for a glass of wine at one table, an orange at another, and a hot chestnut at a third. Those whom I could not see that day, I saw on the following days between it and the new year. And so ended my Christmas holiday with my people.

But there is one little incident which I ought to

relate before I close this chapter, and which I am ashamed of having so nearly forgotten.

When we had finished our dinner, and I was sitting alone drinking a glass of claret before going out again, Mrs. Pearson came in and told me that little Gerard Weir wanted to see me. I asked her to show him in; and the little fellow entered, looking very shy, and clinging first to the door and then to the wall.

"Come, my dear boy," I said, "and sit down by me."

He came directly and stood before me.

"Would you like a little wine and water?" I said; for unhappily there was no dessert, Mrs. Pearson knowing that I never eat such things.

"No, thank you, sir; I never tasted wine."

I did not press him to take it.

"Please, sir," he went on after a pause, putting his hand in his pocket, "mother gave me some goodies, and I kept them till I saw you come back, and here they are, sir."

Does any reader doubt what I did or said upon this?

I said, "Thank you, my darling," and I ate them up every one of them, that he might see me eat them before he left the house. And the dear child went off radiant.

If anybody cannot understand why I did so, I beg him to consider the matter. If then he cannot come to a conclusion concerning it, I doubt if any explanation of mine would greatly subserve his enlightenment. Meantime, I am forcibly restraining myself from yielding to the temptation to set forth my reasons, which would result in a half-hour's sermon on the Jewish dispensation, including the burnt offering, and the wave and heave offerings, with an application to the ignorant nurses and mothers of English babies, who do the best they can to make original sin pass into actual transgressions by training children down in the way they should not go.

(To be continued.)

AN EVENING WITH DR. LIVINGSTONE.

Who does not enjoy an evening with a traveller—a genial, kindly, Christian man, who has been among the strangest people, seen sights that no one else has ever seen, and, full of interest himself in distant and neglected races, strives to communicate that interest to the party that have come together to hear about them? To meet for an hour or two with such a man as Dr. Livingstone, and hear him give a plain familiar account of some of his African journeys, and of the means best fitted, with God's blessing, to benefit the African race, would probably be one of the first wishes and greatest pleasures of a majority of the readers of the Sunday Magazine. Every one, we suppose, knows that Dr. Livingstone himself has again left England, and is engaged once more in his noble endeavour to establish the means of missionary labour and of commercial enterprise among some of the populous tribes of Eastern and Central Africa. We cannot, therefore, have him personally to chat with us of an evening; but we can have what is second best: we may take the large volume which he has just published, and cull from it what we may suppose he would have told us, if it had been our good fortune to spend a Sunday evening in his company. Unhappily, there is little or nothing to tell of the results of missionary labour. Dr. Livingstone is a pioneer, a forerunner of missionaries, rather than himself an acting missionary. He goes to see what can be done, and to arrange for others coming to do it, rather than to do it himself. His idea of his own mission seems to be that he is to conciliate the natives, to disarm their prejudices, to give them a favourable opinion of the British people, to work upon them by kindness and disinterestedness, and thus dispose them to trade with the merchant, and listen to the missionary. But if there be little to say of the results of Christian missions, except that they have hitherto done nothing in those parts, there is, unhappily, far too much to tell of a devil's mission that has been frightfully active and successful—the slave-trade, partly as pursued by the natives, but chiefly by the atrocious Portuguese settlers and adventurers. In fact, the slave-trade has in every way been the ruin of Africa; and, besides making the poor negroes ten times more miserable and degraded than they would otherwise have been, it has proved a most effectual barrier to all missionary and to all commercial undertakings. It is owing to the slave-trade that Dr. Livingstone has failed to establish any centres of missionary and commercial operations on the banks of the Zambesi or its tributaries; and there is little reason to hope for anything better, until measures be taken to repress the infamous traffic on the East, similar to those that have proved so successful on the West Coast of Africa.

For, according to Dr. Livingstone,—and he is so shrewd and careful a man that we can hardly fancy him wrong in this,—the English squadron on the West Coast of Africa has been an extraordinary blessing to that part of the world. Many persons have an opposite impression, and think that England has spent her treasure and the lives of her seamen in vain, in watching those infamous slavers, with which we associate such accursed scenes. Dr. Livingstone is of a very different opinion. There, at the distance of hundreds of miles from the ocean, he found the very decided influence of our national policy: the slave-trade so far suppressed that even the Portuguese spoke of it as a thing of the past; lawful commerce immensely increased; more than twenty Christian missions established; and comparative peace enjoyed by millions of inhabitants. And as regards those missions in Western Africa, of which Captain Burton spoke so disparagingly, Dr. Livingstone entertains a most favourable opinion. At Sierra Leone and elsewhere, Christian natives can be numbered by thousands, who, whatever defects they may have, at least possess the qualification of being trustworthy trade-agents among their countrymen. Making allow-

ance for the fact that many of the native Christians have been the lowest of the low—liberated African slaves,—and also for the strong language of traders annoyed at being prevented from using the people as brutes, Dr. Livingstone thinks that the conduct of England of late years on the West Coast deserves the world's admiration, and that her generosity will appear grand in the eyes of posterity. Neither is it true, as Captain Burton has maintained, that Mahometanism is the only religion that is making proselytes in Africa. The native Christians of Africa contribute no less a sum than £15,000 yearly for the spread of the Gospel. The Mahometans are even beneath the native Africans in their ordinary moral tone. Dr. Livingstone gives an anecdote in illustration of this. He has seen a party of natives plunge into the water to rescue a woman from a crocodile. On the other hand, when a party of his own sailors, who were Mahometans, were coming to the ship after sleeping ashore, one of them walked into the water with the intention of swimming off to the boat; and while yet hardly up to his knees was seized by a crocodile and dragged under; the poor fellow gave a shriek, and held up his hand for aid; but none of his countrymen stirred to his assistance, and he was never seen again. On asking his brother-in-law why he did not help him, he replied, "Well, no one told him to go into the water. It was his own fault that he was killed." This was the part of the priest and the Levite in the parable of the Good Samaritan re-enacted with additional hard-heartedness; for neither the priest nor the Levite was brother-in-law of the man who fell among thieves.

The aspect of intertropical Africa—Eastern, Western and Central—must, by this time of day, be as familiar as his own country to Dr. Livingstone; but the feelings of a stranger setting foot in it for the first time "resemble in some respects those which the First Man may have had on his entrance into the Garden of Eden. He has set foot in a new world; another state of existence is before him; everything he sees, every sound that falls upon his ear has all the freshness and charm of novelty. The trees and the plants are new; the flowers and the fruits, the beasts, the birds, and the insects, are curious and strange; the very sky itself is new, glowing with colours, or sparkling with constellations, never seen in northern climes." Everything in Africa, it was long ago remarked, is contrary: "Wool grows on the heads of men and hair on the backs of sheep." The men often wear their hair long, the women wear it short. Where there are cattle, the women till the ground, plant the land, and build huts. The men stay at home to sew, spin, weave, and talk, and milk the cows. The nursery hobgoblin with us is black, but in Africa he is white. Foolish mothers bid their children be quiet, or they will call the white man to bite them. To the unsophisticated natives of Africa there is something frightfully repulsive in the appearance of white men. On entering villages previously unvisited by Europeans, if a child should be met coming quietly and unsuspectingly along, the moment he raised his eyes and saw the whites, he would take to his heels in an agony of terror, such as we might feel if we met a live Egyptian mummy at the door of the British Museum. Alarmed by the child's wild cries, the mother rushes out of her hut, but darts back again at the sight of the same frightful apparition. Dogs turn tail and scour off in dismay; and hens, abandoning their chickens, fly screaming to the tops of the houses. Unfamiliar sights everywhere present themselves. Here and there may be seen rows of elephants two miles long; in the rivers, crocodiles and hippopotomuses, by no means pleasant to bathe with; and even on board ship, one may be aroused, as Dr. Livingstone was in his steamer, by five feet of cold green snake gliding over one's face. But however peculiar the country, and however different the people, Dr. Livingstone has no patience with what has often been said of the negro race. The notions commonly entertained of their language he regards as absurd; their answers to questions on ordinary topics are about as intelligent as are usually got from the common people at home; and if they are addicted to low motives and mean actions, so likewise unhappily are many of those among ourselves who are not under the influence of Christian principles and civilised habits. Dr. Livingstone is full of hope for the negro race; his life of single-hearted devotion to them is a proof of his confidence in what they may become, if Christianity, and her daughter Civilisation, should find a home among them. Even the unwholesomeness of the climate would in that case be greatly overcome. It is the very richness of the country, in connection with the neglect of its inhabitants, that makes it so unhealthy. The luxuriance of the vegetation is such that when it decays an extraordinary amount of putridity is generated; the very rivers are poisoned by it, and fever hovers on every side. Were the plains cultivated, drained, and reaped, not only would the most splendid harvests be obtained, but the cause of fever would be to a large extent removed. The beautiful fulfilment of the sixty-seventh Psalm, which would result from missionary enterprise in such a country, will strike every reader:—"God be merciful to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine on us. That Thy way may be known on earth, Thy saving health among the nations. . . . . Let the people praise thee, O God, let all the people praise thee. *Then shall the earth yield her increase*, and God, even our own God, shall bless us." No wonder though Dr. Livingstone sighs when he sees regions of such capabilities turned, literally and figuratively, into the valley of the shadow of death. No wonder though it cuts him to the heart to come on masses of skeletons where he might have looked for living men. His soul is fired with the purpose to dispossess Fever, Famine, War, and the Slave Trade from those fertile regions, and to see the Angel of Peace and Love spreading his wings over them. When he thinks of his father's native Hebrides,

> Of Ulva dark and Colonsay,
> And all the group of islets gay
> That guard famed Staffa round,

inhabited by a comparatively happy and peaceful people, why, he asks, should not those regions of Africa—not by any means the sandy deserts that used to be thought, but as rich and fair as any

country on the globe—be peopled by industrious and peaceful tribes, worshipping the God of love, trusting in the work of Christ, and adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour?

The primitive faith of the African people, he conceives to be, that there is one Almighty Maker of heaven and earth; that He has given the various plants of earth to men to be employed as mediators between Him and the spirit-world, where all who have ever been born and died continue to live; that sin consists in offences against their fellow-men, either here or among the departed; and that death is often a punishment of guilt, such as witchcraft. The Great Spirit lives above the stars; but they never pray to him, and know nothing of their relation to him or of his interest in them. As might be expected, they are great believers in spells and nostrums. In one district, the medical profession is subdivided to an extent unknown even in London or Paris. There is the elephant-doctor, who prepares a medicine indispensable to hunters when attacking that animal; the crocodile-doctor, who sells a charm that protects its owner from crocodiles; the dice-doctor, a combination of the detective officer and the physician, part of whose duty is to discover thieves by means of dice; the gun-doctor, the rain-doctor, and numberless others. The various schools deal in little charms, which are hung round the purchaser's neck to avert evil; some of them contain the medicine, others increase its power. On one occasion, near the Victoria Falls, Dr. Livingstone put himself under the guidance of one Tuba Makoro, "smasher of canoes,"—an ominous name; but he alone was believed to know the medicine that insured against shipwreck in the rapids above the Falls. In spite of this, one of the canoes struck a rock and was nearly destroyed. But Dr. Livingstone was assured it was not the medicine that was at fault: the accident was owing entirely to Tuba having started without his breakfast.

In the country of the Makololo a man was met with who pretended to be able to change himself into a lion. Dr. Livingstone bid his native attendants ask him to perform this feat at once, and they would give him for his performance a piece of cotton cloth—the article most valued by the natives. "Oh, no," was their reply; "he may come when we are asleep and kill us." This man-lion would sometimes go forth to the forest to kill game, and then, graciously returning to the human form, would tell his neighbours where to find the buffalo or antelope which he pretended to have killed, but had probably found dead. It is believed also that the souls of departed chiefs enter into lions and render them sacred. Dr. Livingstone tells how a lion came near to his encampment one night, which his native followers believed to be tenanted by the spirit of a chief, and how one of them bullied him, and another coaxed him, while the Doctor himself, a terrible unbeliever, supplied him with a piece of meat prepared with strychnine. In another region the monkey is a sacred animal, and is never killed, because the people believe devoutly that the souls of their ancestors occupy these degraded forms, and anticipate that they themselves must, sooner or later, be transformed in the same manner.

Many of their superstitious notions are very grotesque. When a man has his hair cut, he is careful to burn it or bury it secretly, lest, falling into the hands of one who has an evil eye or is a witch, it should be used as a charm to afflict him with headache. In certain parts there is a wide-spread belief that if one plants the mango-stone he will die. Even among the native Portuguese of Tette there is a superstition, that if a man plants coffee he will never be happy afterwards. There are also superstitions among the people that have a more tragical aspect. The ordeal of the muave is often resorted to. If a person is accused of crime he has to drink the muave, a deadly poison. If the stomach rejects the poison, he is declared innocent; if it is retained, his guilt is proved. Even chiefs are not exempted, and in some cases seem rather to enjoy the thing. A chief, making some assertion that could hardly be received, said, "If you doubt my word, give me the muave to drink." The people of a chief who had successfully gone through the ordeal the day before Dr. Livingstone reached his village, manifested their joy by drinking, dancing, and drumming two days and nights. It is surmised that the native doctor who prepares the poison may be able to save those whom he considers innocent.

The practice of polygamy, the sign of so low a civilisation and the source of so many evils, prevails everywhere. Singularly enough, it is approved of even by the women. On hearing that a man in England could marry but one wife, several Makololo ladies exclaimed that they would not like to live in such a country. They could not imagine how English ladies could relish such a custom; for—as they thought, every man of respectability should have a number of wives as a proof of his wealth. Along the whole of the Zambesi, no man is respected by his neighbours who has not several wives. The reason for this is doubtless because, having the produce of each wife's garden, he is wealthy in proportion to their number. One of the greatest battles of Christianity will have to be fought on this ground. Till this notion is dislodged, the position of woman must be degraded; and what that implies we need not say.

The usual vices of a wild and irregular life—the outbursts of sensuality and passion, and the deeds of cruelty which are found in all barbarous nations—exist among the Africans, but not to the same extent as in some other communities. By far the worst vices that prevail amongst them, Dr. Livingstone ascribes, as we shall see presently, to the slave-trade, the most fearful parent of vice and devilry the world has ever seen. Some interesting features of character are often shown by the natives. They are very susceptible to the influence of kindly treatment, and do not readily forget it. When Charles Livingstone, the brother of Dr. Livingstone, was at Kebrabasa, during the rainy season, he gave some food and a small piece of cloth to a hungry, shivering native traveller. Eighteen months after, while the party were on their journey into the interior, a man came into the camp, bringing a liberal present of rice, meal, beer, and a fowl, reminding them of what had been done for him (which Charles Livingstone had forgot), and saying

he did not like to see them travelling hungry and thirsty. Ready though they are to quarrel, they often try to make peace among themselves. An illustration of Dr. Watts's song, "Let dogs delight to bark and bite," occurred one day when two men were wrangling and cursing each other. A Makololo man rose, and, to prevent mischief, quietly took their spears from the corner in which they stood, and sitting down beside Dr. Livingstone remarked, "It is the nature of bulls to gore each other." The Makololo race are regarded by Dr. Livingstone as by far the most intelligent and enterprising of the tribes he has met. They are, in his judgment, fine subjects for a Christian mission. When talked to about their lawless forays and expeditions for killing their neighbours and stealing their cattle, they seemed impressed with the crime of killing, but not of seizing cattle. They confessed that they needed the Book of God. If that was guilt which custom led them to do, it lay between the white man and Jesus, who had not given them the Book. They were impressed by the thought that there was a Book of God, and that they did not possess it. They were interested in hearing that God's Son appeared among men and died for them, but they did not feel that He had any interest in them. On the last occasion of holding Divine service at Seshake, the English invited them to speak about the future state. The speaker had made some remarks on the resurrection. They said they did not wish to offend the speaker, but they could not believe that all the dead would rise again. "Can those who have been killed in the field and devoured by vultures, or those who have been eaten by the hyænas or lions, or those who have been tossed into the river and eaten by more than one crocodile—can they all be raised again to life?" They were told that men could take a leaden bullet, change it into a salt (acetate of lead) which could be dissolved as completely in water as our bodies in the stomachs of animals, and then reconvert it into lead; or that the bullet could be transformed into the red and white paint of our wagons, and again could be reconverted into the original lead; and that if men, exactly like themselves, could do so much, how much more could He do who had made the eye to see, and the ear to hear? "We added, however," continues Dr. Livingstone, "that we believed in a resurrection, not because we understood how it would be brought about, but because our Heavenly Father assured us of it in his book."

The history of endeavours to plant Christianity in the countries adjoining the Zambesi and its tributaries has hitherto been a history of failures. Ruins of Roman Catholic mission-stations remain, but no trace that their teaching took hold on the people. An anecdote told by Dr. Livingstone of the Roman Catholic priest at Tette will probably account for this. "During the drought of 1858, a neighbouring chief got up a performance, with divers ceremonies and incantations, to bring rain, but it would not come. The Goanese padre of Tette, to satisfy his compatriots, appointed a procession and prayers in honour of St. Antonio for the same purpose. The first attempt did not answer; but on the second occasion, arranged to come off after the new moon appeared, a grand procession in the saint's honour ended in so much rain that the roof of the Residencia gave way. St. Antonio's image was decorated the following week with a golden coronal worth 22*l.*, for sending the long-delayed and much-needed rain. We never looked with disdain on the rites or ceremonies of any Church; but, on witnessing the acts of worship on this occasion, so great was the irreverence manifested, in the kneeling worshippers laughing and joking between the responses, not even ceasing their grins when muttering 'Ora pro nobis,' that we could not help believing that if, like the natives, they have faith in rain-making, they have faith in nothing else."

It is sad to think that nothing has yet come of all the efforts that have been made, in consequence of Dr. Livingstone's former journey and book, to establish Christian missions in the neighbourhood of the Zambesi. When, a few years ago, a party of missionaries, headed by the Rev. H. Helmore, tried to plant the Gospel at Linyanti, in the neighbourhood of the Victoria Falls, several of the missionaries and their native attendants succumbed to fever almost immediately on their arrival, and the survivers were obliged to retire. Bishop Mackenzie and the other members of the Universities' Mission, it is well known, got into trouble in consequence of their zeal in behalf of captive-slaves, the Bishop died of fever, and the Universities' Mission ultimately left the continent of Africa. The Rev. James Stewart, of the Free Church of Scotland, who came out expressly to select a sphere for a mission in connection with that body, was obliged to return without accomplishing his purpose. And even the expedition of Dr. Livingstone described in the volume before us, though conducted with all the authority which the patronage of the Government of Great Britain could give it, has not been successful, except in so far as it has shown how great need there is both for missions and commerce, but how difficult in present circumstances it is to obtain either the one or the other. How comes it that the establishment of Christian missions is so extremely difficult in that region? There may be a variety of answers to the question: but in the opinion of Dr. Livingstone the great obstacle is to be found in that odious curse—the slave-trade.

The most important feature of Dr. Livingstone's present volume is the lurid light it throws on that fearful system. Nothing has made a deeper impression on him than the frightfully demoralising effects of the traffic. In his view it is the prime agency of the devil in this world for turning human beings into monsters of wickedness. The half-caste Portuguese who are concerned in it are as revolting specimens of humanity as can be found anywhere. The atrocities of Mariano are all but incredible. One of his favourite modes of creating an impression in the country and making his name dreaded, was to spear his captives with his own hands. On one occasion he is reported to have killed in this way forty poor wretches placed in a row before him. It might have been thought that slave-owners, through self-interest, would treat their slaves with humanity; but the slave trade seems always to engender

an unreasoning ferocity that is often reckless even of its own ultimate interests. Dr. Livingstone tells of an old slave-trader, worn out with disease and nearly blind, who was not in other respects without humanity, that when his wife died, to dull the edge of his grief, he made a foray amongst the tribes near the mouth of the Shire, and took many captives. This man had made several fortunes; but he managed to squander them all in riotous living, and himself acknowledged that "the money a man made in the slave-trade was all bad, and soon went to the devil." The loss of life caused in these slave-capturing forays is fearful. Colonel Rigby, late British consul at Zanzibar, told Dr. Livingstone that from the Nyassa country, 19,000 slaves passed annually through the custom-house of that island, exclusive of those sent to Portuguese slave ports. But, "besides those actually captured, thousands are killed or die of their wounds and famine, driven from their villages by the slave-raid proper. Thousands perish in internecine war waged for slaves with their own clansmen and neighbours, slain by the lust of gain, which is stimulated by the slave-purchasers of Cuba and elsewhere. The many skeletons we have seen amongst rocks and woods, by the little pools, and along the paths of the wilderness, attest the awful sacrifice of human life, which must be attributed, directly or indirectly, to this trade of hell. It is our deliberate opinion that not one-fifth of the victims of the slave-trade ever become slaves. Taking the Shire valley as an average, we should say not even one-tenth arrive at their destination. . . . . A small armed steamer on Lake Nyassa could easily, by exercising a control and furnishing goods in return for ivory or other products, break the neck of this infamous traffic in that quarter; for nearly all must cross the lake, or the Upper Shire."

There is nothing in all this book more touching than the engraving opposite page 356, which represents a gang of captives on their way to Tette. They form a long line of men, women, and children, manacled and chained to each other, the men, in addition to their chains, being fastened together in pairs by means of beams of wood with forked extremities, the forks being fitted to their necks, and riveted upon them. The women are compelled to carry baskets on their heads, in some cases in addition to their infants, which are bound round their bodies with a cloth. Slave-drivers, armed with guns, staves, and other implements, accompany the gang, and urge them on. The gang, which numbered eighty-four, was met and liberated by Dr. Livingstone, who learned that the day before two of the women had been shot for attempting to unfasten the thongs. One woman had her infant's brains knocked out because she could not carry her load and it; and a man was despatched with an axe because he had broken down with fatigue.

The awful desolation of a once-populous country after a slave-seizing raid, and the terrible scenes that indicate the sacrifice of life, cannot be read or heard of without a shudder. Dr. Livingstone describes what he saw in the valley of the Shire after such an occurrence. "Instead of smiling villages and crowds of people coming with things for sale, scarcely a soul was to be seen; and when by chance one lighted on a native, his frame bore the impress of hunger, and his countenance the look of a cringing broken-spiritedness. A drought had visited the land after the slave-hunting panic broke over it. . . . Large masses of the people had fled down to the Shire, only anxious to get the river between them and their enemies. Most of the food had been left behind; and famine and starvation had cut off so many that the remainder were too few to bury their dead. The corpses we saw floating down the river were only a remnant of those that had perished, whom their friends, from weakness, could not bury, nor over-gorged crocodiles devour. . . . Wherever we took a walk, human skeletons were seen in every direction, and it was painfully interesting to observe the different postures in which the poor wretches had breathed their last. A whole heap had been thrown down a slope behind a village, where the fugitives often crossed the river from the east. . . . Others lay in their huts, with closed doors, which when opened disclosed the mouldering corpse with the poor rags round the loins—the skull fallen off the pillow—the little skeleton of the child, that had perished first, rolled up in a mat between two large skeletons. The sight of this desert, but eighteen months ago a well-peopled valley, now literally strewn with human bones, forced the conviction upon us that the destruction of human life in the middle passage, however great, constitutes but a small portion of the waste, and made us feel that unless the slave-trade—that monster iniquity which has so long brooded over Africa—is put down, lawful commerce cannot be established."

No wonder though Dr. Livingstone is saddened and almost broken-hearted. The sanguine hopes of his earlier days for Africa are blighted by this atrocious slave-trade. If anything is to be done for this great territory, effective measures must be taken to sweep away the cause of its misery and desolation. The suppression of the slave-trade is one of those objects for which all classes of British statesmen are proud to use the power of their country. May they be guided to wise and effectual measures for this end in the East of Africa, and from all our churches may prayer rise with a hundredfold greater earnestness on behalf of those dark places of the earth that are full of the habitations of cruelty.

The Africans have learned to understand England's hatred to slavery. In this respect, our country bears an honourable name, and her prestige is favourable to her missionaries. Her national truthfulness is another distinction in her favour, contrasting for example with the laxity of the Portuguese, whose word cannot be relied on. But other characteristics of a less favourable kind have come to be attached to the English name. In one place, a man's being intoxicated is described by the phrase "he speaks English." The national failing was unconsciously confessed by a sailor of Dr. Livingstone's, who, on its being remarked that certain trees were very like the steeples of England, said "the picture would be complete if there was only a grog-shop near the church."

Dr. Livingstone cannot doubt that, under God's

blessing, Christian missions would be as prosperous on the East coast of Africa as they have been on the West. On the West, sixteen societies are at work: six British, seven American, two German, and one West Indian. These maintain 104 European or American missionaries, have 110 stations, 13,000 scholars, 236 schools, and 19,000 registered communicants—representing probably a Christian population of 60,000. "It is particularly pleasing," he adds, "to see the zeal of our American brethren; they show the natural influences and effects of our holy religion. With the genuine and true-hearted it is never a question of distance but of need. The Americans make capital missionaries; and it is only a bare act of justice to say that their labours on the West Coast are above all praise. And not on that shore alone does their benevolence shine. In China, India, South Seas, Syria, South Africa, and their own far West, they have proved themselves worthy children of the old country,—the asylum for the oppressed of every nation, the source of light for all lands."

We might prolong our "evening with Dr. Livingstone" to the small hours of morning, but the best of friends must part. We conclude by noting two or three interesting illustrations of Scripture, culled from his volume. The shadow of a great rock in a weary land (Isa. xxxii. 2), and the sleep God gives to his beloved (Psalm cxxvii. 2) are both illustrated in the following account of an ascent of all but perpendicular rocks. "The strain upon the muscles in jumping from crag to boulder, and wriggling round projections, took an enormous deal out of the party, and they were often glad to cower in the shadow formed by one rock overhanging and resting upon another; the shelter induced the peculiarly strong and overpowering inclination to sleep that too much sun sometimes causes. This sleep is curative of what may be incipient sun-stroke; in its first gentle touches it caused the dream to flit over the boiling brain that they had been sworn in as members of the Alpine Club; and then it became so heavy as to make them feel as if a portion of their existence had been cut out from their lives."

A native's idea of "holiness" is worth recording. "When copious showers have descended during the night, and all the earth and leaves and cattle are washed clean, and the sun rising shows a drop of dew on every blade of grass, and the air breathes fresh,—that is holiness." The resemblance to the imagery of the Bible is very striking—especially to David's picture of the Holy One:—"He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain." (2 Sam. xxiii. 4.)

Among the birds of the country, the "honey-guide" seems almost designed as a type of the Christian missionary. "The 'honey-guide' is an extraordinary bird; how is it that every member of its family has learned that all men, whether white or black, are fond of honey? The instant the little fellow gets a glimpse of a man, he hastens to greet him with the hearty invitation to come, as M. Cia translated it, to a bee's hive, and take some honey. He flies on in the proper direction, perches on a tree, and looks back to see if you are following; then on to another and another, until he guides you to the spot. If you do not accept his first invitation, he follows you with pressing importunities, quite as anxious to lure the stranger to the bees' hive as other birds are to draw him away from their own nests. Except when on the march, our men were sure to accept the invitation, and manifested the same by a peculiar responsive whistle, meaning, as they said, 'All right, go ahead; we are coming.' The birds never deceived them, but always guided them to a hive of bees, though some had but little honey in store." We will not go into any curious inquiries as to the motive and purpose of the honey-guide. We would rather see in its singular proceeding a lesson for ourselves. To us has been given the knowledge of a treasure "more to be desired than gold, yea than much fine gold, sweeter also than honey from the honey-comb." And to us there is committed the function of the honey-guide—by our Christian missions to lead the starving African to the Bread of Life; and if he do not accept our first invitation, to persevere with pressing importunities, until at last he finds the hidden manna, and his soul is filled as with marrow and fatness.

W. G. Blaikie.

ON AN IMPERFECTLY UNDERSTOOD SCRIPTURE CHARACTER.

The fact that the Christian Church, as early as the fourth century, began to carry her veneration for the mother of our Lord into idolatory is sad enough, yet that veneration itself has much that is good and noble to commend it to Christian feeling. As Jesus links humanity with God, Mary links humanity with Jesus. It is through her that the Eternal Life was connected with our nature, which was dead in trespasses and sins. No wonder, then, that every one who, since that most mysterious birth, has received the Eternal Life, looks with a feeling of deep and sacred reverence upon her whom God selected from among all the women of the world as the "blessed" one through whom that everlasting Branch of righteousness has been, as it were, engrafted upon our dead stem. We must not be surprised, therefore, that Elisabeth, in a voice of deep respect and hallowed wonder, should have exclaimed, "Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"

Moreover, we are apt to ascribe to female piety a purity, a depth, and tenderness which we think the more rudely-framed masculine mind is not capable of. This feeling almost makes us sometimes look upon godly women as beings of a

higher nature, forming, as it were, a class between men and angels. A woman—thus we are apt to think, or at least feel—a woman whom an angel approached with the august salutation, "Hail, thou that art highly favoured!" — whom the Holy Ghost overshadowed—who at one time was so closely united with the Son of God that her very life was his,—that woman must have been the most pious, the godliest, the purest of human beings, standing alone among women, and approaching the heavenly, the divine, as nearly as it is possible for a human spirit to approach it. We feel as if left far behind, and stand in awe at the height of her sanctity. Under the influence of such thoughts, even Protestants often regard Mary as the ideal of female perfection and spiritual life, and, while deprecating any attempt whatever to attribute divine honour to her, they yet feel offended at the assertion that she was but an ordinary pious woman, and reject the idea as being irreverent, if not profane.

Much might be said in defence of the feeling of sacred reverence for that highly favoured of women. Indeed, it is almost a natural fruit of deep love to the Saviour. The higher He rises in our affection and veneration, the higher value and honour we feel inclined to ascribe to everything connected with Him. It is true, that tendency may soon lead to exaggeration,—it may give rise to superstitious feelings and idolatrous performances,—but still its origin is not in superstition, but in true Christian faith. Certainly, nothing of the kind will be found in the heart of the infidel. It is not likely that Strauss or Renan, who look upon Jesus as only an ordinary human being, would go to Jerusalem to pray at the "holy sepulchre," or to Loretto to worship the "Holy Virgin." But Christians, who love their Saviour, cannot help thinking of Palestine; for instance, with emotions such as never rise in their mind when thinking of any other country. They cannot well sit down on Olivet to indulge in humorous or light jesting talk, even though they know well that Olivet is but dust, like any other mountain. They cannot help looking upon these things as though they were invested with a certain holiness, simply through their connection with Him whom they adore as their Saviour and God. Before the tribunal of the cold understanding this may scarcely be justifiable, but in devoted Christian feeling it certainly finds some apology.

And as it is with inanimate objects, so it is, and in a higher degree, with reference to those persons who formed the sacred circle of our Lord's most intimate friends. If we did not believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and if we did not love Him as our Redeemer, of course we would not remember Peter or John with any higher feeling of respect than that with which we remember Pythagoras or Socrates; nor would Mary in our reverence stand upon a higher level than Cornelia the mother of the Gracchi, or Monica the mother of Augustine. But we believe in the Son of God and we love Him, and among the evidences of our faith and love is that feeling of sacred veneration with which we think of his apostles, and also of his blessed virgin mother. We do not entertain this feeling in the same measure for any other company of venerable fathers and mothers of the Church, however pious and godly they may have been. We would probably call it bad taste if some one were to use the name of Clemens Romanus, or Athanasius, of Luther or Calvin, for a joke or a pun, but we should not call it profane. We can easily imagine those good men themselves enjoying such a joke or jest. But we could not possibly permit anything of the kind to be associated with the names of the apostles, of Mary, or of any other of those women who ministered to our Lord. It is true, indeed, that when picturing them to ourselves, in the circumstances of their daily life, we find that nothing human seems to be alien to them, so that they must have had their recreations in the same way as we have. But as we can never think of them wholly apart from their relation to our Lord, we are precluded from looking upon them in a barely secular light. Cold-hearted philosophers may sneer at this as a pitiful weakness, but it is an amiable weakness, and one which has all the sympathies of those who desire to remove everything disrespectful or profane from the name of the Lord and those who were nearest to Him.

It must be admitted, however, that this exclusively sacred respect for the first friends of the Lord scarcely does full justice to history, since it hinders us from looking at them as they really were. Yet the offence against history is only of a negative kind. We only abstain from giving full attention to what they undoubtedly were and must have been apart from their connection with our Saviour. Quite different is the case, however, when the offence against history becomes positive—when those saints are placed in a light altogether at variance with what they really were or can have been. Of this positive offence the Roman Catholic Church is guilty, in ascribing an immaculate conception, a sinless nature, an ascension, and an exaltation to the throne of heavenly glory, to the person of Mary. The hallowed respect with which Protestantism has revered and still reveres the mother of Christ may not be completely justifiable before the tribunal of history; but it is a harmless delinquency compared with the way in which Romanism, by her saint-worship, subverts the whole system of God's revelation, straightway leading to the fatal abominations of idolatry.

Such a fearful excess cannot fail to produce a strong reaction on the part of the friends of truth. For the honour of Christ they now feel obliged to allow history to give its testimony in all its completeness. It is asserted that not only do the Gospels say nothing about that sublime holiness to which the Romanists try to exalt Mary, but they even do not place her in the first rank of the Lord's friends. She only moves round the glorious Sun of Righteousness as a star of the second magnitude. Our feeling of devout reverence for our Lord's mother shrinks from endorsing such an assertion. Nor is it my purpose in this paper to prove that Mary was *not* so holy a woman as she is generally regarded, but *was* a sinner like all of us—a task to which Christian love would by preference address itself. But when a party rises in the Christian Church with the bold assertion that

she was as pure, sinless, and holy as her adorable Son himself, then—however unpleasant it may be—it is the duty of those who know the truth to prove, with the Gospel in their hand, that she *was* a sinner and, like all of us, came short of the glory of God.

Now the chief argument which has always been brought forward to prove that Mary was a sinful being is an *a priori* one, based upon the doctrine of Scripture, that all human beings, being of fallen parents, are born sinners. It has thus been argued that as Mary was a human being she must have been a sinner. This reasoning may be quite correct so far as the rules of dialectics are concerned, but experience has shown that such conclusions cannot in all cases be depended upon. On the same ground upon which Mary's sinfulness is thus maintained, it might be argued that Enoch and Elijah must have died. The Roman Catholic Church does not at all deny the doctrine that the whole human race has, in Adam, fallen into sin and death, but it avers that as Enoch and Elijah were made exceptions to the rule of general mortality, so Mary has been made an exception to the general sinfulness of our nature. Of course we do not believe this, and we summon the Pope to prove it. But the Pope cleverly turns the tables, and summons us to prove that such an exception was impossible. That of course we cannot do. We cannot prove that it was impossible with the Almighty to make such arrangements with regard to Mary's conception as to exempt her from the universal contamination of sin. And so, on purely dialectic grounds, Mary's sinlessness must be left an open question.

The argument borrowed from Mary's doxology, in which she calls God her *Saviour* (Luke i. 47), does not carry the matter much farther. Of course, we Protestants interpret this expression in the sense of saviour from sin, death, and condemnation. Nor can it be denied that this is the usual meaning of that word in the New Testament. But the Romanists aver that Mary called God her Saviour only with reference to her deliverance out of "the low estate" in which she had hitherto been living; and to prove the correctness of this, they appeal to the next verse, where, it is true, Mary does not speak of her sins, but of her humble and despised condition in life. Nor can it be denied, either, that sometimes in the New Testament the word Saviour when applied to God means simply a saviour from temporal misery: as may be proved, for instance, from 1 Tim. iv. 10. So here again the battle must be reported as drawn.

What we need in order to be able to silence the Romanists once and for ever, is an historical proof that Mary actually sinned. But this proof has hitherto been sought for in the Gospels in vain. It is true, the words which Jesus at the age of twelve addressed to her in the Temple: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" do not give us a very high opinion of the development of her spiritual knowledge, but we cannot well quote this as a proof that she had committed sin. Sinlessness does not necessarily include perfection of knowledge, and it must be admitted that Mary's being less enlightened than her Son is no proof that she was less holy. The same may be said of the conversation that took place between the Lord and his mother at the wedding at Cana. The words of the Lord: "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come," do not necessarily infer actual sin on the part of Mary. All depends upon the tone in which these words were uttered. They may even have been uttered with a kind of approving smile. That this may have been the case may be inferred from the fact that Mary, after these words, as it were encouraged by them, said to the servants: "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." And the fact that the Lord really did what his mother wanted Him to do, proves sufficiently that He saw nothing improper in her suggestion.

But there is one passage in the Gospel, which places Mary in such an unfavourable light that I cannot see how, before the tribunal of Christian faith, she can escape the verdict of *guilty*. There we really see her in the act of committing sin. The passage is Mark iii. 20, 21, in connexion with ver. 31. The evangelist tells us, that one day Jesus and his Apostles "went into a house" (ver. 19), which soon was so crowded that "they could not so much as eat bread." This was not the first time such a crowd had filled the house where Jesus was. Mark tells in the preceding chapter (ver. 4), that people, in order to come nigh to Jesus, broke up the roof of the house. In fact, it must have been a matter of daily occurrence. The Lord could not show Himself on the street without being at once surrounded by a crowd which every moment increased. Taking shelter in a house, He would literally be barricaded; people would block up the passages, and turn the place, as it were, into a beehive.

Now this effect of the preaching and miracles of Jesus would no doubt have greatly delighted his relatives, if they, like the Apostles, had believed in Him. But we know from John that, at least at that time, this was not the case. "Neither," says John, "did his brethren believe in Him." (John vii. 5.) So we cannot wonder to learn from Mark that they were angry, nay alarmed, when observing the immense stir which their brother caused in the place. It must also be borne in mind that the people who thus crowded round the Saviour were poor. Many among them were objects of public contempt—publicans, harlots, and sinners. The rich and influential classes kept aloof, knowing well that the Nazarene was no favourite of the great men in Jerusalem. Indeed, Mark tells us that just at this time, when the Nazarene, as probably the people would have said, "was setting everything on fire," scribes had come down from Jerusalem, who, upon seeing what was taking place, gave vent to their anger by saying that He had Beelzebub. No wonder, then, that under these circumstances the relatives of Jesus became alarmed. They perceived that their own reputation, and perhaps even their safety, was at stake. It would never do to allow matters to continue going on in this way. What else could be the end of it than public disgrace? "Our brother," said they, according to Mark's re-

port, "is beside himself." They agreed that something must be done to put a stop to this state of things. So they unitedly walked up to the house where they had heard Jesus was, to take Him home, and of course to keep Him in arrest for some time. "They went out," says Mark, "*to lay hold of Him.*"

Now, while the friends of Jesus set out to accomplish their sad purpose, Jesus was in the house engaged in a distressing dispute with the scribes, who had stigmatised Him as being possessed by Beelzebub. Mark gives us a short account of this unpleasant conversation from the 23rd to the 30th verse, and by this parenthesis the thread of the narrative is broken for a few moments. But the Evangelist takes it up again in the 31st verse, and thus proceeds: "There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto Him, calling Him." Of course they could not get near Him, for the room was full. But the people, carrying the message from mouth to mouth, delivered it to Jesus. "Behold," they said (v. 32), "thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee." The description of the scene is so graphic, that we see it distinctly before us, as if we had been present ourselves.

Now we would expect that our blessed Lord, on learning that his beloved mother was there, and had come all the way to see Him, would either have joyfully risen to meet her, or have requested the people to allow her to pass in, to take her place next to Him. But Jesus did nothing of the kind. On the contrary, He answered the message in such a way as must have made them conclude that He did not wish to see his mother and brethren at all. "Who is my mother, or my brethren?" He asks, as if in a voice of indignation. Then looking round on them who sat about Him, He said: "Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother."

I have said that the Lord uttered that question—"Who is my mother, or my brethren?" in a voice of indignation. And no doubt He did so; for it is evident from his words that He knew what their intention was. But for that, his behaviour with reference to his mother is perfectly inexplicable. This is not the way in which a tender-hearted son would receive his beloved mother. It seems a gross trespass against the first rule of maternal love and filial reverence. Something very extraordinary—something exceedingly reproachful must have taken place on the part of a mother, when a son like Jesus could give her such a reception. But we know what that extraordinary—that exceedingly reproachful thing was. Mary came in company with her relatives—not, like her namesake, to sit down at the feet of her Divine Son, to choose that good part, but to lay hold of Him, to stop his Messiah-work, to lock Him up for a time, to deprive the people of his word and blessing, and to do exactly what his deadliest enemies desired.

She came *to lay hold* upon Him. It is the same word (*krateo*) which Mark uses in the 17th verse of the sixth chapter, where he relates that Herod *laid hold* upon John the Baptist to put him into prison. How she, the mother of the Lord, could possibly have allowed herself to be brought to such a deed, is one of the most difficult problems that ever perplexed us. Could she, we would ask, forget all that she had witnessed of her Son, from the moment when the Angel Gabriel entered her humble room with his heavenly salutation, to the day when grey-headed Simeon exultantly praised God, with the holy Babe in his arms? In those days, we read, she "kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart." Were those things all gone from her memory now? If any one on earth could know that her Son was not the son of a human father but of God himself, *she* surely knew it. Could she for one moment lose hold of that great truth, and allow herself to arrive at such an absurd, nay, blasphemous supposition, as to think it possible that this Son of God might be "beside Himself," and in need of being watched by her?

The idea, indeed, seems to be too absurd. But what absurdities are there which men may not commit, if they allow themselves to be guided by feeling and prejudice, instead of by the Word of God and the enlightened understanding? It is a fact that in those days there was not one believer in Israel who did not expect the Messiah to ascend the throne of David at Jerusalem, and to set up a glorious kingdom on earth. Consequently, among those who believed in Jesus' Messiahship, there was not one who thought of such a thing as a cross. That the Messiah must *suffer*, and thus enter into his glory, was a truth foreign to them. They all expected Jesus to come forward some day in all the glory of his majesty. But the very reverse took place. He became an object of contempt; only poor and despised people flocked to Him. They waited from day to day, from week to week, but nothing suggestive of a throne and sceptre was manifested. On the contrary, his way was more and more towards the deepest depth of humiliation. This greatly perplexed his friends. But Jesus at length told his disciples plainly, and in so many words, that He was to be delivered into the hands of the Jews, to die, and to be buried. Even this was of no use. "They understood it not," says Luke (ix. 45), "and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not." And where such men as Peter and John, who were always with Jesus, and daily enjoyed his teaching, did not understand it, we cannot wonder that such a man as John the Baptist, for instance, who, strange enough, never joined the band of Christ's disciples, did not understand it either. When that good man at length found himself in the prison instead of on a throne by the side of the Messiah at Jerusalem, he, in his perplexity, sent two of his disciples to Jesus, to inquire whether He was really the expected Messiah or not (Matt. xi. 3). It is true John had at one time, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, proclaimed Jesus as the Lamb of God. But we know that the prophets of the Old Testament (and such was John—the last of them) were not always under the inspiration of the Spirit, and that in their uninspired times they often did not themselves clearly understand what the Spirit had prophesied through them (1 Pet. i. 10, 11). In short, there was not one

living soul in Israel, however pious and godly, which was not perplexed and disappointed on account of the humble and despised condition of Jesus. And the dark cloud of prejudice which thus dimmed their eyes, did not disappear till it was dispelled by the sun of the resurrection.

We do not read that Mary was an exception. To her the angel had distinctly said, that God would "give unto her child the throne of his father David, and that He was to reign over the house of Jacob for ever." In whatever sense she may have understood these words in aftertime when Jesus had ascended into heaven, this much is beyond doubt, that before that event she accepted them in the sense in which every Jew understood the expressions. If anyone in Israel expected that the babe born at Bethlehem was to become a glorious earthly king, certainly Mary did. But more than thirty years elapsed and nothing extraordinary happened. Now thirty years makes up a long period. Even such impressive events as Mary had witnessed on the occasion of the birth of Jesus, could not but lose much of their freshness to her mind, which was never refreshed again by a renewed apparition. The child grew up like other children. Twelve years after his birth she seemed to have been so little alive to the fact that He was the Son of God, that she got alarmed, fearing lest He might be lost in the crowd. He most likely joined her husband in his trade, and the days and years passed on without anything particular breaking the dull and dreary monotony of a poor artisan's life. Then, at the age of thirty, He came forward as a public teacher, and no doubt Mary's mind must have been quickened again when she heard about the great works which He performed. But soon disappointments came. The spirit of the leading classes turned against Him. Crowds of poor, miserable people flocked after Him, but there was nothing like a throne in prospect. Then her own children and relatives began to shake their heads and shrug their shoulders. Only a strong character, a spirit highly endowed with the gift of faith, could have stood the continuous depressing influence of such circumstances. But such a strong character, such a heroine in faith, Mary was not. Other women followed her Son where He went; but—and it is indeed a remarkable fact—we do not read that she was among them. We find her with Him at the beginning of his career, and we find her, a tender-hearted faithful mother, by his cross; but we do not find her among his disciples who clung to Him steadily as their shepherd.

Truly we find Mary in the wrong place, when we find her, not among "those who sat about" her Son, but among those who "went out to lay hold on Him." It is not necessary to assume that she too believed that He was "beside Himself." We revere and love her too much as the mother of our Lord, not to be inclined to put the most favourable construction upon her conduct. She was a tender, loving mother. To guard her beloved Son against distress and suffering was her heart's desire. Observing the exasperation of the rulers against Him, she could not but expect the most serious consequences from his present conduct. In this fear she was confirmed by the daily conversations of her family and relatives. She may have disapproved of their harsh sayings, that He was "beside Himself;" but she, at all events, believed that He was carrying matters a little too far. At least, to take Him home, and to keep Him away from public life for some time, would do no harm, in her opinion. Nay, it was absolutely necessary, for hers was in those days that same spirit which made Peter say: "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." So she joined the company of her relatives who went out to lay hold on Him. She most likely did so, to secure, if possible, the success of their attempt by her maternal influence.

It is strange that the connexion between the 21st and the 31st verses of Mark iii. has been so little observed either by Scripture commentators or Scripture readers. The passage in which the Lord speaks about his mother and brethren in the crowded house has usually been treated in sermons and commentaries as if it stood entirely by itself, having nothing to do with the preceding assertion of the Evangelist, that the Lord's friends had gone out to lay hold upon Him. This seems all the more strange, because we read in the 31st verse: "There came *then* (*own*) his brethren and his mother." This *then* has no meaning at all if it does not refer to something that had been previously said about his brethren and mother. Still, I will lay no stress upon this *then*, as Lachmann and Tischendorf have rejected it. It is not in the Vulgate. It was, however, received into the text at a very early period of the Church, and shows that the ancient Christians used to look upon the coming of Mary with her family to the house as the carrying out of that plan of theirs, which was described in the 21st verse. Nor is the *then* necessary to prove the connexion between the two verses. That connexion lies in the story itself. In ver. 20 we are told that the Lord found Himself in a crowded house. In ver. 21 we are told that his friends went out to lay hold of Him—of course *while* He is in that crowded house; for it is distinctly said that they went out *on having heard* of his being in such a crowd. In ver. 31 we learn that his friends, now specified as his brethren and mother, really come to the crowded house, and actually find Him there. I cannot see how, without violating the truth of history, we can come to any other conclusion than that his brethren and mother came *to lay hold on Him*.

No doubt Mary was a pious God-fearing Israelitish woman, but it ought to be borne in mind that her piety was not the ground upon which God chose her to be the mother of the long-promised Seed. That ground lay, not in her mental or spiritual disposition, but solely in her direct descent from David. Even if she had been really sinless, and as pure and godly as the highest of the angels, she would not have been chosen as the mother of the Saviour, had she not been a daughter of the house of David. In a certain sense her piety had nothing at all to do with it; her qualification was exclusively of an outward kind. Of course, she required to be a believing, God-seeking woman, but the *degree* of piety and spiritual life which she had attained was another matter. With all her qualifications she might have been a woman with great defects. In the

genealogy of our Lord we find two maternal ancestors who, no doubt, believed in God and his promises, but at the same time were known as sinners. We are apt to think that those whom God chose to be the ancestors of the great Messiah, and the eminent bearers of his covenant promises, must have been spiritually gifted in an extraordinary degree. No doubt there were some such amongst them, but many of them, too, were men of very ordinary spiritual endowments. Take Isaac, for instance, a man who could prefer Esau to Jacob, because "he did eat of his venison." Or take Judah, who, but for God's providential interference, would have caused Joseph's death. And so we find the very mother of the Messiah in an act of foolish anxiety and unbelief. God's ways are not ours, nor are his thoughts ours. He desires us to know that his Son did not receive his purity and godliness from our nature, but that we are to receive our purity and godliness from his.

D. D.

OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS; OR, METHODS TO DO GOOD.

BY THE EDITOR.

IV.—OUR CHIEF END—THE GOOD OF MAN.

I HAVE somewhere read the story of a man—if he was worthy of the name—who, though possessing large stores of food, kept them concealed amid the horrors of a famine; shut up, while hundreds of unhappy creatures were perishing at his door. He heard the wail of children crying for bread when their mothers had none to give them; he heard the loud clamour of the maddened multitude; he saw women with infants on their withered bosoms fall fainting in the street; he saw gaunt and famished men fiercely fighting over a bone, like hungry dogs; and while to such as in sepulchral tones, with hollow eye and sunken cheek, implored his pity, he replied, "Alas! I have nothing to bestow," this wretch was calculating the wealth—the cursed, filthy lucre—he would gain by opening his stores, when prices and the famine were at their highest. His crime against humanity, not to say religion, was terrible; and not less terrible its punishment—the wages of his sin, death in a most appalling form. In some way or other, the secret of his well-stocked granaries and cruel selfishness became known; and instead of rushing for food, famishing as they were, the people rose, as one man, for vengeance—forgetting their hunger to wreak their fury on this monster. Their first impulse was to tear him in pieces; limb from limb. They took a calmer, deeper, more terrible revenge. He had refused them bread. They would place him where there was bread enough, and to spare—not, however, to gratify his eyes and appetite, to appease the pangs of hunger, and, returning good for evil, illustrate the blessed rule, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; and in so doing thou wilt heap coals of fire upon his head." Having carried him to one of his own storehouses, with food in abundance on every side, within an inch of his fingers stretched to the full, there they left him, nailed to the floor—bread, bread everywhere, but not a bit to eat—dooming him to pine away amid unavailing cries, and die of famine in the midst of plenty. A tragedy indeed!—and a terrible illustration of the law of nature, and what to a certain extent is also the law of every human government, this, namely, an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth; hunger for hunger; and life for life.

This man's crime may have deserved severe punishment at the hands of society. I do not say it did not, for in such circumstances who would listen to the plea, Have not I a right to do what I will with my own? But without entering on that point, and to deal with the case simply on the principles of Christianity, what course would she have dictated? Not certainly that, nor any such, terrible and tragic revenge. No other course, indeed, but such as Jesus Christ, her founder and our pattern, would himself have taken. If any man, he says, would be my disciple, let him take up his cross, deny himself daily, and follow me; a rule which resolves itself into this—Speak as Christ, had he been in our circumstances, would have spoken; feel as he would have felt; act as he would have acted. Now, had Nazareth in his day been the town where this famine raged, and where with others he and Mary had seen neighbours die of want, and had themselves felt the pinch of hunger, does any one suppose that when the wild mob, yelling for vengeance, rushed along the street to wreak it on the author of their calamities, that Jesus would have thrown himself into the throng—to head them, or even as a mere spectator of such vengeance, to stand by, and, without a look of pity or a word of remonstrance, see the wretched man fastened to the floor in sight but out of reach of bread? When I fancy Nazareth the place of such sufferings and such a tragedy, I fancy that I see him leave his workshop, and hurry to the scene. Though foreseeing the time when he himself shall be condemned to a death as cruel, and not one voice to say, Crucify him not, yet in my fancy he presses to the front to place himself between the clamorous, famished, frantic, furious multitude and the pale, crouching, trembling, speechless victim of their vengeance; and there, to my eye, calm and majestic, as he stood one night amid the raging waves of Galilee, he rebukes the murderous passions of the multitude, saying, Peace, be still—Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Weeping the loss of Lazarus, Mary's first words to Jesus were, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died: nor had that man had Christ been there—or Christianity been there. For though nature, fallen and unrenewed nature,

hates her enemies, and, thirsting for vengeance, would drag them from the horns of the altar, Christianity embraces the bitterest foe in the arms of brotherhood. Present in a scene where there were ample stores and a man, wretch and monster though he was, famishing of hunger, she would have lifted in her hand the cross radiant with the love of God and red with the blood of Him who came not to kill his enemies but be killed for them, to ask, as she protested against this terrible retaliation, "Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother in need, and shutteth his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

Besides the glory of God, another grand End for which we should live, as this, and many other passages, and I may say all Scripture, teaches, is the good of others. An end this which we shall be the better able to keep in view, and reach, by forming a correct and sufficiently large idea of what is meant by the term *brother*, as employed by our Lord and his apostles. Now, when our Lord was, on one occasion, addressing the people, some hearer on the outskirts of the crowd interrupted him, to say, "Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee!" As when the lilies bloomed at his feet; or a little bird, free of care, sat sweetly singing on a bending spray; or a sower, girt with sheet, paced the furrows of a neighbouring field, flinging the corn broadcast from his hand; or the valley stood below, with two houses by its brawling stream, one a ruin on a bank of sand, the other weather-beaten and grey with age, yet firmly planted on a rock whose sides the flood was vainly chafing—so here our Lord seized the opportunity this interruption offered to teach an important truth. To the man's appeal and the people's astonishment, Jesus returns this memorable answer, "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?" adding, as he stretches forth his hand and points to his disciples, "Behold my mother and my brethren; for whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother!" Was our Lord a stranger to filial or fraternal affection that he spoke what seems to slight the dearest relationships; and on another occasion, addressed his mother not by that endearing term, but irreverent and unrespectful-like, said, Woman, my hour is not yet come? By no means—as his life's last, dark, closing hours bear witness. It is said that the ruling passion is strong in death—hence the dying scholar has been heard muttering classic odes in place of David's psalms; hence the old soldier has fancied himself once more on the field of battle, and put forth his remaining strength, ere he sank back in death on his pillow, to raise a feeble arm, and wave a swordless hand, and, startling the onlookers, thunder out the charge; and hence also, when death had struck him from the helm, the last words of the statesman, ere he sank, have been of the fortunes of his country. And if the ruling passion be strong in death, I am willing that our Lord should be judged by this test. When that alabaster box was broken, what precious spikenard breathed forth to fill the Church and world with its fragrance? Judged by this test, never mother had a more tender son than our Lord; his last, loving, living looks were turned on Mary, and he would seem amid the agony of the cross to have forgotten his own sufferings in sympathy with hers.

Understood aright, our Lord's words do not weaken our household ties. Their purpose was not to undervalue the relationships of nature, but to exalt and magnify those of grace; to teach us that Jesus Christ regards the humblest, poorest, feeblest saint as a brother or a sister—more still, as dear to his heart as his own mother. And this relationship which, by faith, unites him and his believing people in such close and tender and holy fellowship, so unites them to each other that in whatever circumstances they meet, by signs secret to the uninitiated and outer world, they recognise in each other the character and the claims of brethren. His skin may have a hue different from mine; bred for the market, he may be bought and sold like a cattle-beast; he may be marked with the brand, loaded with the fetters, lashed with the whip, crushed with the sufferings of a slave; but if, with faith in Jesus, he lift his manacled hands and streaming eyes to that heaven where bondsmen are free, and, robed and throned, they stand before the throne of God, and share in the glory of his Son, slave though he be, sold though he be, trodden in the dust though he be, he and I are brothers. With the same God for our Father, the same Saviour for our Elder Brother, the same Spirit for our heavenly Comforter, one cross for the anchor of our hope, one Bible for our guide-book, one heaven for our everlasting home, the Gospel tells me to knock off a brother's fetters,—to loose him and let him go. No tie is so endearing and enduring as that of a common love to Christ: and so by that I may be bound in closer fellowship to a man living in the other end of the world than to my next-door neighbour, to foreigners than to fellow-countrymen, to the black man than to his white proprietor and cruel oppressor. And thus, in yonder fields, where the negro man bleeds under his master's lash, or the negro mother weeps, vainly seeking to protect a daughter from brutal violence, I may witness the scene that set Moses on fire, when he saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, and smiting the Egyptian buried him in the sand. Hence in living not only for the glory of God, but for the good of others, we are, because they are brethren in Christ, to regard those who are of the household of the faith as having the first claim on our attention and sympathy, on our help and charity, on our prayers and pity. Who hurts them hurts, and who helps them helps Christ himself. Inasmuch, He says, as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto me!

But though the people and saints of God have the first, they have by no means the only claim on our good offices. All mankind are bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. Unhappily buried with us in the ruins of the fall, but also mercifully embraced in the covenant of salvation, those against whom equally with us Justice closed the gates of Eden, but to whom equally with us Mercy opened the door of heaven, the lowest savage that roams his forest may address us saying, "Am not I a brother?" nay, the vilest creature that nightly prowls the streets for prey, "Am not

I a sister?" And—for piety toward God is the true parent of pity toward man—if imbued with the love and spirit of Jesus, the sight of a fellow-creature suffering, and by the mouth of every wound imploring help, transforms me into a good Samaritan. Nature, as well as grace, has her claims; and they most adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour whose benevolence, irrespective of creed, colour, country, or even character, rises like the sun, and falls like the sunshine upon all. When a French frigate, pierced by our well-directed, crashing shot, settled down into the sea and left her survivors to struggle with death among the waves, it gave occasion to one of those heroic incidents that shed a gleam of light on the horrors of war. The men who had sunk her, and had other ships yet to fight, threw themselves into their boats; and, heedless of the battle that thundered over and the shot that fell around them, pulled for the drowning, and with the very arms that had wrought the deadly guns plucked their enemies from a watery grave. Nature made her voice heard above the roar of cannon. What was it to our rough but kindly seamen that the head they pulled for belonged to a foe, and a Frenchman? Frenchman and foe, it was a fellow-creature perishing. And in the presence of such a spectacle we should blush for the Christianity of a man who, with the sight of suffering before his eyes and the power to relieve it in his hands, leaves any fellow-creature to suffer; passing by on the other side. He may be robed in the habits of a priest, he may fill the office of a Levite, but with God's showers and sunshine falling alike on the evil and good, and with God's Son hung on the bloody cross for the chief of sinners, to such a man I may well apply the question, "How dwelleth the love of God in him?"

Now, the wants and woes of the world present abundant opportunities of living for the good of others. Speaking only of the poor, The poor, said our Lord, ye have always with you; and, apart from the numerous, too numerous cases of poverty that result from vice or improvidence, many have a hard struggle to live—to keep body and soul together. I have known some come to church on Sabbath without having broken their fast; I have known mothers sing their infants asleep that they might forget their hunger in its sweet oblivion; I have found old age shivering by a cold, black hearth; I have seen an emaciated form lift its skinny arm and shake its thin grey locks to say, when I spoke of Jesus, "I am cold and hungry, nor can think of aught else." This was sad: but, alas! many from year's end to year's end, especially in the dark, squalid quarters of large cities, have a constant struggle for the bare necessaries of life. Objects of sympathy more than of censure, they are sorely tempted to forget the great question, "What shall I do to be saved?" in these—suggested by hunger, squalid rags, and empty cupboards—"What shall I eat, what shall I drink, wherewithal shall I be clothed?" To relieve such poverty alleviates suffering; but more, and in the light of eternity better still, rolls away the stone that shuts up the grave of a soul, and stands, like that at the mouth of Lazarus's tomb, between the living and dead. Nor, as I have seen with my own eyes in these abodes, is bread that perisheth the only, or the greatest want. How many Bibles stand in pawnbrokers' windows?—they who for bread have parted with the Word of Life, excusing themselves almost in the language of Esau, when, addressing one who took unbrotherly advantage of his wants to buy his birthright for a mess of pottage, the hungry hunter said, "Behold, I am at the point to die, and what profit shall this birthright be to me?"

But thousands, millions of our fellow-creatures present us with opportunities of living for their good in matters of yet higher moment. In heathen, in some so-called Christian lands, what multitudes are perishing for want of the Word and Bread of Life? Nor is their case the better, but the worse, that they are insensible to their needs—unlike the hungry man who works for bread, begs for it, will even steal for it, ay, sometimes murder for it. Their miseries, if not their mouths cry, Come over and help us! And with our prayers contributing our money in the shape of Bibles and of teachers,—in answer to this appeal, ready, while we sit at home at ease, to encounter all dangers, and even death itself,—we should be happy, had we millions, to spend them in a cause for which the Son of God spent his life, and poured out his life's blood on Calvary.

Now in aiming at the good of others as one grand end of life, we are to pursue it in an unselfish, generous, brotherly way,—allowing our benevolence neither to be tied down by the conventional rules of the world, nor tainted by its commercial spirit. Our Lord puts this strongly, or rather most strikingly, where He says, "When thou makest a feast, or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee: but when thou makest a feast call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." But who ever saw such a feast? The poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind,—these we receive at the door where they knock with timid hand, and, in some small coin, in bread, or broken victuals, receive their alms. But who invites them further; ushers them in; receives them as welcome guests into the house, where, treated with frank, respectful kindness, they find a seat at his table, and servants to stand at their back?

No doubt the Church of Rome, as children play at feasts or mimic fights, plays at this thing. I have seen the Pope, a mere play-actor, entertaining pilgrims at his table, where, divested of triple crown and gorgeous robes, he gave each with his own jewelled hand a piece of bread and a cup of wine. The ceremony is performed once a year, and is nothing but a drama—the time, Holy Week; the stage, St. Peter's; the actors, the Pope and pilgrims; and the spectators a brilliant assembly—monarchs, princes, cardinals, priests of all ranks, monks of all colours, and a swaying, fashionable crowd met to see him who claims the right to put his foot on the neck of kings, go through a mockery of Christian lowliness and hospitality. But, while the Pope may be said to carry out our Lord's instructions in empty mockery, who does it in reality? Who would, would astonish society more than by a

crime. Let a man invite such guests to dinner, and how people would stop, and stare, and gape with wonder at the stream of poverty creeping along and pouring in at his open door—the lame hobbling on crutches, the blind led by dog or little child, the widow clad in rusty weeds, the poor outcast with rags on her back and at her bosom a shrivelled infant, children, shivering and shoeless, from streets their haunt by day, from dingy dens and cellars their cold homes by night! Not wondered at only, and supposed by many to be mad, the man who dare do this, who would render a literal obedience to Christ's command, might prepare for no measured censure—people saying, this was to turn the world upside down; to spoil the poor; to inflate them with notions unbefitting their condition; to destroy the lines of demarcation which God in his providence had drawn between the different classes of society. What a talk such a feast would make?—how many, more ready to tread the poor down in the dust than raise them out of it, would condemn it as a piece of mischievous ostentation, the empty parade of charity!

Nevertheless, why should it not be tried? It is said of the excellent Lord Chief Justice Hale, that he frequently invited his poor neighbours to dinner, and made them sit at table with himself. If any of them were sick, so that they could not come, he would send provisions to them warm from his own table. He did not confine his bounties to the poor of his own parish, but diffused supplies to the neighbouring parishes as occasion required. He always treated the old, the needy, and the sick, with the tenderness and familiarity that became one who considered they were of the same nature with himself, and were reduced to no other necessities but such as he himself might be brought to. Common beggars he considered in another view. If any of these met him in his walks, or came to his door, he would ask such as were capable of working, why they went about so idly? If they answered that it was because they could not get employment, he would send them to some field, to gather all the stones in it, and lay them in a heap; and then paid them liberally for their trouble. This being done, he used to send his carts, and cause the stones to be carried to such places of the highway as needed repair.

As to turning the world upside down, that charge was brought against the apostles; and, as were true of a pyramid pitched by earthquake or other convulsion of nature on its apex, the world, which sin has set wrong, will never be right till things are turned upside down—till Eternity takes the place of time, the soul of the body, the Saviour of sin, self-denial of self-indulgence, and the despised and neglected poor are treated as brothers—neighbours whom we are to love as we love ourselves, or rather whom we are to love as Christ loved us.

Then again as to ostentation, while all care should be taken that our good is not evil-spoken of, we are not to cease to do good because it may be so. Conscious that it is only sovereign grace which makes them differ from others, none are less likely to make a parade of their good works than God's people. Indeed, I have known some of these run into the opposite extreme—forgetting that the light which flashes over the sea from lighthouse tower on rugged headland or sunken rock, is not kindled to be hid, but seen. A candle, as our Lord says, is set on a candlestick, not under a bushel, that it may light the house; and, however singular our conduct may appear to the world, or whatever occasion it may afford scoffers to sneer, the Christian should never allow himself to be deterred from obeying his Master's behests, following in his Leader's steps, and so making his light to shine that, not he, but his Father in heaven, may be glorified.

It would certainly look singular, while others dole out their charity at the door, or send it by servants or societies to the homes of the poor, were we to invite them into ours. But one of the characteristics of disciples is, that they are a *peculiar* people, and Jesus, be it remembered, taught his followers that they ought to do many things not done by others—saying, "What do ye more than others?"—saying, "Except your righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of Heaven." By all means avoid whatever could countenance vice or encourage improvidence; but let there be more interchange of personal kindness between the rich and poor. I am sure that the sight of worn-out labour, sad and humble widowhood, helpless orphans, and such objects, victims of poverty and objects of pity, as our Lord recommends, sitting all happy at our table, with gratitude burning in their hearts and beaming in their faces, would afford us a purer satisfaction than the highest company we ever entertained. Verily we should have our reward.

True, it may be said, we do this, but after another fashion—through workhouses, hospitals, houses of refuge, asylums, ragged schools, and other such benevolent institutions. Yet these, which form part of the debt the world owes to Christianity, are but an imperfect method of expressing the love which she inculcates, of doing in fullest measure good to others. This object cannot be accomplished but by the direct intercourse of personal visits—those we pay to the poor in their dwellings, or, as our Lord recommends, those they pay to us in ours. It is less the amount given than the way of giving it, that sweetens the cup of poverty and reconciles the pensioners of our bounty to their lot. There are delicate perfumes that owe their fragrance to elements so volatile and etherial, that much of their virtue is lost when they are poured from one vessel to another. So it is with charity, the pleasure it yields, and the gratitude it awakens. Those kind looks and tones which bespeak the feelings of the heart, you cannot transmit with the goods or gold, the meat or messages, which you send through the medium of servants or societies, or any second party whatever. As far as possible, therefore, every one should be the almoner of his own charities, and carry the sunbeams of his presence into the homes of the poor.

Let me remark further, that I fear we have not faith enough in the literal sense of many of our Lord's injunctions, as is touchingly illustrated by the following fact:—Two boys, brothers, had fallen out, and in the heat and whirlwind of his passion the elder struck the younger on the cheek. Brave as steel and quick

as lightning, the other raised his arm to return the blow; but ere it fell, he remembered how he had read that morning by his mother's knee these words, "When one smites thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also." No sophist, but a simple child who took Christ's words in their plain and ordinary sense, he drops his arm, and turning on his brother eyes where tears of forgiveness had quenched the flash of anger, he offered the other cheek for a second blow. It was the other's turn to weep now. Surprised, subdued, melted, he fell on his brother's neck; and, kissing him, acknowledged his offence and implored forgiveness. And there, locked in fond embraces, the two boys stood a living proof of this, that our Lord's highest and apparently most impracticable injunctions admit of a more literal obedience than any give them, and than any almost suppose it possible to give them.

Our Lord himself teaches us by his own example how we are to live for others, and reach this one grand end of life. He laid down his life for us, nor are we to shrink from doing the same for others. The world has made her boast of men who, for suffering kindred and bleeding country, have risked and even lost their lives. And indeed there are few worthy of the name of men who, did they see a fellow-creature sending forth wild shrieks and stretching out suppliant hands from the window of a blazing house, would not shake off such as sought to detain them, and bursting open the door, rush in to save another's life at the peril of their own. And when the ship, hurled by a tempest on the foaming reef, lies off shore with the waves sweeping her deck, and her crew, lashed to the masts or hanging on by the shrouds, implore help in cries heard above the roar of breakers, are not brave men found to volunteer for the rescue, and throw themselves into the life-boat; risking their own lives to save the lives of others? But thus to peril life and to lay it down, as he does who takes another's place on the fatal drop, are different, very different things. I will find you a thousand men who will do the first for one you will find to do the second. Yet this is that which the example of Christ may call us to do for the good of others. Hereby, says the apostle, know we the love of God because he laid down his life for us; not staked it, nor even lost it, but laid it down. And the sacrifice which the good of others may require at our hands, is not only to follow Jesus in those walks where he went about continually doing good, but follow him when he took his way to Calvary, following him to death. For the apostle does not conclude that we should part merely with our money, or luxuries, or ease, or comforts for the good of others, but with that which the devil—speaking truth for once—pronounced more precious than them all, saying, Skin for skin, all that a man hath will he give for his life. Because, says the apostle, speaking of our Lord, He laid down his life for us, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Nor is our beneficence, the good we attempt to do to others, to be confined to limits any narrower than God's. It is when we bless them that curse us, and love them that hate us, and pray for them who despitefully use us, that we present the truest image of God, and most clearly prove ourselves to be the children of our Father which is in heaven. He makes his sun to shine upon the evil and the good, and his rain to fall upon the just and unjust. But not because he could not do otherwise. Such miracles as that which he wrought on the fleece that was saturated with dew when the ground about it was dry, and on the following night lay dry on grass sown with pearls or sparkling with diamonds in the morning sun, he could repeat on all our fields—so turning the face of nature into a broad, patent mirror of his own secret and unsearchable mind, that we could tell, by the barrenness or fertility of a farm, whether its tenant was, or was not, a man of God. As I have seen a gardener play the water of his engine on one tree and turn it away from another, God, when he drives his cloudy chariot across the heavens, could so guide its motions and dispense its treasures, as to pour refreshing showers on the fields of one man while those of his neighbour were left to wither and die; and he could still dispense the sunbeams which ripen our fruits and fill our barns, with a hand as powerful but as partial, as on the day when Goshen lay smiling in sunlight, and the neighbouring land of Egypt was palled in darkness that might be felt. But who surveys a smiling valley from the summit of a hill sees all its fields alike robed in verdure or waving with golden harvests—God making no distinction between saints and sinners, but distributing his treasures of shower and sunshine equally to both. And thus in the features of the landscape not less than in the pages of the Bible, in the common providence as well as in the inspired precepts of God, we learn to embrace all men in the arms of Christian affection, and, without excluding even our bitterest enemies, to do them good as we have opportunity. This, the peculiar glory of Christianity and grand lesson of the Cross, shines bright in every sunbeam, and sounds in every falling shower.

ON THE LOSS OF FRIENDS.

BY THE REV. A. W. THOROLD, M.A.

THERE are many ways of losing friends. When they go to a distance, and we cannot reach them, we soon discover that the most profuse letter-writing is not like once seeing them face to face. The features grow misty in the haze of distance. Where there are fewer objects in common, there are fewer sympathies. We presently reconcile ourselves to circumstances; we see that in this world we cannot have everything our own way. It is for the happiness of both of us that we soon cease to be necessary to each other, and so we grow fresh flowers in the heart.

Or we may lose them through a momentary indis-

creetness we would give anything to recall, or through a wretched misunderstanding which ten manly words, frankly and brightly spoken, would set right for ever. But the opportunity has not come, and the flaw grows into the tree, and a slight estrangement hardens into the alienation of a life. For Time can aggravate as well as heal. Men do not always become more willing to explain things as they grow older. If there were more peace-makers, perhaps there would be more reconciliations; but we all shrink too selfishly, too timidly, from the delicate and difficult task of mediating: and thus warm-hearted but proud men, who would welcome the least excuse for shaking hands over the past, never find it, and go down to the grave with a dull weight on their heart.

But that "loss of friends" on which I would write now is the saddest, for it is irremediable; the commonest, for it is the lot of all in turn; the most abiding, for the Resurrection seems far away. It is the loss by death, which long ago made the army of the dead outnumber the army of the living, and which is ever impoverishing us with a deeper poverty.

De Tocqueville classifies human miseries in the order of sickness, death, and doubt. But while doubt may be settled by conviction, and sickness succeeded by health, the dead never come back to tell us the secrets of the other world, or to say that they love us still.

Every schoolboy remembers the heathen song, in which death is said to strike "æquo pede" the hovels of the poor and the towers of kings. Yet though all lose, the amount of the loss varies. Age, character, circumstances mark us separately with their own pain-lines. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness." We mourn, as well as die, alone. And though there is no universal measuring-line for the waters of grief, yet, if we can find a word that shall define with tolerable exactness the precise value of the relationships of life, we shall fit a key to the real nature of the sorrow. The link between husbands and wives is that of identity. They are one flesh and one spirit. That between parents and children, or brothers and sisters, is one of affinity. They are one blood, they may or may not be of one spirit. That between friends and friends is one of sympathy: they are one spirit.

In married life there are all possible varieties of affection and devotedness, represented in their extremes by the distance between the poles. Where marriage is not much more than a convenient arrangement for the contracting parties, there is not likely to be that fusion of soul into soul which is the true ideal of Christian wedlock. But where, since the day that they were pronounced man and wife together, the life of the man and the maid has been an ever closer interlacing of joys and sympathies, an ever-growing identity of interests, and duties, and tastes; where, whether wisely or unwisely, the one has been to the other, as Hector to Andromache, its entire satisfaction and society, and counsellor and friend; the parting, when it comes, divides one life rather than separates two; the void that it leaves, gapes with a fissure that knows no filling. The soft familiar tread, the rustle of the gown, the music of the bright greeting, the half-timid tap at the study door, the dear and natural caress that for hours of monotonous labour or weary vexation was the desired reward; the sunny face opposite you at breakfast, the cheek which glowed with an irrepressible joy when others praised you, the feet that ran so nimbly to meet you in the distance, the full and tender heart which never felt shame though others detected its love—they are gone, and passed away, and if you live an hundred years can never come back just as they were. There is no one now to cheer you up in the evening. The cares of life are suddenly doubled, for the worries that were kept from you before meet you now. The children are ill, and you must nurse them. The servants leave, and the task of finding others devolves on you. You may have more money now, but she who shared your poverty cannot share your wealth; and you hardly care for it. If the promotion comes about which in early married days you spoke of when alone, merrily and hopefully, your heart sinks at the thought, that the one person in all the world is gone, who would most have rejoiced to hear of it from you, and to whom you would have most rejoiced to tell it. When a wife dies, the husband feels the light gone out of his home, the taste out of his enjoyments, the colour out of his landscape. Again and again he has to say to himself, with Robert Hall, "I did not complain, did I? I won't complain." When a husband dies, the oak is felled to which the tender vine loved to cling. They fall, indeed, together; and the delicate tendrils still clasp the prostrate tree; but the plant, though still it lives, no longer shoots itself into the warmth and blue of the sky; for months and years it grows sadly and humbly on the ground.

When you lose a child you lose part of yourself. No doubt the age makes a difference. The longer we have loved, the more we lose in the parting, and the promise of opening years gives an additional keenness to the pain. Yet there is no reasoning ourselves out of our deep sadness, when we put away the little waxen body in its white coffin, and give the last kiss to the cold marble brow, and wonder at the majesty of death in its face, and comfort ourselves with the thought that it is safe in the Shepherd's arms, and then shut it up, to see it no more till we are dead ourselves. How often we wake, for nights and nights after, as if the sharp wailing cry we knew so well called us to its side. When the first darkness glooms over the little grave, and the rain falls, or the snow, it is hard to sleep: it is as though the rain wetted *it*, or the snow chilled *it*, though well we know that no harm can reach it in the sunny land where, knowing what we cannot know, seeing what we cannot see, and loving as we cannot love, it sings among the angels of God. When we come across its toys in the nursery, or put away its little clothes, (it is best to do these things at once,) when, as we walk in the garden, we see the small wheelbarrow, just where the child left it, or the little spade, grasped by tiny hands that will never grasp it again, the loss comes back, the pain comes back; in no distrust of God, in no rebelliousness about the child, but in the genuine emotion of a nature, which mourns because it loves, the sad mother,

careful that no one sees her, sits down and has a hearty cry.

When a brother or sister dies, a companion is gone with whom you shared the freshest hours of life; a counsellor is gone, whom you could consult about things you could talk over with no one else. If you wanted to marry, or had got into a boyish scrape, or a parent was displeased, or some secret was to be told which you were too shy to tell yourself, the one person you instantly thought of was the playmate of your childhood, and the counsellor of your inmost soul. Your wife, perhaps, never heard your name until the year when she consented to be yours. Much as we may love our parents, there are trifles with which we cannot trouble them, wishes we cannot put to them, troubles we cannot unburden to them, in a dutifulness which makes us shrink from vexing them, in that proper reserve which is inseparable from filial respect. Until our riper years friendship has no real hold on us. In this respect, the boy is not the father of the man. Our home ties are our real ties until we are fledged, and go out into the world to make them for ourselves. Though in a large family the children will mate in sets of their own, and the tie of blood is not always the tie of sympathy; yet when brothers and sisters are really united, there is no union save one nearer and dearer. When one goes down to the grave, the others hunger after him with a sad and pining love. When our parents die, it is as if the roof over our head was suddenly uncovered, for the winds of heaven to blow down on us; as if the strong arm on which we have leaned was snapped asunder, and we were roughly told to walk alone. Then (if our parents loved us, as some parents can love), the mind that most thoroughly understood us, the heart that was most entirely wrapped up in us, the lips that most continually spoke of us, the soul that so often prayed for us, the face that we first learned to recognise, the voice we first grew to obey, the hand that we first tried to grasp, the knee that we first learned to climb, the cheek we first wished to kiss, are gone, and will never come back. We may be in our prime, and for years past have been bearing the burden of our own life, and the burden of other lives; yet the thought that our father and mother are really gone, and that we can no longer consult them in our difficulties, nor confide to them our secrets, nor share with them our joys, nor lavish on them our love, makes the heart sad with a deep and abiding sadness, unless it has grown old in a premature decay. When a friend dies, whom neither early association, nor a tie of blood, nor mere convenience has joined to us, but who, suddenly crossing our path, has linked his arm within ours, and we have held him fast, through the strong force of instinctive affection, it is like the cutting off of a limb or the choking of an artery. This is not the place to define friendship, but it is a simple matter of experience that the tie of sympathy is nearer than the tie of blood. When there is no jealousy to sever us, and no money to stir up strife; where we love, not because we ought, but because we cannot help it; where a mutual attraction brings us together, and the cause that makes us one keeps us one, there is no limiting the intimacy of intercourse, and no transgressing the bounds of prudence; we do not fear reaction, we do not mistrust silence; and when the friend is gone, with whom we had shared the cares and the joys of a lifetime, the heart seems to ossify into a sudden numbness; for a short and foolish moment we say we will shut our door in the face of the whole world.

If the loss of friends, coming to all in turn, is a loss that all can appreciate, in natures cast in the same mould, it strikes the same chords and evokes the same feelings. On each of the losses we have been thinking over a cloud of regret settles, which reason has no power to expel.

Death with the young seems always premature. Virgil's lament over Marcellus is but the echo of the world's wailing over young lives. The question is always the same. "Why should they leave us so soon?"

As to the old, it is easy, yet somewhat cold, to argue that we have only a certain time to be here; that we each take our turn at the table of life, and when our years are over, we rise to vacate for others the place that was vacated for ourselves. No doubt there is a kind of consolation in the fact that ours is a common lot; and that there is no sense of injustice to make pain keener, or to move rebellious thoughts against that Lord of Life and Death, who in bringing down to the grave, and in bringing up, hath no respect of persons. Nevertheless, death to those who die is always sudden, to those who mourn is always premature. When we close a parent's eyes, we do not usually comfort ourselves with the thought that they are old, and we have had enough of them, though it is indeed a cause of thankfulness if they have been spared to us for long. Nay, in some natures, the passionateness of affection bursts out in a tropical growth, that counts days for years. There have been wives, whose memories of married life are limited to the weeks of a honeymoon, yet who love their dead husbands as with a love of a lifetime.

Tennyson has remarked that if the report were to reach him that the friend, whom he was mourning, had arrived: and he should come out of the ship with the other passengers, and strike hands with him, and "ask a thousand things of home," he would "not feel it to be strange." The reason of it lies in this, that through our constant thinking of the dead, they are ever with us in spirit if not in person: in the exquisite thought of A. K. H. B., they never grow older, and never younger, the little girl is always young, the gray hairs of our parents are always gray; and we so completely realise their existence in another world, though that world is apart from ours, that if they appeared in the body, just as when they left us, it would be but as waking out of a dream, or coming off a journey.

Thank God, though death may part bodies, it cannot altogether part souls.

Another feature in our mourning for the dead is a power, which seems specially given at that time, for shedding out of the memory all that was imperfect, or sinful, or foolish in them, and recollecting them only at their best. There may, indeed, be a certain irra-

tionalness about it, for death cannot really alter anything; yet it is very beautiful, as indicating a merciful purpose in God, and no one need find fault with it unless it is carried beyond the bounds of truth, for it helps one to make death less terrible, and the parting less bitter.

There is also in some instances an analogy of a real kind between the more than mortal beauty that steals over the features, shortly after death, and the subdued chastened patience of the believer just before he departs to go to be with Christ. We all know that the majesty of the face in death arises from physical causes: and there is a stolid ignorance, in which some unhappy souls pass away to their Judge, which may be too easily mistaken for the Peace of Christ. Yet, where there is a well-grounded hope of a joyful resurrection, the grand and sweet calmness of the sleeping clay helps us to anticipate the time when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality. When the last words on the dying lips tremble joyfully at the name of the Saviour, when the last faint smile seems illumined with the sight of Him in Whose presence is life, we are more reconciled to our own loss when we feel it to be their gain. How can we wish to keep them, when the message has come, "The Master is come and calleth for thee"?

> "'Tis better to have loved and lost,
> Than never to have loved at all."

Who does not feel this? We must be richer and better and happier for having been loved, if the true wealth of man is in the heart. What we have enjoyed already may be disturbed and interrupted, yet nothing can rob the past of its joy. Nothing can make us unlive the happy golden years, when we walked side by side with those who are now in their graves. Nay, if we could have looked forward, would we have refused our marriage vows because in the course of years one would be taken and the other left? would we have preferred to go through the world childless, because the sadness of a little grave may for a moment seem worse than the stillness of an empty nursery? Would we have no joys in life, lest haply we lose them? Shall we refuse to love, because in front of us is the tomb? No, no! The heart says no. The reason says no. The Bible says no. If we had no memory, and so could not recall the happiness of the past, if we had no hope, and could not people the future with the blessed joys that are to come: if our love be so thin and selfish, that when our friends cease to be of use to us we can forget them: if our faith is so feeble, that we cannot believe how those that sleep in Jesus God will bring with Him: then let us live the life of beasts, not of God's redeemed, immortal creatures—let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. But if we are Christians we shall take life as God ordains it, drink the cup as He mixes it, taste joy when He permits it, accept sorrow when He ordains it, and remembering that here we have no continuing city, and that our rest is to come, wait for our "gathering together unto Him."

Again, if a wish could bring them back, could we have the heart to wish it, lonely and helpless though we be? Possibly, it might not always be safe to give us the chance of it. Does the sick daughter never wish for one more glimpse of that wise and tender parent, who was father and mother in one? That little bright-haired girl, that died just when she was taking her mother's place, and filling her father's heart with a devouring love—is he so always at his best, that he can cheerfully consent to leave her in Paradise with her mother and her Lord? Does the wife never wish for her husband back, just one half-hour, to consult him about the children, to tell him how she loves him, loves him, loves him, with a love that grows rather than decays, how long the time seems in front of her, before she will be summoned to join him at home? And of our friends do not we sometimes say—"Oh, if he were but here, talking with me over the fire, and strengthening my heart with calm and manly advice! But he rests far away among the gray mountains, and I shall never see him again, till others mourn for me."

Still, let them go, let them go. Do not lay hold of their garments to keep them down on earth, but let them mount to their crown. Let your child have its blessed freedom from the soils and stains of wilful sin. Let your parents, whose hoary head was their crown of glory, have the rest they earned in the heat and burden of the day. Do not indeed let them go because you cannot help yourself. That would be no sacrifice at all. Let them go, because the Lord, who bought them, wishes for them—because when once there the only thing they will wish for is to have us at their side.

"And still they rose a countless throng, in solemn slow array,
And still my heart went with them all upon their heavenward way:
But then I marked another there, bound by some unseen ties,
Who hovered long upon the brink, as though she could not rise.

"There was one, who held her down to earth, and on her garments knelt,
In whose sad eyes an untold depth of speechless anguish dwelt;
'And canst thou, wilt thou leave me thus, mine own beloved one,
And must I seek my widowed home, thus desolate and lone?'

"She veiled her mantle round her head, she did not, could not speak,
For, oh, how strong is human love, the human heart how weak!
But with clasped hands all fervently for strength she seemed to pray,
And fainter grew that passionate grasp, and she soared from earth away."

(*From an unpublished Poem.*)

And here we touch on a part of our subject, which if in one aspect it be commonplace and unnecessary, in another is worth glancing at for the truths it suggests on God's purpose for us, and our attitude towards Him.

To ask why we must lose our friends seems much the same as to ask, why must anyone die? Yet, when one exclaims, "What have I done to deserve this?" and another, "What is the message which God is now sending to me?" not only for the dead in their death, but for the living in their sorrow, is the question a

just one, "Why does a kind God part those, whom He has Himself joined, so long before their time?"

For those who fall asleep in Christ, there can be no need to show that death is gain; while we grieve for them, and even speak of them as if they needed our pity, they are delivered from the evil behind them, they are safe from the evil to come, they see His face, and their joy is full. The Church is part of Christ himself. The Head is no more complete without the body, than the body without the Head; and for every ransomed soul that passes up into glory, there is a *Jubilate* in Heaven. But how is it good for wives to be widows, for children to be orphans, for friends to be desolate? Are not two better than one for the journey of life? Why does God bestow to-day, what He will take away to-morrow?

Now the chief answer to this—an answer, be it observed, which can only be received and comprehended by faith—is that it is "for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

All sorrow has a purifying purpose with it, but bereavement is meant to produce results which perhaps no other grief can bring about in the same way. When with the spirits of the departed we have, so to speak, mounted up into the higher heavens, and looked down on the earth, as men might look at it from the stars, we see it at its exact worth, both in its compensations and its disappointments, not despising it utterly, since it is the place that God has chosen for us, yet colouring it no longer with the old false hues.

Then we see ourselves, as we never saw ourselves before. Just as pain and fatigue and sickness bring out the features of the body in a kind of ghastly sharpness, so in the hour when God is searching us as with candles, we seem able to look in at ourselves, as persons outside look through an open window into a house. The growth of secret faults, such as covetousness, or envy, or pride, a multitude of little failings separately but trifling, yet together eating out our strength with the voracity of parasites, the heart settling quietly down into hasty prayers, easy self-love, scanty self-denial, these things all suddenly stare at us as the lightning flashes into the darkness of a closed room; and some have felt at such times that there is something more woful, more intolerable, even than the death which has changed the current of our life; that sin is the worst kind of sorrow: that to have grown cold towards Jesus Christ can move the stirred heart into a more bitter relenting than the thought of the dead face shut up in its long home, never to smile on us again.

Then, too, we discover God; whether on the one hand with Job we have confessed and served Him, though with a heart of which too much lay fallow, or with others (some, it may be, who shall read this paper) who have not yet learned to call God Father, or to rest on his love, revealed and offered in Christ, as the most precious possession of the soul. Oh! how many owe their first thoughts of God, their first turning towards Him in a kind of benumbed, bewildered dismay, to the hour when the shore of life seemed strewed with the fragments of their shipwrecked happiness, and when there was no heart left to begin the voyage again.

It does not, indeed, follow as a matter of course that we discover God in sorrow. It is only too possible for the heart to harden itself against that Divine Will, which it conceives to be unjust and unkind. God will not work a miracle on our behalf. His own appointed way of bringing us to Himself is by removing the idols that have kept us separate. God offers us Himself, and He can make the heart glad with a deeper, sweeter, safer joy than man can. But if we will not listen to Him when He speaks to us, nor look at Him when He draws near to us, sadly, but surely He suffers us our way: He departs, and we are more alone than ever.

Then we discover his wisdom in ordering all things, and his tenderness, as we never conceived of it before, both in sparing us a multitude of trifling anxieties, which to sensitive hearts so aggravate suffering, and in moving on our behalf the sympathy and the prayers of friends.

Moreover He himself comes close to us as we sit alone, and whispers, "It is I, be not afraid," and "I am the Resurrection and the Life." He sheds a light on his Word that it never possessed before; we do not wander, or doze over it then. And the power of prayer which He pours out upon us seems to change the aspect of life, gives us an hourly access into his immediate presence, makes us feel, even in the midst of our sorrow, that, whatever else has been taken away, we have an abiding and a sufficient Saviour.

Now if we meet bereavement in this way, and receive God as He offers Himself to us, we are not poorer for our losses, we are richer; and though for years to come the traces of that unspeakable misery leave their furrows behind them, the last is better than the first: we say to the Lord, in the words of one of old, "Thou hast kept the best wine until now." Taking our joy less eagerly, we do not spill it. Not expecting as much as once we expected, we are less liable to disappointment. Not wishing for so much as once we wished for, we make God able to trust us with more. If earth is emptier, heaven is fuller. If autumn is nearer winter, we look for the flowers across the snow; and the glimpse of glory that gleamed on us when the curtain opened for our beloved to pass through, has gilded with a blessed summer brightness the short cold days that separate us from the eternal spring.

> And yet God took with me his plan,
> And now for my appointed span
> I think I am a happier man
> For having wed and wept for her.
>
> I would not lose from my past life
> That happy year, that happy wife!
> Yet now I wage no useless strife
> With feelings blithe and debonair.
>
> JEAN INGELOW.

One truth may here be earnestly impressed—that of soberness and self-restraint in sorrow. Let us not selfishly exact too much of others in their sympathy with us. Let us not be blind to the fact that the time will come to ourselves, when time and the loss of friends, and the routine of duty will, through God's mercy, tone down our grief, and move it from the

surface into the foundation. It is not heartless in our children to go back after a time to their play. It is not unfeeling in our friends to speak of other things than the great loss that absorbs us utterly. It is unreasonable to complain if the world at large returns to its own affairs after its dole of pity for us. Nay, it need not be fickleness in ourselves, if through the very laws of our own being we presently cease to feel broken and hopeless, and life seems to have something left to make it worth living.

It does violence to our nature to force it into feeling of any kind, and even if there were nothing wrong and unreal in all fictitious emotion, there is something singularly displeasing in artificial sorrow. Besides, we cannot ultimately resist the bent of moral laws, and none have been more inconsistent in their subsequent conduct, or made themselves more remarkable by the contrast between their first condition and their last, than those who, in the uncontrolled extravagance of their early grief, announced to their friends that they would never smile again. We are so made that a kind of irrepressible elasticity compels us soon to rouse ourselves. The growth of the tree may be checked for a while through the loss of a principal bough; but soon it makes green wood once more. Life could not last, the world could not go on, if mourners were to stay by the grave side, instead of going home manfully to face their duties, and trustfully to expect their consolations. It is a false and injurious sentimentality that refuses to be comforted; and that is the best type of human nature which simply orders itself according to the Divine will, and, taking its place in a world which, if in some things it can never be quite the same again, still has much pleasantness left, enjoys the autumn as well as the spring, and though its May blossoms be over is thankful for its Martinmas summer.

> "The human heart can not sustain
> Prolong'd inalterable pain,
> And not till reason cease to reign
> Will nature want some moments brief
> Of other moods to mix with grief;
> Such, and so hard to be destroy'd
> That vigour, which abhors a void,
> And in the midst of all distress,
> Such nature's need for happiness."
>
> HENRY TAYLOR.

Besides, what injustice it is to those who are gone, what unkindness to those who remain! Do we really believe, that those whom we delight to think of as in the light and goodness of heaven wish us to remain in sackcloth and ashes, while they are in joy and felicity? Has the perfect state made them more selfish than they were here? Are they likely to care more or less about our happiness, now that they love us as with the love of God? If they trusted us before, they will trust us still, even though we do not sorrow as those without hope. If before they did not grudge us other friends than themselves, will they begin to be jealous of us now? If we may judge of others by ourselves, we do not wish our children to be always mourning for us, or that our wives and mothers and friends should feel guilty of forgetting us, if, when the sun breaks out, they draw up the blind to let it shine upon them. A little cell to ourselves in the shrine of the heart is all we ask for: and if actual experience is worth anything in the matter, many a dying wife's last whisper to her husband has been the complete triumph of wife-like unselfishness, and an indication of what our friends desire for us, as they ford the river of Death.

> "Wilt thou remember me when I am gone,
> Further each year from thy vision withdrawn,
> Thou in the sunset, and I in the dawn?
>
> "Wilt thou remember me when thou shalt see
> Daily and nightly encompassing thee
> Hundreds of others, but nothing of me?
>
> "All that I ask is a gem in thine eye
> Sitting and thinking, when no one is by,
> 'Thus looked he on me—thus rung his reply.'"
>
> DEAN ALFORD.

Besides, is the love of those who are left nothing to us? Shall we despise or throw away the treasures still spared to us in kind and affectionate hearts? One is gone, but others remain: and though at first this does not comfort us—though it may be quite true that all our other friends together cannot quite make up for the one whom we have lost, still we should be willing to see what we yet retain, and use it, and be thankful.

Then how it hinders and cramps our usefulness, if we shut ourselves up with our sorrow, and refuse the surest way of healing our own wounds in hastening to heal the wounds of others. "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." Sorrow is sent to teach us sympathy. We should try to comfort others "which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." What a talent for years to come is a sanctified sorrow! But if we will not use it, and persist in hiding it in the earth, we distrust God, and we dishonour Him. If with the heart we believe, with the heart we rebel. If the Christian refuses to give Christ what Christ asks for—the full service of heart and mind and will, —Christ loses much, but the Christian loses more.

There is, indeed, a sense in which the sorrow is to be cherished, not driven away, for it is as an angel of God, and we must hear what it has to say to us.

> "He that lacks time to mourn lacks time to mend.
> Eternity mourns that. 'Tis an ill cure
> For life's worst ills to have no time to feel them.
> Where sorrow's held intrusive, and turned out,
> There wisdom will not enter, nor true power,
> Nor aught that dignifies humanity."
>
> HENRY TAYLOR.

Yet we need not turn it into an idol. And with respect to our dead, though presently we may feel it better to cease speaking much to others about them, and to be content with cherishing them in the solitude of our own memory, there is nothing either unreal, or unsafe, or foolish in testifying by our actions that they still live in our hearts.

I do not quite mean by this, hanging "immortelles" on their tombs, though if it pleases anyone to do it let him do it. We read their letters, written long ago; and perhaps we reproach ourselves for ever having destroyed one in that dear, dear hand. We look at their photographs, for they are better than nothing, and we wish we had had more of them, taken at more frequent intervals, and marking more accurately

the ages and changes of life. We make visits to their graves, not too often, lest the habit become morbid—not too seldom, lest a chance visit shock us with sudden pain. We know *they* are not there; *they* are with the Lord: still part of them is there, and we love the corruptible for the sake of the incorruptible. Oh it is blessed to think how churchyards may be watched over by angels, how the Saviour guards the precious dust of his saints, who are laid to sleep in Him. Each of us has some churchyard, as a holy and consecrated place in his memory; whether by a quiet southern stream, or on a hill-side overlooking a grand landscape, or among grey hills, or within the sound of the tossing sea, or in some great cemetery near the smoke and roar of a city, where those whom we love as our own souls, and whom we should not forget if we lived a thousand years, slumber till Christ's return.

Yet there are better ways than these of keeping our hearts true, and of proving our love, not only to those who are gone, but to their Lord and ours. Are there children to rear? Let us be father and mother in one, with all diligence and tenderness striving to fill the void place, and doing the work for which, however unfit we seem for it, strength most assuredly will come. Are there objects of interest to carry on, duties of Christian love to discharge? Is there a wife left behind who would value your sympathy? Are there duties unfinished which you have leisure and capacity to complete? Here are opportunities of showing the reality of your love to the servant, and the servant's master.

But, best of all, follow your friend as he followed Christ. If our dead could speak to us out of Paradise, and tell us how to give them joy and testify our trueness, would they not be likely to say some such words as these:—

"I am now in the eternal world, and while I look down on the earth where once we dwelt together, I look up in the face of Him, whom before I thought I loved, whom now I adore with rapture unutterable. Do not forget me, but be absorbed in Jesus. If you love me, prove it by loving Him, and O learn the awfulness of life. The bulk of Christian people fritter away heart, and strength, and opportunity on things which here seem to be utter trifles both to angels and saints. Remember the shortness of time, and try to save the lost. There is nothing you can lay your hand to of more value than the saving of a soul. It will not be possible long. And now that I see the King in his beauty, I see, as you cannot see, what loss, what woe it will be to be shut out of his presence. Live for the weight of glory. I am happy, O so happy! but perhaps if I had laboured more diligently—thought less of myself and more of my Saviour, prayed more, tried more, and believed more, I should be happier still. Glory is nearness to Christ, and likeness to Christ, and fulness of Christ: as you glorify Him now, He will glorify you presently."

"One writes that other friends remain,
* * * * *
And common is the common place,
And vacant chaff well meant for grain."
In Memoriam.

Still, what is common-place is mostly true, so true that we are tired of hearing it; and though (as has been remarked already), in the first months of our loss nothing seems to compensate us, nature makes us fall back on our remaining resources, it sometimes prompts us to replenish them. The chair at our fireside must always be left empty, though one who used to fill it can never fill it again. If the heart that is made to love aches for something fresh to love, why deny it its righteous desire? Pericles, in his funeral oration, delivered in the first year of the Peloponnesian war, could not indeed console his sorrowing audience with the promise of the Resurrection, but he touched a real chord in their hearts when he bade them comfort themselves with the sons still at their side, and with the hope of children yet unborn. Almighty God has given us hearts capable of indefinite expansion; and there is every variety of soil in them, where all kinds of affections may grow. Where there is room for all, one need not interfere with another. Why is the power of forming new affections confounded with fickleness or inconstancy? Because a man takes a wife to his heart, must he therefore be a less dutiful son, or a less kind brother? No doubt characters will, in this matter, differ materially. Yet while we admire the tenacity of one man's nature, we need not frown on the fertility of another's. The wayside of life is quite lonely enough without our needlessly making it lonelier. Let us cheat the toil and cheer the way by giving and receiving sympathy. He who has most friends has most opportunities of making others happy as well as himself. He who suffers himself, as occasion offers, to replace a lost friend with a new one, will live in a garden, which will blossom in a perpetual summer, and will not be less likely to forget the old, merely because he accepts the new. Every old friend was once a new one. True love, of whatever kind it is, will but strengthen and deepen in us love of every other kind. For the circulation is quickened through the entire system, and in some natures the heart grows as it is filled.

A word of caution and exhortation may fitly end a paper, which could not be real if it had not a hue of sadness; which could not be useful, if it were not even more for the living than for the dead; which could not be Christian if it did not point on to the sun that will soon rise on us in "the morning without clouds."

We have all of us many partings to go through, yet we need not dwell on them, for why should we needlessly cloud over our permitted happiness? and if we persist in anticipating trials, in other words, in suffering before God bids us suffer, it must be at our own risk. Strength is not given us for to-morrow, only for to-day. Partings, which in the distance seem more than we shall be able to bear, when the moment comes may seem but as the evening farewell, when the day's toil is over—softened and cheered by the thought that morning is at hand. For the burdens which God lays on us, there will always be grace enough. The burdens which we make for ourselves we must carry alone. And this, by the way, should make us very careful of not attempting to measure grief by the mere outward demonstration

of it, nor to think that there is no real mourning, because the way of showing it is not our own. Tears, talking about our grief, dress, manner, and look, vary infinitely according to circumstances, and character, and sex, and condition of life. At the grave-side, there may not be a single tear; but, perhaps, there is a strength of self-control which you might well envy, girding those hearts to be manful and calm before you, and to testify the consolation of the grace of God. But there was weeping enough yesterday to satisfy any one; and if you could be with them, when they are each alone (for when together they are cheerful), you would no longer think them guilty of a shallow or cold love.

Of course it does not really matter, so far as we are concerned, what the world outside gossips about our grief. The stronger we are in our manliness, the deeper we are in our affections, the truer we are in our friendships, the less is it likely even to occur to us that our sorrow is suspected, the less should we consent to defer in the least degree to impertinent and unfeeling intrusion. Still, indifferent as we may be to what others say of us, let us be careful not to judge others. Of course there are heartless people in the world; but they are usually the most anxious to conceal their heartlessness. If there is one thing more than another that mourners wish for, it is to be left alone.

To mourn for our friends is natural. Would that it were as natural, while still we have them here, to be true and brave with them about their souls. Why are we kind in every other way, and not in this way? Why do we so firmly seal our lips on the one subject which will engross eternity? The time may come, when we would give all we possess for one chance more. We are travellers "between the cradle and the grave, and the great fact of life is death: and the centre of human interest moves gradually towards the other world" (*Professor Goldwin Smith*); and if we would but see it so, no love is more real, more kind than that which helps a brother man to make his peace with God before he passes behind the veil. And it is no answer to say, that those whose creed is most rigid, and their notions of duty the most severe, and their appreciation of Divine Love most scanty, and their religious charity towards their neighbours most narrow, when their own belongings pass away, put the best possible construction on each last word, and cling to shreds of hope about the future of husband, or wife, or child, which they would ruthlessly tear to pieces in the case of a stranger. For the human heart is weak, and it is easy to reason ourselves into what we wish to believe; and the very notion of an everlasting misery, for those whom we have begotten or reared or loved, is so intolerably dreadful, that if we actually realised it about any one dear to us, life would be one long agony, and death would be the only riddance of our pain. Yet our hopes and our fears cannot change the laws of right and wrong: our tears and our prayers cannot alter the condition of the soul that has gone to stand before God. What is true for a ruffian hanged at Newgate, is true for the most accomplished scholar, or the most refined gentleman. Repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, are the only way of salvation. God forbid that we should take cruel pains to rob the mourner of the only hope that can comfort him. "It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?" The thief on the cross is an instance of Divine mercy bidding us never to despair. Nevertheless, if we hold it possible for men to be lost—if we really believe that there is a wrath to come, and that unless we flee from it it will overwhelm us—if in the Bible we find nothing about all at last returning into the bosom of the Eternal Father—if we hold to the Saviour's words, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"—we shall sometimes think of those we love and live with as dying and risen, and judged, and lost or saved: and while we continually pray about them, that God will Himself fit them for his own presence, humbly but earnestly, firmly but gently, we shall try to speak to them of Him.

Yet with all this, it is a blessed thing to rest on the love of God, when we have no ground for supposing that it has been wilfully resisted, or perseveringly cast away. Christ's cross is the proof of God's mercy. If He does not care, does not yearn to save, why did the Son of God taste death for every man? Some of us may know what it is to hear suddenly of the death of a child or a brother thousands of miles away, and far from friends and home. There may be but scanty particulars of the last hours: and the sources from which they come are not always so reliable as to inspire us with much consolation. Well, we were not there, but He was there, without whom no one can live, no one can die; and He, who bought them with his blood, and is able to save to the uttermost, can be more in the last hour to the fainting struggling soul, than mother, or wife, or friend. Oh, it is solemn to think how busy Death is every minute of every hour; how "never morning wore to evening, but some heart did break." We cannot, nay we need not wish to know of all the suffering in the world, for if we did we could not help it, and to see what we cannot mend is a useless pain. But there is One who knows and feels for it all. On this wide groaning earth, on palace and cottage, on town and village, on hospital and workhouse, on the restless sea, on the burning desert, on the forests of the West, and the snows of the North, on the steppes of Thibet, and the meadows of England; wherever there are men and women and children to pity and to save, the holy solemn face of Christ looks down with tenderness unspeakable. He is ever near, though we cannot be. Everywhere He can sustain those who lean on Him; and his blessed smile nerves the departing spirit for the struggle that sets it free.

In a little while friendship will be a reality. When we meet round the Tree of Life, we shall have shed our last tear, and Death and Hell will be cast into the lake of fire. Friendships are made on earth to be enjoyed in Heaven. This is a busy world, and, as things are now, much of our time is passed over objects for which we do not care, and with men whom we do not love. We have but snatches and foretastes of that heart and soul intercourse, which in its consummation and perpetuity will be part of the happiness of Heaven. What a gathering it will be when we meet

FREDERICK WILLIAM ROBERTSON.

from the east and the west and the north and the south in the many mansions of the House of our common Father, and each in our own glory recognise and embrace those whom we loved on earth. It is sometimes an anxiety to sensitive persons that they will have no one to welcome them in Heaven. As if Christ would not take care of that. As if He, who hath prepared us for our home and our home for us, may not be safely trusted to make it a happy one. We shall meet there many whom we did know, and more whom we did not. But Infinite Love will fill every glorified soul; and if friends will still be friends, no one will wound us with the cold glance of a stranger. The parents that bore us, the servants who ministered to us, pastors who have brought us to Christ, physicians who have pulled us through weary illnesses, and made us grateful with the gratitude of a life; the friends who have loved us, the good who have edified us; many, whom we have seen and longed to know, but never could get to know; many who saw us, and wished to know us, but who died, without the interchange of a word; writers of books which have helped us, promoters of plans which have inflamed our zeal and set us working, in a multitude which no man can number, all, all will be there! Yet God makes Heaven; and the "friend that sticketh closer than a brother" will be the one friend of all others we shall most desire to see; and when we see Him as He is, we shall not think we took too much pains to make others love Him; we shall understand then how the "loss of friends" on earth was to prepare us for our life with Him.

FREDERICK W. ROBERTSON.

The peculiar mental unrest of the present time has brought it about, that, of all histories which can be written and read, the most interesting, to many classes of the community, is a mental history. In the midst of its thousandfold material activities, the thoughtful mind of the age—it might almost be said, its thoughtless mind as well—is feverishly alive to all the problems of inward life. The work done, the battles fought, the suffering endured, in the invisible domain of human hearts, have been found to possess often a great and tragic interest. There will be differences of mental histories, of course, as there are differences of minds. The toil and trial of inward life, like the toil and trial which have been seen and known of men, will be, in one case and in another, of lesser, or of mightier, import. Many spiritual histories laboriously pourtrayed, turn out to be without individuality and freshness, and the record of them is made up of disappointing commonplaces, every one of which we seem to have heard a hundred times before. There are higher and meaner among the souls whom God has made; and, within as well as without, the one will be found to have lived the higher, more eventful, more significant, and the other the meaner, more eventless, more insignificant, life. In the case of the latter, the question of personal salvation will generally be found the only one which it has been much concerned to settle; in the case of the former, the foundations of the stable earth have been shaken, and solemn problems have risen up, spectre-like, and moved across its field of vision—problems of Law and Love and Life—of Humanity and God.

The Life of Mr. Robertson of Brighton, which is now before us, is a mental history of this latter sort. The facts of his career in the world are few. Not only, however, as framework for his inward history, but also, because of their vital connexion with it—the action and reaction of the external and internal—they are of the utmost moment. But it is what *he thought and felt*, and so thinking and feeling, spoke and wrote, that enchains our interest. In the latter part of his lifetime, the attention of men began to be directed to him—of men far beyond the circle of those who had his voice and presence in the midst of them. But it was after his death, when his sermons were issued from the press in a collected form, and the words which had been addressed to sympathetic or unsympathetic hearers in Trinity Chapel, Brighton, found their way to the ear of the great world, delighting or startling, reading the thoughts or enkindling the hearts of many in distant places, that the question, "Who and what manner of man was this?" began to be commonly asked; till at length an answer has been supplied to it, in the biography of Mr. Brooke, more or less satisfactory. A copy of the first volume of these sermons, published in 1864, now lies before me, and is marked, "Thirteenth Edition." A very large amount of buying and reading, in the case of this book at least, is indicated by the prosaic announcement. To many, through these sermons, Mr. Robertson has become, not a voice only, but a living and breathing presence. It is too plain that he poured out his inmost soul in them; that they are written often as with blood from his own heart. From some of their doctrinal statements we strongly and unequivocally differ, less however in the way of attributing to them positive error than of lamenting their defectiveness. The propositions which he maintains are mostly true in the full sense which he gives them; but his great error seems to lie, in excluding other important propositions, that ought to be at their side, as if they were utterly inconsistent with them. When he thinks himself broadest, he is often narrowest, fixing his eye, with its microscopic or telescopic intensity of sight, on some aspect or corner of truth, and so, disclosing that, as in a sunshine gleam, or perhaps lightning-flash: but then, unhappily, seeming to claim for a part the place of the whole, for his own particular illustration of the truth the credit of being the truth itself in its widest and deepest form. In most cases, if not in all, the evangelical theology which he stigmatised as

hopelessly narrow, if rightly and comprehensively presented, would include all that was true in his views, and something more. It was his special faculty, and perhaps his mission, to set forth, in vivid illustration and unchallengeable certainty, the humanity of the Redeemer's Person and of his Cross —the humanity of the Bible and the Christian faith and life, in an age that needed such teaching. The friends of catholic evangelical doctrine will thank him for that, while they will be disposed to mourn over the intellectual presumption, which supposed itself to be conquering the new when it was simply coming into living contact with the old, which mistook the narrower for the broader truth. Narrow men—men whose life is built on a few great thoughts, is devoted to one grand aspect of doctrine or duty—are intense, vital, suggestive, in proportion to their narrowness. You must meet them on their own ground; and there, you find them, in thought, or speech, or action, giants. The catholic doctrine of the Church, and still more the Holy Scriptures, from which it is drawn, by their very breadth and tolerance, put to shame the exclusive spirit in which such men are often criticised. The Bible has its Antinomies —Law and Love; Predestination and Free-will; Faith and Work: and the Creeds of the Church have ever left these where it sets them, side by side; their practical reconciliation ever found in actual human history, their theoretical reconciliation hidden in the vastness of God.

London was the birth-place of Mr. Robertson. He was born there on the 3rd of February, 1816. But the first five years of his life were spent at Leith Fort, where his father, then a captain in the Royal Artillery, was on duty. This early period left on his susceptible mind its own especial impress. As is usual with children, the mist-curtain which hid the beginnings of his life had breaks of azure in it. He remembered certain outstanding scenes and events; the rest passed out of his conscious life altogether. The sea in these early days awakened in him an affection which never died, and its fresh breezes blowing inland, across Inchkeith, or from the grey distance out of which the ships came one by one, seemed, in the dreams of after-days, to stir his hair again, and sprinkle his face with spray. At the end of these five years his father resigned his commission, and removed to Beverley in Yorkshire, where the education of Frederick, his eldest son, was carried on, partly at home under his own superintendence, and partly at the grammar-school of the place, for the next eight years. Thereafter, in 1829, the family removed to Tours, where Mr. Robertson acquired his thorough knowledge of the French language. The Revolution of 1830 drove them to this country again, and this time young Robertson was sent to school in Edinburgh. This strangely desultory mode of education, which I have not yet fully described, had no doubt its effect, in shaping the mental tastes and habits of Frederick Robertson to what they afterwards became. He was a man evidently of very varied culture, furnished, as few men are, with manifold personal knowledge of the world and of mankind, but making up in freshness and variety for what he lacked in accuracy and depth. His father was a soldier; all his younger brothers, in one way or another, gave themselves to a military life; and one can therefore imagine how, in the household of Captain Robertson, would be nursed the frank daring chivalrous spirit which had such a battle before it, harder to face sometimes than a storm of shot and shell. He was already dreamy and sensitive, full of the imaginings of noblest boyhood; and yet, also, of healthy physical development, and passionately fond of every kind of boyish activity; building up the slight but lithe thews and sinews of a frame which yet was too fragile for the fiery soul within it, and was worn to death prematurely, avenging itself, of the spirit that wore down and wasted it, by the infliction of maddening pain.

At the Edinburgh Academy, Frederick Robertson devoted himself to his work with characteristic ardour; and, though labouring under the disadvantage of having pursued his earlier studies elsewhere, he seems, if I understand his biographer aright, to have stood second dux of the school at the end of the year. The following year was spent at the Edinburgh University, under the care of Bishop Terrot. No memorials remain of his attendance at any of the classes, except that of natural history, then taught by Professor Jameson; but his name may be found, perhaps, in the roll-book of some of the others, for the session of 1832-33. He left Edinburgh to become the articled clerk of Mr. Borton, a solicitor at Bury St. Edmunds. A year at Mr. Borton's desk was enough for him; and his father gave him leave to follow out the purpose which he had been cherishing through all his previous life—to become a soldier. An application was made to the Horse Guards for a commission. His name was placed on the list for a cavalry regiment then serving in India. Meanwhile, at Chatham with his brother, or in Cheltenham, where the family now resided, he anxiously prepared himself for a military life. His culture was still of the same healthy and comprehensive sort, physical as well as mental. He studied engineering; became a skilful draughtsman; read much and deeply in the history of India, its wars, even its missions, trying to solve the problem of its connection with this country and its future destiny; and at the same time spent much time in riding and shooting, till he became a great proficient in both. Two years thus passed, but there was no sign of his commission, and his heart grew sick with hope deferred. He was now twenty years of age, and impatient to feel himself engaged in the work of his life.

At last, in the beginning of 1837, under the influence of Mr. Davies, now Vicar of Tewkesbury, and others, he was led to reconsider his determination to be a soldier, and to decide for the Church instead. This was done, however, very much in deference to the wish of his father and his friends: and if it had been delayed a little longer, would never have been done at all. On May 4, 1837, he matriculated at Brazenose College, Oxford. The die was cast. Only a fortnight afterwards, news came of the long-expected commission, but, with much regret, the offer of it was now declined. On the receipt of this letter a few days

later, or a few days earlier, the shape which his career should take depended, in the providence of God. The relation which he has come to hold to thousands of his fellow-men was thus determined, much against his will and hope. It were folly not to see the Divine Hand in this, and to hold, as we shall have to hold throughout, that God mixed for Mr. Robertson the cup which he had to drink.

The next three years were spent in Oxford, till, in 1840, he took his degree, and his academic training, at least, was completed. He found Oxford the scene of great intellectual activity—rent especially by theological dissensions, so that, during these years, much of his time was given to the study of doctrinal and ecclesiastical questions. The man whose name was in all men's mouths, and about whom there went on a constant turmoil of discussion, was the Vicar of St. Mary's, John Henry Newman. He excited a deep interest in the mind of Frederick Robertson, won his affection as well as admiration,—for Newman's sermons were a chosen and beloved companion to the end of his life,—by the glow of his genius and the nobleness of his earnest and devoted spirit; but, at the same time, repelled, by his ascetic and idealizing temper, Robertson's broader humanity. We find him write even bitterly of the Tracts and the Tractarian school; his bitterness, however, being the bitterness of a heart which is not at rest, but which hides, beneath its argument and denunciation, the pain of a secret love. The system, though he tried to regard it ever so favourably, repelled him; the men, in spite of himself, he was forced to hold in the highest honour. It is always hard, for an enthusiastic, sympathetic spirit like his, to distinguish between doctrinal belief and personal character, between the truth or untruth of the principle, and the truth or untruth of the lives of those who maintain it. This characteristic I believe to appear also in his later relations to the Evangelical party, and to be indeed, in a great measure, the key to his career.

During this period, Mr. Robertson kept his own heart with a singular care. He was a man of prayer. He set on foot a society for prayer and conversation on the Scriptures. His Bible was ever within his reach. He had a very accurate memory, and turned it to good account, by committing to it daily some verses of the New Testament. Before very long, he had gone twice through the English version, and once and a half through the Greek. All this was done partly out of antagonism to the Tractarian school, but it endowed him with an accurate knowledge of Scripture which was of the greatest value to him in his future life. And yet, while not ashamed of Christ, while living thus in continual contact with the Divine Word, he delighted in his classical studies: Plato, especially, was a friend and counsellor. "One of the poets," he calls him in after years, "who, when his brain was throbbing, and his mind incapable of originating a thought, and his body worn and sore with exhaustion, made him know what it was, to feel the jar of nerve gradually cease, and the darkness in which all life had robed itself to the imagination become light, discord pass into harmony, and physical exhaustion rise by degrees into the consciousness of power." One other reminiscence of Robertson at Oxford. He was a member of the Union Debating Club, and Mr. Davies tells how, the second time he had attempted to speak, he opened a discussion on the question of the moral or immoral tendency of the theatre. Robertson's speech was on the stricter side. Before getting up to make it, he pressed his friend's knee and whispered, "Davies, pray for me!" His opponent was one John Ruskin, of whom men have since heard, and who in his reply was very witty and clever at Robertson's expense.

At this period, Mr. Robertson bore all the marks of a genuine piety. But it was of a very spontaneous and child-like sort. His feet had not yet felt the chill of the deep waters through which he was to pass. The tender charms of early association bound him: the dreams of boyhood had scarcely faded. He followed and sought to realise a high ideal of chivalrousness, of faith and courtesy. He was a born soldier: but in the preparation for his clerical life, and in that life itself, this character of his had field enough for its display; there is another warfare than that of camps and armies, and blood-red battle-fields. He longed to be a Vindicator of the Right, and Avenger of the Wrong. Consistent with this, and from the same root, was his devotion to his ideal of womanhood. The gentler sex had an immense power over his mind, because he saw in them what he deemed the highest attributes of human being, which they do not seem to have been aware of, and which they used for the most part only to wound and thwart him. "At seven years old," he says, "woman was a sacred dream, of which I would not talk. Marriage was degradation. I remember being quite angry on hearing it said of a lovely Swede—the loveliest being I ever saw—that she was likely to get married in England. She gave me her hair, lines, books, and I worshipped her only as I should have done a living rainbow, with no further feeling. Yet I was then eighteen, and she was to me for years nothing more than a calm, clear, untroubled fiord of beauty, glassing heaven, deep, deep below, so deep that I never dreamed of an attempt to reach the heaven. So I lived. I may truly say that my heart was like the Rhone as it leaves the Lake of Geneva." "I have seen him," writes one of his friends, "grind his teeth and clench his fist when passing a man who, he knew, was bent on destroying an innocent girl." "My blood," he writes himself, after a conversation on the wrongs of women, "was running liquid fire!" This idea', then, which he cherished, of manhood and of womanhood, explains much in his teaching, and much in his personal life. It was this which made him so impatient of the harshness and pettiness which he encountered: which gave his life its character of peculiar isolation: which made his attachments so sudden and strong, and his reactions so violent: which drove him from actual men and women, to find in Christ the truest characteristics of manhood and womanhood too, and to lavish the wealth of his love on the God-Man Redeemer, stronger than the strongest, and tenderer than the tenderest of all. In many sermons, besides that especial one on the Glory of the Virgin-mother, he shows the ideal, which he had never found even par-

tially realised on earth, to have its eternal realisation in the Man Christ Jesus.

On Sunday, July 12th, 1840, he was ordained a deacon by the Bishop of Winchester. He had received a title from Mr. Nicholson, rector of the united parishes of St. Maurice, St. Mary Kalendar, and St. Peter Colebrook, Winchester. Mr. Nicholson was an earnest Evangelical, and, for a busy year, Mr. Robertson and he worked to each other's hands, in much brotherly love, and with apostolic devotion. It is curious to note, how well the Bishop and Mr. Nicholson understood their man, for the latter preached the ordination sermon from the same text which the former gave Mr. Robertson as a motto for his future life—it was 2 Tim. ii. 3, "Thou therefore endure hardness, as *a good soldier* of Jesus Christ." The parishes were inhabited by a poor population, and, during the incumbency of Mr. Nicholson's predecessor, had been almost wholly neglected. But times had changed. The rector and his curate were obliged, in a few months, to open two churches instead of one, and both were crowded. Mr. Robertson's ministry was greatly blessed, more than he knew till long afterwards. He was as Evangelical as his rector. His texts on his first three Sundays were Isaiah lv. 1, Isaiah lvii. 15, and these words (John i. 42) which make Andrew a type of truest and highest brotherly-kindness—"And he brought him to Jesus." Here in Winchester, his labours were incessant, and of the humblest and most self-denying kind. Meanwhile, he strengthened his intellectual grasp of the truth by the thorough study of President Edwards; kept the edge of his spirit keen by much holy meditation with the help of "The Imitation of Christ;" and drew his impulse and his power from frequent solitary prayer. Yet was he possessed in some measure by a spirit of bondage and fear. He spent much time in mere self-dissection. There is a freer Christian life, which harmonizes work for God with communion with Him, which looks less in on self, and more out on Christ and on the world for which Christ died. And to this, with all his doctrinal defectiveness, he seems to have attained afterwards in fuller measure, when the pain and strife were past.

Too intense and consuming labour produced ill-health, and after but one year of work in Winchester, he was ordered abroad by the physicians. Before setting out, he was invested with priest's orders. He travelled on foot through many parts of the Continent, storing his mind with all grand and beautiful imagery, revelling in the glory of Nature, and the aspects of strange cities and men. Yet he never forgot his work of winning souls for his Master. There is a touching story of a young Prussian of Elberfeld, with whom he travelled on one occasion, and whose views were of the most sceptical kind. After much argument, Mr. Robertson simply told him in plain words, what was his own conviction, belief, and hope. The young man, unconvinced by argument, was melted before the reality of truth. "*C'est une belle croyance,*" he said—"I wish that I could believe it too!" In Geneva, Mr. Robertson remained for a considerable time, meeting there both the Evangelicals and their opponents. He was delighted with Malan and Merle d'Aubigné. The well-known views of the former on the assurance of faith startled him, and suggested profitable thoughts, but did not win his assent. In Geneva, he met, and shortly after married, Miss Helen Denys, third daughter of Sir George William Denys, Bart., of Easton Neston, Northamptonshire. She survives her husband. Returning to England with his bride, he took farewell of his flock at Winchester, and after a month or two of enforced idleness, accepted the curacy of Christchurch, Cheltenham. This was in the summer of 1842.

Cheltenham was to be the scene of his labours for the next five years. In some respects this period was the most important of all, the turning-point of his life. But that life was now turned violently aside from the path which it had hitherto followed, and involved in the overshadowing gloom both of error and of sorrow. Three children were born to him in this period, one to be taken as it had been given, very soon. He passed through the usual routine of a clergyman's life, with its monotony, and yet wondrous variety, of work. It is in his relations to the people around him, and the effect which outward circumstances had on his inner spirit, that the interest of this Cheltenham period entirely lies. The incumbent of Christchurch was the Rev. Archibald Boyd, now of London, an able preacher and stanch Evangelical. Mr. Robertson, of course, ranked with the party to which Mr. Boyd belonged. His admiration for Mr. Boyd was intense, and their friendship warm, till growing divergence of doctrinal teaching introduced embarrassment. The influence of the incumbent on his curate was stimulating and yet also depressing. It impelled Mr. Robertson to more careful and matured preparation for the pulpit, but led him also to make comparisons most disadvantageous to himself. The Cheltenham public, with which Mr. Robertson came into contact, was of that fashionable and somewhat idle sort, which could not understand him, and which provoked him to anger and impatience. Amidst the active thought and work of the day, amidst scholars and thinkers, amidst merchants and artisans, he would have struck fire at once. He found himself in the midst of a peculiar society, with many characteristic excellences, but broken up into little sets and parties; tractarianism and evangelicalism being the most popular watchwords. He was one of those persistently original men who must think their own thoughts and speak their own words, or else neither think nor speak. He could belong to no party, being charged with the work of hewing out new paths of thought, which might be marked with milestones afterwards, and made distinctive tenets of, by others, when he meant nothing of the kind. The comforts of partisanship, the sympathy of friends and backers, the good things which the chiefs of the party can bestow, when it is in power at least, were not for him. To many of his hearers his modes of expression were strange—nay, were not his views also strange, and being strange, of necessity dangerous? They tried first to enlighten his own mind. They gave him on Monday mornings their opinion of the sermon of the previous day somewhat plainly. On

one occasion he had pronounced this world in itself a riddle, but had commended the Christian religion as the key to that riddle. The next day an anonymous lady-correspondent, who must have been asleep during the latter part of the discourse, informed him that Christianity made all the difficulties he spoke of plain. He smarted under such interference; but otherwise gave no heed to it. He called these wise ladies his "muslin episcopate." He was, in short, incorrigible. Then they began to let their opinion of him be known. I have said enough before to show that to Mr. Robertson all this must have been almost intolerably painful. As his Evangelical friends drew off, friends of a different stamp gathered around him. A certain philosophic inquirer, a student of Coleridge and the Germans, accorded him the sympathy which was elsewhere denied; but such a one might supply him with intellectual stimulus, but not with the needed guidance towards settled truth. In the case of an inquirer, the influence of a fellow-inquirer is perhaps the greatest; the influence of one who has through pain and struggle won his way to rest is next; the influence of an altogether settled and untroubled dogmatist, given to didactic monologue, is simply nothing at all. Mr. Robertson's spirit was wounded deeply, and a wounded spirit who can bear?

Yet let us not blame too much the people of Cheltenham. The devotedness and purity of Mr. Robertson's Christian character might have made them more patient and considerate, but there were undoubtedly very strong grounds for anxiety and perplexity. Mr. Robertson's teaching, at this point, was the teaching of one who was feeling his way, not indeed to new truths, but to a new and more living relation to the old. It lacked that roundness and scriptural fulness which they had good reason to love. Unsettled himself, it was not desirable that he should be permitted to unsettle them. Their feet were planted on a rock; they had no wish to tempt the seething surges; the man who would plunge them into these would, they felt, do them a cruel wrong. Ill-health came again and deep despondency; and in 1846, Mr. Robertson had left Cheltenham never to resume his labours there.

He went back to the Continent, to travel alone in the Tyrol, to go chamois-hunting in its mountain solitudes, to do anything and everything to escape from the unquiet of his spirit. The Evangelicals had cast him off: the narrowness, as it seemed to him, of the Evangelical theology and life, of which he had formed a wrong conception, caused a revulsion of feeling all the more intense and agitating, that he was still hiddenly drawn to both. One cannot help thinking, that, if he had met at this stage with some humble, faithful, and not untried believer, his course might have been different. His heart cried in its anguish for sympathy, and found no more reply from other hearts than it did from the crags of the mountains, from the serpentine mists, from the vast silences of heaven, from the changing skies of sunset or of dawn. If he had had the true theology before him in its Biblical fulness, he would have found the representations of God and man from which he revolted to be but caricatures, for which he had his own proud impatient spirit not a little to blame: if he had seen how, in the real doctrine of the Atonement, for example, the Father and the Son are perfectly at one in the work of redemption, and he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father, and the utmost honouring of law is also the utmost honouring of love: if, again, he had distinguished between the creed and the life of Christians, had counted the harshness, weakness, inconsistencies, stupidity, which he happened to find in good people, only a thing to be expected, and ever to be forgotten in gazing on the beauty of Christ,—his teaching might have been full-orbed and complete, his heart more at rest, and his sermons purged from their traces of reaction against cherished beliefs, and made richer in positive truth —truth not one whit less human, but more divine. I cannot refrain from quoting the terrible words in which he describes the case of a doubter, which, at the time I am speaking of, was evidently his own. "It is an awful moment when the soul begins to find that the proofs on which it has blindly rested so long, are many of them rotten, and begins to suspect them all; when it begins to feel the nothingness of many of the traditionary opinions which have been received with implicit confidence, and in that horrible insecurity begins also to doubt whether there be anything to believe at all. It is an awful hour—let him who has passed through it say how awful—when this life has lost its meaning and seems shrivelled into a span; when the grave appears to be the end of all, human goodness nothing but a name, and the sky above this universe a dead expanse, black with the void from which God himself has disappeared. In that fearful loneliness of spirit, when those who should have been his friends and counsellors only frown upon his misgivings, and profanely bid him stifle doubts which, for aught he knows, may arise from the fountain of truth itself—to extinguish as a glare from hell that which, for aught he knows, may be light from heaven, and everything seemed wrapped in hideous uncertainty, I know but one way in which a man may come forth from his agony scatheless; it is by holding fast to those things which are certain still—the grand, simple landmarks of morality. In the darkest hour through which a human soul must pass, whatever else is doubtful, this at least is certain. If there be no God, and no future state, yet even then it is better to be generous than to be selfish, better to be chaste than to be licentious, better to be true than to be false, better to be brave than to be a coward."

This is certainly a picture drawn from personal experience. To many, of course, it will seem, either a wild imagination and unreality on the one hand; or, accepting it as true of Mr. Robertson, they will conclude from it that he had not, and never had, any spark of the grace of God in his heart. Deeper spiritual experience, however, will reverse such judgments. It is not the shallow, easy-going believer, whose faith, even on its intellectual side, seems to go out like a candle in a night of tempest, and from whom the face of God is hidden till there seems to be no God at all.

It is not made by any means plain in the biography, by what means Mr. Robertson regained his mental clearness and calm. Such storm-clouds, indeed, by a hidden law of their own, which is the will of God, do their work, spend their force, and, one scarce knows how, glide away. This, however, was to some extent a new beginning. The season of doubt and tribulation left Mr. Robertson with a deeper knowledge of his own heart and the hearts of others, and a deeper insight into the things of God. Only by such means do men attain to such pathos and power, such skill in striking the deepest notes in the music of humanity, such lightning-like vividness of speech. Mr. Robertson certainly attained to all this when his soul was swept by a wind from the wilderness. One is all the more saddened to find, that the agency which had been used to bring about his time of trial, mingled with his future teaching a certain harshness of tone, a certain bitterness of reaction against the school to which he had belonged; and for which, allowing for the negations which are due to this woundedness of spirit and this reaction, I am disposed to claim him still. While he was still on the Continent he resigned his Cheltenham curacy, and then returned home to seek for work elsewhere. This was found, for a month or two, at St. Ebbe's, in Oxford, where he carried all before him; and then at Trinity Chapel, Brighton, where he entered on his duties on the 15th of August, 1847. His incumbency at Brighton is but the last chapter of his life; though it is that one which makes us ask eagerly for all the rest. Here his peculiar teaching was matured, if we may call it mature, in the form in which we have it now. And here were the beginnings of that fame which has sounded its trumpet most loudly, after his ear could hear it no more for ever. Here he had scope and freedom at least. A good many of the former worshippers in Trinity Chapel, Brighton, trained in a different school, fled at the very sound of his earlier sermons; but their places were filled at once by an eager thoughtful crowd. Brighton was a wider world, and with a more varied humanity, than Cheltenham. "He met with men of all classes, whose opinions had been formed and widened in the storm and stress of London life; and with others whose prejudices were as blind as those of the smallest village in England." He knew that he would die soon, and determined to work while it was day. His great practical thought was, that "Christianity was too much preached as theology, too little as the religion of daily life; too much as a religion of feeling, too little as a religion of principles; too much as a religion only for individuals, too little as a religion for nations and the world. He determined to make it bear upon the social state of all classes, upon the questions which agitated society, upon the great movements of the world." It was a time of singular activity. His published sermons belong to it, and most of the letters which are now printed in his biography. Now, at least, he had friends to whom he poured his very heart out; and he is allowed to speak for himself with a fulness and self-accusing faithfulness, for which we cannot too much thank his biographer. Intense work alternated with intense physical exercise. The sunsets seen from Brighton, and the sea, ever-changing, in its gloaming calm and its tempestuous gloom, were to him a continual joy.

His fresh and unfamiliar statements of truth still fell among people who did not understand them fully. He had much sympathy now, but also much hostility more pronounced than ever before. In his crowded audience there were sure to be some at least who came to entangle him in his talk. And the very thought of this, instead of making him more cautious, made him more rash. The same curious interferences with him, especially by ladies, from which he had suffered so much, even while he indignantly resisted them, at Cheltenham, still continued. The revolutions of 1848 interested him mightily. They seemed to him in his ardent philanthropy "a bridal dawn of thunder-peals." At this time, he lectured on Samuel the prophet, and so laid down the respective duties of kings and subjects, that he was called a Democrat in the unreasoning panic which then prevailed. He was the originator of a Working Man's Institute, in 1848, which had a chequered history and did not survive its originator. In many ways he addressed himself to working-men and anxiously befriended them, till he was next pronounced a Socialist. Happily the day has gone by when such a charge would be made. He excited the hottest ferment and injured himself most seriously, by his sermons, in 1849 and 1852, on the Sunday question. His view of this question is that, which disconnects the Sabbath of Christendom from the law given by Moses, and builds it on the two pillars, of the original and universal necessities of humanity, and the Resurrection of the Divine Redeemer. Men slow to make a doctrinal distinction, were startled, when he carried his theory into practical application, by refusing to petition against the opening of the Crystal Palace on Sundays, and by preaching on "the religious non-observance of the Sabbath." In this, more than anything else, may be seen the extremeness of a man stung by rancorous opposition, and tempted by the allurements of paradox.

The last months of his life were embittered by a dispute with the Vicar of Brighton, Mr. Wagner, who used the authority which he possessed to prevent the appointment, as Mr. Robertson's curate, of Mr. Tower, on whom Mr. Robertson had set his heart. The result was, that, weak and worn, he had to go on single-handed with his work. For some time past that work had been done at fearful cost. He spent days and nights in terrible pain, as though his head and neck were being torn by the beak of an eagle, or cleft by a sword. Intense mental activity: the bitter sense of isolation, in the midst of enemies, which deepened on him to the last: the conflict of his life, not long, but hot and fierce, almost without a parallel:—these bore their fruit at length, in the physical anguish from which he found release only in death. The controversy with Mr. Wagner was at its hottest, when all Brighton was startled to hear that Mr. Robertson had received his death-blow. His disease was supposed to be an abscess in the brain. The turmoil of his outward life grew quiet and far away as the shadows of death stole over him. His last effort was to creep from his bed to the window, and

look out on the "beautiful morning." His two sisters, long since dead, seemed to come to him with a crown for him in their hand. He felt assured that he would live in Christ for ever. Between him and all men who had troubled him fell the calm of forgiveness and peace. Again and again the pain smote him, keen and terrible, but it could not bereave him of his patience. The two hours before his death were filled with fearful anguish. "My God!—my Father!" he cried feebly at intervals: and then, when they sought to move him: "I cannot bear it; let me rest. I must die. Let God do his work." These were his last words. The storm of physical agony raged itself out: and, a few minutes after midnight, on Sunday, August 15th, 1853, he died. He was but thirty-seven: his sun reached its highest noon, and then vanished into the great darkness. So he

"pass'd
To where beyond these voices there is peace."

I have already characterised his teaching, and explained its peculiar character. It remains only to borrow from his biography some idea of Mr. Robertson as the multitude saw and heard him in his pulpit at Brighton. We are invited to imagine a high intellectual brow, strongly marked; blue deep-set eyes; a mobile mouth, capable of a most radiant smile; a voice not loud, but with a swell of power and thrill of passion in it; a manner of the quietest, but of singular grace and refinement, and suggestive of force under restraint: the very preacher for an audience of sensitive culture, and yet visibly an earnest man, speaking to, and making, while he spoke, earnest men. His utmost popularity and most manifest success never won him from his habitual and painful self-depreciation. The excitement of his preaching left him despondent and depressed—turning wearily from his fellow-men to cling to the bosom of the Eternal Love. He has, I believe, told the story of his own spirit, in these sentences descriptive of John the Baptist, with which I leave him now. "When that crowd dispersed at sunset, and John was left alone in the twilight, with the infinite of darkness deepening round him, and the roll of Jordan by his side, reflecting the chaste clear stars, there was something there higher than Pharisaic forms to speak to him—there were heaven and eternity to force him to be real. This life was swiftly passing. What is it to a man living like John, but a show and a dream? He was homeless upon earth. Well, but beyond—beyond—in the blue eternities above—there was the prophet's home. He had cut himself off from the solaces of life. He was to make an enemy of the man of honour, Herod. He had made an enemy of the man of religion, the Pharisee. But he was passing into that country where it matters little whether a man has been clothed in finest linen or in coarsest camel's hair; that still country, where the struggle-storm of life is over, and such as John find their rest at last, in the home of God, which is reserved for the True and the Brave."

ANDREW CRICHTON.

THE PRODIGAL.

I.

AND thou art he! But ah! how changed
Since last I looked on thee;
Ere from thy father's house, estranged,
Thou soughtest to be free.
With love as with a garland crowned
Light rested on thy brow;
And joy was in thy footfall's sound,—
There's sadness in it now.

II.

That quivering lip, that clouded eye,
That pale and wasted cheek—
Oh! what a tale of misery
And sin and shame they speak!
Ay, speak of thee, o'er whose young head,
Ere yet by guilt defiled,
An honoured sire his blessings shed,
A holy mother smiled.

III.

And where is now the siren throng,
So full of mirth and glee,
Who filled thine ear with their wanton song,
As they spent thy substance free?
Oh! they merrily laughed as the cup they quaffed
Till they saw thy wealth run dry;
Then flung thee off, with taunt and scoff,
And bade thee work or die.

IV.

Return, thou wanderer, return!
Why shouldst thou longer roam?
The fires of love still brightly burn,
Within thy childhood's home.
Wealth in thy father's halls is stored,
And raiment rich and fair;
There's plenty on thy father's board,—
Why shouldst not *thou* be there?

V.

Arise! thy sin 'gainst earth and heaven
Is deep, as sin may be;
Yet not too deep to be forgiven;—
There's mercy yet for thee.
Go to thy home! thy father's heart
Waits thee with welcome there:
Go to thy God! He'll grace impart;
'Tis He who answers prayer.

W. L. ALEXANDER.

MILICZIA OF PRAGUE; OR, THE BOHEMIANS IN LONDON.

AN EPISODE OF THE REFORMATION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A ROMANCE OF TRUTH."

I.

WHERE the noble town of Sheerness now reflects its lofty spires and handsome store-houses in the waters of the Medway, there stood, in the year 1413, only a few fishers' cottages, amongst which a substantially built two-storeyed house figured very much like a sturdy oak surrounded by copse-wood. From the structure of the walls and windows and the massive-looking front door, it was evident that this dwelling had in former days formed part of a castle, which may have witnessed many a bloody affray in the times of the barons. It was now however reduced to the humble and more peaceful destiny of being the shop and dwelling-house of Will Simpkins, a worthy citizen of London, who conducted a lucrative business as a ship chandler and marine store-dealer. These names did not exhaust the extent of his business. Not only could the sailor who came up or down the Thames or the Medway, obtain at his shop everything he wanted in the shape of eatables, but also every article of dress, from the coarsest worsted stockings to the finest duffel jacket, not to speak of the immense varieties of rope and canvas, brooms and brushes, oils, tars, soaps, &c. &c., which filled the warehouse from top to bottom.

Will was a tall, stout, broad-shouldered man, whose sinewy face, dark flashing eyes, and manly form indicated firmness of character as well as bodily vigour. Still there was a kind, mild expression in the features round his mouth which seemed to guarantee the submission of his powerful capacities to the rein of reason. Indeed throughout the neighbourhood he was known not to be so ferocious as he looked, though everybody at the same time knew that he was a terrible fellow to have dealings with, by all those who dared to dispute his theory about the liberty and rights of man. In this respect he was looked upon as a worthy son of his father, who, it was said, assisted Wat Tyler, when he occupied London with an army of 100,000 men, some thirty years before, to compel the king to give up the poll-tax. Will of course could only have been a baby then, for he was scarcely past thirty now; but no doubt there was something of Wat Tyler's spirit in him, for nobody could with greater fervour have proclaimed the doctrine of equality and liberty than he did, when among his friends. Only his arrows were never, like those of Wat, aimed at the king. He was as loyal a subject of Henry V. as could have been found in the whole of Kent. The Pope and the bishops, the monks and the clergy, and all who had embittered the life of that good man John Wycliff, and had consented to the death of William Sawtre, the first in that noble band of martyrs for true liberty, were his declared enemies. And among these there was none he hated so much as Arundel, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the tower of whose palace, at Lambeth, was continually crowded with the innocent victims of his bloodthirsty vengeance. His greatest friend was Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, that noble knight whose princely mansion, Cowling Castle, had, since William Sawtre's death, been the refuge of the "poor priests," and all who had walked in Wycliff's footprints. Nor were Arundel and the other "bloodhounds of his stamp," as Will used to call them, ignorant of the fact that Will had for the last ten years been Cobham's right hand in distributing the writings of Wycliff, which that noble and zealous lord caused to be copied at his castle and at his expense. It was well known too that among all the Lollards there was no such "damnable heretic" as Will Simpkins the store-dealer, but hitherto not one of the priests had ventured to apprehend him, for they knew that every stroke of his good sword cost a man's life, and that the two bull-dogs which lay growling night and day in their kennels in his back-yard were no fellows to joke with.

To understand Will's spirit and practice aright, it must be borne in mind that he lived in a critical time, at once political and religious. In the fifteenth century the seed of God's word, sown by the precursors of the Reformation, began to germinate, and to strike powerful roots into the heart of the nations. John Wycliff, who died in 1384, had bequeathed to the English people the Bible translated into their own tongue, and a great number of writings besides in which he taught the great, and to Rome terrible, truth, "that a Christian ought not to submit to the word of a priest, but to the word of God." The writings of this great man, multiplied by the quick pens of transcribers, not only spread through this country with all the rapidity of light, but also found their way to the then powerful kingdom of Bohemia with which England stood in close alliance, both political and commercial. The produce of that country, which, while England's trade and industry were yet scarcely born, had reached an uncommon height of prosperity, was sent down the Moldau and the Elbe from Prague in small crafts till it reached Hamburg, where large mercantile vessels took cargoes and carried them across the North Sea to London. The Bohemian sailor who in this way provided "the children of the far west" with necessaries and comforts, brought back to his own home many a written leaf which contained food for the life that endureth for ever. The writings of Wycliff became, under God's blessing, so many stars enlightening the dark sky of Bohemia, and preparing for the rising of the sun of the Reformation in Germany. It was by their light that the eyes of John Huss and Jerome of Prague were opened to the truth of the Gospel.

At the time our narrative commences the persecutions with which Rome tried to extinguish this light had just come into full operation. Wycliff had just died

in time to escape the stake which was being prepared for him. His disciples, who went under the name of Lollards, *i.e.*, singing or chanting people (perhaps because the singing of psalms formed a considerable part of their religious service, or because their preachers had got into the habit of addressing the people in a certain cadenza, which struck the medium between speaking and singing), did not allow the new doctrine to die with its first preacher. Having adopted the principle that the clergy ought to be independent of Rome, and that every preacher had a right to administer the sacraments, they dispersed themselves through the country in all directions, addressing the people in the markets and the high ways. They fought with unflinching courage against the chief errors and abuses of Rome, and especially against the luxuriousness, wantonness, and laziness of the popish clergy. They themselves led a simple life, almost verging upon poverty, so that the people called them the "poor priests." No wonder then, that they drove the great bulk of the clergy mad with anger. Still many a priest joined them, under the conviction that a "poor priest" was more like Christ than one who, like Dives, fared sumptuously every day. The conscience of the people, too, bore testimony to the truth of the new doctrine. From the towns as well as from the villages great multitudes flocked to hear the addresses of these eloquent and popular preachers. Soldiers and lawyers, noblemen and peasants, listened with pleasure to the simple truths which, like precious jewels, were brought forth from the heaps of rubbish under which they had lain buried for centuries. Encouraged by these signs of sympathy, even from the highest classes of society, the Wycliffites did not limit their zeal to mere preaching, but affixed placards to the walls of the churches, in which they stated their charges against the Pope, the priests, and the monks. This was too much for the bishops, who had long been watching for the fit moment to strike a decisive blow. No sooner did Henry IV., in 1399, push King Richard from the throne and place himself upon it, than Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, while putting the royal crown upon the usurper's head, said to him, "Be thou a friend to the clergy and a terror to the Lollards, and thy throne shall be established for ever." Henry believed that word. "I will be a defender of the Church," he answered; and with this speech he placed all the power which they desired in the hands of the clergy. The nobility, observing into which scale of the balance the king had put his weight, gradually abandoned the "poor priests," who were now left to the mercy of their enemies. Henry enacted that all heretics who refused to recant should be burnt alive. This was that famous 2 Henry IV., c. 15, the first Act of Parliament that was issued in England against the heretics. Its first victim was William Sawtre, a priest and a godly man, who had the courage to say, "I will not adore the cross on which Christ died, but I adore Christ who died on the cross." He was burnt alive in 1401.

This was the signal for a series of persecutions. Arundel issued his "Constitutions," in which the reading of the Bible was prohibited, and the Pope was proclaimed as being "not of pure man but of true God here on earth." The archiepiscopal palace at Lambeth had a large, lofty tower, teeming with prison-cells. These were soon filled and kept crowded with heretics, who never left those abodes of darkness and misery except to walk to the stake. Still the friends of truth continued to spread its light with unyielding faithfulness. Public preaching had become impossible, but they assembled in houses, in back-streets, in courts and lanes, in remote hamlets and villages. The common people gladly heard them preach, and of the nobility many were favourably disposed towards them, although few had the boldness to give public evidence of this disposition. The clergy had become too mighty for them, since the king had sided with the archbishop.

But there was one nobleman who, loyal to his king, yet could not sacrifice the peace of his conscience to his loyalty. That nobleman was Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, who lived at Cowling Castle on the bank of the Medway, a few miles from Rochester. He was a true knight, who in many a battle in France had maintained the honour of the English arms. In him there was no guile. To him truth remained truth, even though it was abandoned by his friends and accepted by his enemies. To him liberty of conscience was a treasure more precious than life itself. He was not a theologian nor was he a philosopher, but he was possessed of much common sense and simplicity of spirit. A plain truth, once well understood, lodged for ever in his heart. To defend it he was ready every hour of the day or night, and if the matter could not be settled by words, then he was prepared to settle it by the sword, according to the chivalric notions of that knightly age. Such a man could not have met Wycliff without becoming enthusiastic about him. He only needed to make the acquaintance of that Reformer's simple doctrine to embrace it with all his heart. After Wyclif's death he devoted all his time and a considerable portion of his income to getting his works transcribed and circulated. His castle was at all times open to the "poor priests" and especially so after the martyr death of Sawtre, when he came boldly forward as the defender and protector of the oppressed against their inhuman persecutors. He often attended their religious meetings, and, when their enemies tried to hunt them away, he kept them safe under the cover of his sword.

Such a man could not but be a thorn in the side of Arundel and the clergy. His friends—and he had many among the nobility—trembled for him. But he had nothing to fear as long as Henry IV. lived. This king had scarcely one among the noblemen of his realm whom he esteemed more or loved so much. Was it because Sir John's valiant arm had once saved his life in a brawl at Calais? Or was it because Sir John's noble and knightly character commanded the boundless admiration of the unhappy sovereign, who saw none but flatterers and hypocrites round his throne and person? Perhaps both went to form the cause. Enough that Henry IV. could see no evil in Sir John, and that Arundel was shrewd enough not to touch a man who was as the apple of the

king's eye. But Henry died in the beginning of 1413, and his son and successor, Henry V., was a Pharaoh who knew not Joseph. True, he, too, in the beginning hesitated to withdraw his favour from his father's favourite; but what the value of that favour was the following chapter will show.

II.

One evening in September, 1413, there was a small assembly in Will Simpkins' dwelling-house. An old servant of his father's, who had nursed him when a baby, and felt attached to him like a mother, had pushed the heavy oak table into a corner, and laid half-a-dozen of deals across a dozen of wood blocks. These were the forms or pews of the hastily-improvised little chapel. A chair was placed upon the table. This was the pulpit from which a young man with pale face, shorn head, and in a monk's coat, proclaimed the new doctrine. A train-oil lamp, suspended from the ceiling above his head, threw a fantastic glare upon his lank form. There was no other light in the room, nor was any other light required, for those days were not like the present, when every hearer can read in his own Bible and hymn-book the texts and hymns the preacher gives out. The room was well filled, but from the dimness of the light it was difficult to notice anything of the dresses or faces of the people. Only Deborah, Will's old housekeeper, was visible from a ray of the lamp falling upon her white linen cap; and so was a portion of Will himself, as he sat next to her.

"My friends," said the preacher, "I have been a monk myself, as you must have observed, so I could tell you what monks are, and how monks live. But I won't tell you now, for I understand that William Cawtre spoke to you last week, and he knows as much of it as I do."

"Yes, William spoke here last week," said Will, "and told us all about the monks and the priests, and a wicked, drunken, lazy lot they must be."

"So they are, most of them," resumed the preacher, who did not seem at all put out by this familiar way of interrupting his discourse, "so they are most of them; but don't be too hard upon them, dear friends, for you have no conception of their ignorance. They don't know better. They are trained in the belief that they please God by shutting themselves up in a convent, by scourging their bodies at one time, and fattening them at another. And how could they know better? The Gospel is never preached to them. The Pope is their God, and the saint whom they pray to is their saviour. So it was with me until I met with the copy of the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, which Will put into my hands while passing Ave Maria-lane one day."

"Yes, I thought I would require to give it to you," observed Will, "for I had watched you going all through Paternoster-row, and as you kept standing at nearly every shop, I noticed you read the nonsense exposed for sale, and as I noticed that you could read, I thought I was bound to give you worth your while."

"Why, it *was* something worth my while," continued the preacher, "for I found peace, everlasting peace to my heart through it. I never found true peace in praying to Mary. I don't know how it was, but I could not help always hearing a voice whispering within me: 'She was but a woman: how could she save thee?' But Paul tells us a better story. He points us to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Son of Man. He is both Man and God. He came down from heaven to save us, and He is mighty to save, for He is the true God, and has everlasting life. He was scourged for our sins. So we must no longer scourge ourselves. He paid our debt by his blood. So we must no longer pay to pope or priest, for it is *all* paid,—yes, it is *all*, *all* paid. Do you hear that? I must repeat it once more, that you may understand it well, and never forget it, and keep it in mind day and night, this great, all-sufficient, all-comprehending truth, viz., that it is *all* paid, that it is *all* finished, on the cross, by the blood of the Son of God, who died for us, and loved us more than father or mother could ever love us. We must not go to any human being to obtain heaven, for he alone has bought it for us. No human being, whether called Mary, or Urbanus, or Clemens, or Arundel, can give it to us, for they never bought it, nor could they, because it was bought long before them. Jesus is the only owner of that great treasure, salvation. He can save whomsoever He will. And He saves freely. He has bought Heaven at a very high price, the highest price He could give,—his own precious heart's blood—but He makes it over to us at a very cheap rate. He gives it to us for nothing. Only think of that, for nothing! I never could believe this, till I read it with my own eyes in the Epistle of the Apostle Paul. From the beginning of the Church there has been some truth in the Latin Bible, and I could have found it there, as there was a copy of it in our convent. But that big book was seldom or never looked into by any one of us, as we were all of us bad Latin scholars. It is quite true what the prior of St. Dunstan's said the other day: 'John Wycliff has, through his translation of the Bible into English, made that book more intelligible to laymen, and even to women, than it ever was before to learned clergymen.' Why, when I read that Epistle of Paul in my own mother tongue, it was to me as if a thick cloud had been suddenly taken from before my eyes, and as though I saw the most beautiful landscape, with its hills and valleys, fields and forests, lakes and rivers, spread out before me. I read not one word of Mary, nor the Pope, nor Purgatory, but everything of Jesus, his Cross, and our Salvation through Him. And when I had found this treasure, I thought I was bound to go out into the world, and tell it to everybody. So I fled from the convent, and began travelling through the country to bring the glad tidings to everyone who wanted to hear them. And I must make haste, for these are bad times; my young life may be taken away from me soon, for I find that——"

Here a rap at the door was heard. There was a rustle through the congregation, which at once rose to its feet. Meanwhile, Will opened the door, and keeping it ajar, asked:

"Anything the matter, Bob?"

"Not a bit," answered a rough voice. "There's a tall, stout fellow outside the gate, who wants to get in, as he says he knows you."

"What is his name?"

"Why, the devil may know it; I can't keep it in my memory."

"I'll go and see myself," said Will, and off he strode with his servant.

"There is no danger, at all events," said the preacher; "so resume your seats, and let me tell you something further about the way to heaven."

The preacher was just about to take up the thread of his discourse again, when the door was opened, and Will entered with a gigantic man, who surpassed him by at least half a foot in height, and had to bend his head to pass through the door.

"Here is our friend, Justus of Prague," said Will, "and a good friend he is."

"Oh, the tall Bohemian!" cried several voices joyfully, and from all sides hands came forward to be shaken. "Welcome, old friend!" cried some. "How dost thou, and how does thy soul?" asked others.

"Are you from Prague—from Bohemia?" asked the preacher, addressing the stranger from his elevated seat. "Then do you also know that good man, John Huss?"

"Don't I know him!" answered the Prague man, with a bass voice that seemed even to make the floor thrill. "It is scarcely six months since I saw him at Magdeburg, when we passed in April last."

"Is he as tall as you are?" asked Deborah, who found herself put entirely in the shade by the gigantic form of the Bohemian.

"Eh, old Deborah!" answered Justus, good-humouredly. "How do you do, old soul? Why, I cannot say Magister John Huss is as tall as I am, though he is one of the tallest of the land. But he is not nearly so stout as I am. In this respect he much more resembles you, Mr. Preacher. He is a thin, meagre man. And no wonder, he is always buried in his book-cell, and has gone through a great deal of suffering of late."

"Suffering? Was he in prison?" asked the preacher in an anxious voice. "I think you had better step up and take my place, and tell us all about that great man of God."

General applause supported this proposal. Justus placed his foot upon the table, and, having got hold of the preacher's hand, soon found himself in sight of the whole assembly. He had to sit down in the chair, however, because his head touched the ceiling when he stood upright. A blushing, weather-beaten face, hemmed in by a strong reddish beard and whiskers of the same colour, now became visible to the congregation. The head to which this face belonged turned upon a long neck, which was visible almost all over its length, till it disappeared in the blue collar of a coarse sailors' jacket, which hung loosely about two broad shoulders.

"No, thank God, John Huss is not in prison yet," he said in very fluent English, though strongly tinctured by a foreign accent, "and if he were, he would be sure never to get out again except to be roasted as a turkey, for the priests in our country don't open a prisoner's dungeon on any other occasion. But I'm afraid it won't be long before they have him in their claws, for times are hard, and even worse than they were when I saw you three years ago. You can understand that John Huss could do no good in the eyes of the archbishop since he publicly praised that good man John Wycliff, and has spread his writings with might and main."

"Hear! hear!" cried the assembly, unanimously. "Cover the whole of Bohemia with them!" cried several voices.

"Would to God we could!" said Justus; "especially since three years ago the archbishop succeeded in laying hold of more than two hundred volumes of Wycliff's writings, which were publicly burnt in the market-place under the toll of the church bells and the singing of *Te Deum*.

"For shame!" cried the assembly.

"So it was," continued Justus, "and among those books there were costly jewels, for they were magnificently bound, and had cost many a rixdaler, depend upon it, for the binding alone. It was a great loss to the owners, for they had paid for them with their good money, and they were their legal property. But the priests did not care about that. The Pope, you know, may rob everybody if he thinks it profitable for the Church. The university and even the king tried to speak a word to prevent the terrible destruction, but in vain. The king, however, compelled the bishop to pay the owners of the books for their loss. But the archbishop, the more exasperated, got a thunder-bolt from Rome, which excommunicated Huss. The people, however, were all John's friends, and laughed at the papal bull. They took all the papal bulls they could lay hold of, and hung them on the necks of harlots, who carried them in procession through the town. Then they laid those bulls on a cart surrounded by armed men, who cried: 'Here we carry the epistles of the greatest scoundrel and heretic to the stake!' And having arrived at the gallows-field, they put fire to the papers and burned them."

"That's right!" cried Will. "A pity they could not burn the archbishop in addition."

"Pst! Pst! No vengeance," said the preacher. "'Let us not avenge ourselves,' says the Apostle, 'for it is written, Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord.'"

"Ah well, I don't know," muttered Will, between his teeth; but he held his peace, as he knew most of the congregation were of the same opinion as the preacher. The Lollards were on the whole a meek, submissive sort of people. Heavily persecuted as they were, they persecuted nobody.

"Our King Wenzel, too, was on John's side," continued the Bohemian, "but at length he was compelled to yield to the threats of the Pope. He advised John to leave Prague for some time, till the rage of the priests should have subsided a little. So John left Prague in December last. He has been living since with his friends, who are delighted to have him for their guest. It was owing to his wandering from castle to castle, and from one country to another,

that I was so happy as to meet the beloved exile in Magdeburg. And fond as I am of my poor country yet I hope he will never return there, for I know it would be his death."

"I cordially hope with you that the Lord may spare that good man's life," said a voice apparently belonging to an old man, a father in Israel; "but if it should be the Lord's will that John Huss be offered up a sacrifice to the praise of His name, let us pray that strength and boldness may be given to him to persevere to his last breath in proclaiming the great truth of salvation. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church, and perhaps the death of John Huss will prove the life of Bohemia."

"Father Henry Elmwood, will you offer up prayer for John Huss?" said the preacher to the old man. "Pray for him and for our dear brother the noble Lord Cobham, and for our other dear brethren and sisters who are sighing in the dungeons of Lambeth."

The old man yielded to this invitation with all his heart. His prayer for the servants, witnesses, and martyrs of God was humble, submissive, supplicating, yet mighty, as if besieging heaven. The sobbings, which were heard all through the room, showed that his words were supported by the feelings of those present. No wonder, indeed, for many a one prayed for a beloved brother, or a husband, or a child, now sighing in dark, damp dungeons, and never to see this world again, except by the glare of the flame which was to burn them to ashes.

A hymn was sung. The preacher pronounced a benediction, and the congregation dispersed, making way through the back-door.

"Is Lord Cobham in prison?" said Justus to Will, in a voice of distress and alarm.

"He is," answered Will.

"Impossible!" exclaimed Justus, clasping his hands upon his knees.

"It is a fact, I tell you," replied Will. "Sir John is in the Tower of London. This is the sorest stroke that ever came upon me, I tell you. I think of it day and night. It makes my bread bitter and my ale sour."

"Merciful God!" sighed Justus, "and how could it happen? Didn't the king protect him? He was the king's favourite, wasn't he?"

"He was a favourite of the late king, but not so much of the present. But Sir John, in my opinion, was imprudent. He knew that Thomas Arundel had sworn not to rest till he was dead. Now, he also knew that Arundel stood high in favour with the king. This, in my opinion, ought to have warned him to trust the king as little as the archbishop. But he continued confiding in the king, until at last the king has betrayed him. But it is rather too long to tell you all about it now, for it is late. And you never told me anything about yourself. When did you arrive?"

"This afternoon. Our ship is lying just opposite the first lime furnace."

"So you did not sail up to town at once?"

"It grew too late in the day. Besides a fog set in, so I thought I had better drop anchor and give you a call. Moreover, I have a parcel of letters from John Huss to Lord Cobham, which he requested me to be very particular in delivering, and as I thought Sir John was at Cowling Castle, I purposed to walk up with you to-morrow to his residence. But I see that's hopeless now."

"I will see you on board to-morrow," said Will. "Is your sister with you?" he added, casting a peculiar look at Justus.

"Who—Miliczia? So you haven't forgotten her yet, you rascal."

"How could I ever forget Miliczia?" answered Will, enthusiastically. "Why didn't you bring her along to-night?"

"It was too dark. Besides, she could not leave our old mother alone all night."

"I see, I see. But at all events I shall see her to-morrow morning. At eight, look out for me."

The two friends shook hands, and while Will fastened the heavy door of his house, Justus of Prague strode along in the dark to the little boat, waiting for him, and which with only a few strokes of the oars, landed him safely on the large merchantman in the middle of the Thames.

III.

The next morning, at the appointed hour, Will found himself on board the *Libertas*, which name was seen in big letters on the broad white flag flapping on the helm, and on the pennon that floated on the big mast. Now-a-days the vessel would be numbered among the small craft that ply up and down the Thames, but in those times she was looked upon as one of the finest and greatest ships that entered the Thames. Indeed, as Will's house figured among the fisher cottages that surrounded it, so the *Libertas* appeared among the vessels which ploughed the back of Father Thames. The crew which manned this big two-masted ship was quite in keeping with its size. Will counted but few among his friends who could "take his ear between their teeth." But here among the Bohemians he saw himself reduced to a middle-sized man, upon whose shoulders even the smallest of them might have rested his elbow.

No sooner had Will stepped on the quarter-deck than Justus pressed him to his bosom, and, after the German fashion, bade him a cordial welcome with a kiss on his forehead. They thereupon went down to the cabin, where two women, dressed in the national costume of the Bohemians, were sitting at a small table, which sighed under the weight of liberal hospitality. Eight o'clock in the morning then was what we now call our luncheon-hour. Ten o'clock, or at the very latest eleven, was the regular dinner-hour for all respectable people in the Christendom of the fifteenth century. One of the women was evidently enough the mother of the other. She was like her in the same way as you will be like your present photograph thirty or forty years hence. She was a beautiful old woman, of nearly three score, but Will's eye could not rest long upon her, as Miliczia was sitting next to her—Miliczia, the finest pearl of Bohemia, whom he never forgot since he had first seen her three years ago. She was a girl of seventeen then. From a child she had accompanied her late father on his voyages between Hamburg and London, so that she knew England as

well as her own country, and spoke both languages with equal ease and fluency. The sea air in which she had grown up from her infancy had imparted a health and strength to her system, making her beautiful blue eyes sparkle with buoyancy and her cheeks blossom like spring-roses. Her dark-brown hair only stealthily peeped out from under a white muslin cap, which was folded and stiffened in a square form. The long white slips of this cap, after having been tied together under her chin by a red ribbon, floated down her neck and bosom, where they disappeared behind a richly-embroidered stay, which at the same time served as a jacket, and which was profusely trimmed up with red and blue and yellow tape and string. Under the stay a red checquered apron was fastened, which covered the front of a blue petticoat that came down to her ankles. The whole of her dress had something very picturesque about it, especially if seen in the open air, with the clear blue sky of Bohemia above and its ever-green fir-clad hills for a background.

The acquaintanceship of three years ago was soon renewed.

"Do you remember where we saw one another the last time?" said Will to Miliczia.

"I think I do," answered she, with a blush. "It was at a meeting at Cowling Castle."

She remembered how, together with her brother and a few sailors, he had guided her home through the dark of the night across the partly inundated fields, and how on that occasion he had often taken her on his arm like a child to carry her through the swollen streamlets, as he whispered into her ear that he wished the rivulet were as wide as the whole world, and that he had to carry her all his life long. She remembered all this quite well, and much more that he had whispered into her ear; and she confessed to herself that though she heard it at the time with surprise, she very often afterwards remembered it with pleasure. Still she could not say on seeing him again, after a lapse of three years, that her expectation was realised. He did not look nearly so meek and innocent, she thought, as he did in those days. He had acquired a roughness and fierceness in his look and manner which but for her agreeable reminiscences, would have made her frightened at him.

"We shall have no meetings there now," said the old woman, in a sad voice. "Justus tells us that the noble lord is in prison."

"You were to tell us how it came about," said Justus.

"Why, I told you that Thomas Arundel, the archbishop, had sworn not to rest till Sir John was in his claws. Knowing, however, that the king held him in favour as the people held him in honour and love, the shrewd priest ventured on no direct public attack, but set at work slyly to prepare the way for it. In the beginning of this year, immediately after the king's accession to the throne, the hypocrite assembled a Convocation, in which the present growth of heresy was debated. A petition was sent up to the king to the effect that a commission should be despatched to Oxford to inquire into the cause of this increase of heretics. This was granted at once, and the answer the commissioners brought home was, that Lord Cobham was the only cause, as he encouraged scholars from Oxford to study, to copy, and to circulate Wycliff's writings and propagate his opinions by preaching. The tiger now thought the fit moment had come to take his fatal leap. Accompanied by a large number of his wicked accomplices, he approached the king with the humble and charitable request that he should put Sir John to death for Christ's sake. But the king refused. He thought Sir John was not so bad as that, and too good, at any rate, to be burnt. He said he would reason with Sir John himself, trusting that he would put him right if there should be anything wrong. So the king sent for his lordship, and bade him change his mind and leave those new opinions alone. Upon this Sir John answered that he had ever been a dutiful subject to the king and hoped ever would be. 'Next to God,' he said, 'I profess obedience to your majesty. But as touching the Pope and his spirituality, I owe them neither suit nor service, forasmuch I know him by the Scriptures to be the great Antichrist.' Now, you may imagine how horrified the king was when he heard such language. He gave Arundel leave to proceed against his lordship with the utmost severity. Yesterday ten days, being the 11th of this month, the archbishop sat in consistory to hear Sir John's case; but Sir John did not make his appearance, and rightly so, for if the priest had to say something to him he might take a boat and sail to Cowling Castle. In the meantime Sir John drew up a confession of his faith, and went up with it to the king; but his majesty coldly pushed back his lordship's hand. 'I will not take this piece of paper,' he said; 'give it to your judges.' 'Please your majesty,' said Sir John, 'I offer, for the defence of my faith, to fight for life or death with any man living, whether Christian or heathen, your majesty always excepted.' This was a fair, noble offer, as it behoved a valiant knight like him to make; but the king, instead of accepting it as he ought, ordered him to be tied like a vagabond and led away to the Tower like a rebel. Oh, isn't it a shame for the house of Lancaster to have dealt thus with such a noble knight and true Christian!"

While giving utterance to these exclamations, Will clenched both his fists and so stamped the floor with his foot, that everything on the little table shook.

"It is a shame," said Justus; "and I should never have believed that Henry IV. would have come to that. But what are they going to do with his lordship?"

"To-morrow is the Lord's Day," said Will, "and that's no day for burning a man; but on Monday next, I am informed, his lordship will have to appear before the court to have a final trial, and then of course they will sentence him to death. Depend upon it Arundel can have no peace as long as Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, is in the land of the living."

"Will," said Justus, "I must interrupt you here, as business compels me to do so. Tide is coming up now, and the wind is favourable. We must weigh the anchor. So, if you won't sail up with us, you had better take to your boat."

"Well, I don't mind sailing up," said Will; "since it is the Lord's Day to-morrow, and I should like to

be in town on Monday to know how Sir John's trial at the Dominican convent comes off. Besides, you have brought a great many nice things from Bohemia, I suppose, which you will show me in the course of the day, since I want to have a little bit of haggling with you, as in days of yore."

Justus went up to the quarter-deck to give orders to his men. The weather being mild and dry, the mother suggested that they might as well continue their conversation. So, seated on the bench on the quarter-deck opposite the caboose, that the charming panorama of the shores of the Thames might cheer up their minds, they talked, for they wanted cheering indeed in these sad times of persecution. There was also another reason why mother Zbyrna wanted to be near the caboose. She wanted to have a look now and then at what the cook was doing with the dinner, now that they were to have a guest at their table. Those looks, however, soon became so frequent that she remained in the caboose altogether, and left it to Miliczia to entertain their guest; an arrangement which Will was of course perfectly content with.

"I have always been a loyal Englishman," he said, "but since Henry could deliver up my lord to his enemies, I fear I am about to feel as deep a hatred to kings as I already do to priests."

"Hush!" answered Miliczia, lifting up her finger, as if to warn him, "you should not feel hatred to either."

"They are the oppressors of mankind," said Will, clenching his fist; "until they be cast out as dirt in the streets there will be no true liberty on earth."

"Oh yes, there is true liberty even now!" cried Miliczia, in a voice of enthusiasm. "There has been true liberty ever since Jesus was born and crucified."

"Indeed!" said Will, in a tone of surprise, and looking with amazement at the maiden's ecstatic attitude. "Then show me the man who has that liberty in our times, please."

"Why, Sir John."

"Sir John? He who is in prison, whose hands are perhaps chained to the wall, and his legs fastened in a block."

"Yes, the same," answered Miliczia. "True liberty is not the liberty of the body. It is the liberty of the spirit, when the heart is made free from sin and its service, from fear of death, from fear of men, from relying upon any other strength but the strong arm of God. In that state of liberty is Sir John's mind at present, I suppose, now that he has come to let his last props go, viz., the king's protection and his own sword, to be left alone with God, and none besides."

"So you are glad he is in prison?" said Will, looking the girl sternly in the face. "I have been thinking all the night how to get him out of that dungeon; but *you* would not help me even if you could, I presume."

"The Lord helping, I think I could give my life to rescue him from prison," answered the girl, in a faltering voice. Will looked in her face. Her eyes were filled with tears.

"Dearest sister!" he exclaimed, taking her snow-white hand between his, and pressing it to his bosom; "I did not mean to grieve you. I *hope* you will forgive me if I have hurt you. But——"

"You misunderstood my words," answered she, with a kind smile, that broke through her tears, as the sun through the morning dew. "I never said true liberty could only be found in a prison. Where Jesus is, there is the liberty of love."

"Quite true," said Will; "but not to be permitted to preach the Gospel, or even to speak one's mind except in secret in the evening or in some hidden corner of the world, and under danger of being apprehended by spies, and put in prison, and burnt to death,—that's not a state of liberty, at all events. Then, again, how many tithes must the poor people bring up all the year round to fatten the bellies of those gourmands, not to speak of the endless taxes which the kings put upon our shoulders just as often as they please. There *must* come an end to that; yes, there *must*. We are all of us creatures of one God. Why should any one of us have the right of making a slave of his brother, of preventing him from saying what he believes to be true, of binding his limbs with cords or chains, of flogging and tormenting him, of——"

"Enough, enough of that!" answered Miliczia, while a shudder passed through her frame. She remembered the tortures which, just before her leaving Prague, three young men had undergone before being burnt to death, because they had contradicted the priest during his sermon. "All these horrors would not be if Jesus had made all of us free. But that is not the case. The priests are not free, nor are the kings, nor are the people. They all serve sin, their own lusts and passions. So there *must* be chains and prisons, racks and stakes, for these things belong to the kingdom of the devil, who is a murderer of man. Nor will it be otherwise until the nations have learnt to love Jesus, and to worship God in His name. We, therefore, ought to speak of Jesus to everybody, to proclaim the Gospel everywhere, no matter whether kings or priests forbid it or not. We ought rather to allow ourselves to be burnt to death than to cease to call people away from the idols, to bow down at the feet of Christ."

"B-r-r-r," muttered Will, beating the hilt of his sword, that never left his side day or night, "but before they get *me* there!"

"Your sword can do nothing," replied Miliczia; "and as long as you place your hope in that you cannot be free yourself."

"Me not free!"

"No. You are the slave of passion. You are in the service of hatred, not of love. Jesus never told you to take the sword. He never killed his oppressors. He prayed for them. He allowed them to put Him to death, and his death has become our life. The liberty which you aim at is only the liberty of the body, the liberty of the mouth to speak and of the hands to act; but you do not seek the liberty of the heart."

"But I do."

"No, you do *not*; for you allow yourself to be in the service of a master who prevents you loving your

enemies. You may kill them, but you cannot pray for them."

"Pray for Arundel, for instance!"

"Yes, just as Jesus prayed for the men who nailed Him to the cross, and as He prayed for you and me, who were his enemies before we knew Him."

Will rose and paced the quarter-deck. He felt the girl was right, yet he did not want to acknowledge he was wrong.

"She is an angel!" he said to himself. "Oh, she *must* be my wife! Indeed, I cannot live without her. I shall never be truly good until she is always with me."

IV.

Monday, the 25th of September, 1413, is a day always memorable in the history of the Reformation of England. Will's prediction was confirmed. The Consistory, with the Archbishop at its head, sentenced Lord Cobham to death. He was designed to be the first-born of that illustrious band of English noblemen who after him were to lay down their lives for Christ.

It was in the Dominican convent that this great iniquity of Antichrist took place. A crowded assembly of bishops, priests, and monks worried the noble knight all day from dawn till dusk with their scoffings, scornful reproaches, insulting questions, and tormenting insinuations.

"Confess your error!" said one of the bishops.

Sir John knelt down. His mind was heavily shaken. He perceived the importance of this day for his own soul—for the cause of Christ—for England.

"O God," he cried, lifting up both his hands to heaven, "to Thee I confess that from my early youth I have sorely sinned against Thee, through pride, through anger, through license and impurity of heart. For these transgressions I pray Thee to have mercy upon me!"

Then, rising from his knees, his eyes filled with tears, he said to the assembly—

"I do not ask your absolution, I only want that of God."

This was plain language. It was the good confession of a noble Christian knight. The priests saw it was in vain to try to intimidate such a hero. They then took to art and cunning. They tried to shake his faith through subtle sophistry. They held out great promises, they said he would be the "Preserver" of the Church of Christ if he would only give in. In vain. All their cunning devices were lost upon the unsophisticated sincerity of that simple hearted Nathanael. The primate and the priests rose, and having uncovered their heads, the sentence of death was read in the most lugubrious manner that that doleful solemnity is capable of.

"Very well," said Sir John. "You have sentenced my body, but, thanks be to the everlasting grace of God, you can do no harm to my soul!"

"Nor to thy body either, Sir John!" cried a stentorian voice.

Everybody was amazed, and everybody looked towards the corner from which that bold word had proceeded. A crowd of people thronged the doorway and even a portion of the hall in which the trial took place. An iron bar prevented them from pushing too far into the hall. As the sun had set, and the hall was only dimly lighted, the faces could not be discerned. But a tall strong man moved through the crowd to leave the place, and two soldiers of the archbishop's lifeguard followed him closely.

"Are you the man who said that word?" they asked him, when he arrived at the street.

"Suppose I were?"

A scuffle ensued. The next morning the two soldiers were found dead at the spot.

It was late in the evening when Will found himself again on board the *Libertas*. She was lying opposite the Tower.

"Why, you are bleeding?" cried Mother Zbyrna, pointing to his hand, across which there was a fresh cut.

"I must have got a scratch somewhere," said Will in an indifferent tone, while Mother Zbyrna opened a drawer from which she took a plaster.

"No, you must have been fighting," said Miliczia, gravely. "Your shoulder is also cut, though it seems not to have penetrated beyond the skin, thank God."

"Have you been in a brawl? Confess, now," said Justus. "You'll never learn to hold your peace, I fear."

Will told his story.

"Of course," he said to Miliczia, "I have done wrongly in your opinion. I should have allowed myself to be chopped like straw by those scoundrels."

"Not at all," she said. "You were right, I think. It was in self-defence. You have done a good deed by speaking a word of sympathy and encouragement to Sir John at that moment of death. It will have done him good. It must have been to him like a draught of cold water in the burning heat of the desert. God will bless you for it. Yes, He surely will."

While she said this her eyes sparkled.

She tendered him her hand, which he brought with enthusiasm to his lips and kissed with great devotedness.

"Justus," said Will, while he was standing on the rope-ladder to row ashore, "do you see that bay-window over there?"

It was a bright clear September evening, and the moon ruled like a queen in the sky.

"You mean the lieutenant's chamber?"

"The same. Do you see the fourth window to the left from the bay-window?"

"I do."

"That's Sir John's prison. If he would just jump down into the water, we should not forget to pick him up, eh?"

"How could he, Will? Haven't you noticed the iron staves?"

"That's the bother, you see. But think of it. Something may be done in one way or another. Good-by."

The splash of oars was heard in the water, and Will disappeared behind the numerous vessels which already crowded that part of the Thames.

After that evening the eyes of Justus, of his mother and sister, were a thousand times a day turned to

that "fourth window to the left from the lieutenant's." Day and night they pondered over the question, *what* might be done to rescue the beloved prisoner. Miliczia spent many an hour in prayer, beseeching the Lord to tell it to her. Meanwhile Will returned to his home, where his business called him. It was made known that Lord Cobham was not to be executed before Easter next year. So, if anything could be done, there was time for preparation.

In those days, the feeling for what is seeming and proper was less developed than in ours. The manners and customs were simpler, and the daily life, especially of the middle class, was much humbler. In our time the sister or daughter of the captain of a first-class merchantman would disdain to live on board ship, and to spend her life in little else than assisting in the management of the vessel and in superintending the cargo. Miliczia, on the contrary, was not only accustomed to be a sailor with sailors, but it was also part of her duty, when arriving at the place of destiny, to walk through the town, basket on head, selling the curiosities of her country at the houses. Soon the fair Bohemian peddleress was well known to the gentlefolks of London, and especially to the young noblemen, who many a time emptied her basket and filled her pocket, just to have a chat with her and to hear her sing her national songs.

One day, it was in February, she found herself at the gate of the Tower. This was perhaps the twentieth time she had found herself there since her arrival in London, but she never had the courage to enter among the rough soldiers she saw swarming about. Still, she thought she *must* do so now, as time was rapidly advancing. So, taking courage, she stepped in.

"Hallo! There is our fair Bohemian!" cried a voice. "Come away, dear girl, don't be afraid!"

The voice came from an officer who from an open window kindly beckoned her to walk through the narrow passage to the inner portion of the premises. She remembered having seen him before. Indeed, she recognised him as her valiant and gallant protector against three intoxicated young noblemen, who were one day molesting her. She soon found herself in his presence, surrounded by a few other officers, who received her with great kindness and respect. Her basket was unpacked, and many articles were sold at handsome prices. Then she had to tell all about Bohemia, and the Kaiser, and the noble town of Hamburg, and how the people were dressed, and how they lived, and what songs they sang at wedding or carnival.

All this pleased the gentlemen so exceedingly that they requested her to come as often as she liked, and gave her permission to visit the Tower at any time of day. This was the very thing she desired, and she did not neglect to turn this permission to her own profit. She came nearly every day, each time extending her visit a little farther. Soon she penetrated to the inmost parts of this labyrinth of buildings, gates, passages, steps, and courts, with which she soon became as familiar as she was with the compartments of her own ship. And all who saw her, the highest officials as well as the common soldiers, were pleased with her appearance, as she was always cheerful and *naïf* and curious as a child.

"Dear me, what a heavy iron door, captain! That's a prison cell, I suppose."

"It is, darling."

"Is any one in it at present?"

"Here? Let me see—Number 2—yes, of course, that's Thomas Balfour's, the late king's secretary. It is nearly a twelvemonth since he came here."

"Poor man! Could I not see him? Perhaps he may buy something out of my basket that may give him pleasure. And I will sing a song to him to cheer him a little."

"Not bad, that," said another officer, laughing. "Let poor Tom have some fun, I say, John."

"Well, I don't mind. Bob is to bring him his dinner in a quarter of an hour. You may go in with him, if you like, pussy."

And soon Bob, the turnkey, was accustomed to see the fair Bohemian about dinner-time in the passage, in order to go in with him when he brought the prisoners their scanty rations. And even rough Bob was pleased to see what a comfort her words were to the poor captives, and how her melodious tunes made them for a moment forget all the misery of their position.

One evening in March, Miliczia, on entering the cabin of her ship, put down the basket quickly, and producing a slip of paper from her bosom, said to her mother and Justus:—

"Sir John gave me this to-day. Listen now: 'The staves are through. I am ready.'"

"Then let us send for Will at once," cried Justus. "Happily he is in Greenwich just now. To-morrow night it must be done."

The next evening, Will and Justus, under cover of a dense darkness, gently pushed along in a boat, till they found themselves under the well-known fourth window. Groping over the wall, they soon laid hold of a string that hung down from the window. A gentle pull from below, was followed by a responsive pull from above. Then a rope-ladder was fastened to the string, and gently hoisted up. A few minutes elapsed, and there was profound silence. Then a short crack was heard, and a gentle rush, as if somebody was gliding down the wall, and next a few heavy shakes of the rope-ladder, and down into the boat came a man, who was caught in the arms of those in the boat.

"God be praised!" he whispered. Justus immediately grasped the oars, and within a couple of minutes Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, found himself in the cabin of the Bohemian *Libertas*.

There was no time to be lost. The rope-ladder which was hanging down from the window would be sure to betray them. The anchor was weighed as soon as the moon peeped out, and before the escape of the prisoner was discovered next morning, the *Libertas* found herself, with her precious cargo, many miles down the Thames. Next day Sir John left the ship in the company of Will. He resolved, after having arranged some matters at Cowling Castle, to fly to Wales, where he was certain he would be safer than in any other part of the world.

Four years later, in April 1418, Justus and Miliczia were sitting on the grassy bank of the Moldau, enjoying a magnificent view of the venerable city of Prague. The spot, too, was visible where, nearly three years before, John Huss had been sacrificed as a burnt-offering for the name of Christ. They were recalling the faith, courage, and love of that great man, manifested even at the last moment, when the smoke, driven into his face by a gush of the wind, choked him—and a young man, who had approached them unnoticed, asked in broken German, while pointing to the place :—

"Is that the spot where Huss died?"

"It is," answered Justus in English, for he knew at once that the foreigner was a native of the "far west."

"You speak English!" exclaimed the young man in a tone of pleasant surprise. Then, looking Justus in the face—

"Why," he said. "I know you. Aren't you Justus of Prague?"

Justus now examined the stranger from top to toe, but in vain.

"Don't you remember the preacher who invited you to come upon the table at Will Simpkins'?"

"Is it you?" cried Justus, joyfully. "Sit down, sir, and tell me all about your dear noble country. When did you leave it?"

"Two months ago."

"And how is Sir John?"

"He is in heaven. He was safe for four years under the protection of his Welsh friends. The king set a price of a thousand marks upon his head, and promised a perpetual exemption from taxes to any town that should secure him, but he was never delivered up. At length, however, the archbishop succeeded in prevailing upon the Lord Powis to play Judas. He was again brought to the Tower, from which on the day of his martyrdom he walked out with a cheerful countenance. Arrived at the place of his execution, he fell upon his knees and implored God to forgive his enemies. He then stood up, and, briefly addressing the multitude, exhorted them to continue steadfast in the observance of the laws of God as contained in the Scriptures. He was slowly burnt to death upon a small fire. He praised the Lord with his last breath."

"Why didn't he stay with us?" exclaimed Justus; "he would have been safe now."

"He is still safer where he is," said Miliczia. "He has now that crown of glory which nobody can take from him. Oh, to be a martyr for Christ! What an honour! What a glory!"

A glare of joy shone from her face while she was saying these words.

"And what has become of Will?" asked Justus.

"After Lord Cobham's recapture it was discovered that he was with the Bohemians who effected Sir John's escape. So a band of soldiers was sent to his house to capture him, either dead or alive, as he was known to be a strong man and a desperate one. As they approached his house all the people of the neighbourhood ran to their arms, and a regular fight was like to ensue, when suddenly he threw away his sword, and falling on his knees cried: "Lord Jesus! Help me now!" Then, stepping on towards his enemies, he said: "Let there be no blood shed for my sake: I am ready to die." He was conveyed to the prison in the archbishop's palace at Lambeth, and there he was when I left England. But he is in heaven most likely now, for Arundel, you know, roasts his game as soon as he can."

Tears streamed down Miliczia's face.

"I am sure you loved him, as I always said," observed Justus.

"I esteemed—I liked him," she said, "but I love him now. Nor shall I love any other man henceforth. We never were united in life, but we shall be in death."

On the list of the Bohemian Martyrs the name occurs of Miliczia of Prague, burnt to death A.D. 1419.

LAST WORDS IN CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL, 1865.

BY THE DEAN.

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the LAST."—*Rev.* xxii. 13.

THERE is ever something solemnising in the thought, that it is the *last time*. The last gleam of the day—the last word before parting—the last look of a life—all these acquire an importance and an interest vastly beyond any which they would possess in and of themselves. The sun shone brighter before he approached his setting: the farewell word was some very ordinary one, of no real weight: the parting look was one which we would willingly otherwise have forgotten. But no noon-day splendour was so cherished in memory, as that slanting beam that disappeared in a spark of gold over the western hills: no one tone in all our converse dwelt on the ear so long and so clear, as that one word, "Good bye:" no look has ever been so often recalled, as that smile of recognition on the pallid face from whence life was taking its flight.

And so, whatever those words may be in themselves which I am about to utter here to-day, they may claim some hold on your attention perhaps, as being the last which will sound in this church in the year now ending. Another long course of human hopes and fears and interests, has passed away. We stand at another barrier of those spaces which divide our lives. A few hours, and a door will open to us, and admit us into a new field for desire, and action, and suffering, and will close behind us for ever. To-morrow we shall be in another year—not really more changed from what we are to-day, than to-day has changed us from yesterday; yet, in spite of reality, more, inconceivably more, changed. For it is not matter of fact which makes differences between one state of man and another, but it is the thoughts, and deemings, and

ways of speech among men: by these we are ruled, and to these we are conformed. And besides, after all, there is, say what we will, a certain reality in our comparative measurement of ourselves at these intervals. It is matter of fact, that we are none of us the same, nor near the same, as we were when we met here standing before the last barrier of this kind, waiting admission into the year which has now passed over us. The child's limbs have knit into strength, the youth has come nearer manhood, the maiden has put on the matron, the brow of mature age has become barer and more furrowed, the aged step is not so firm. And for some the grave has opened, and their places know them no longer.

Nor is the mere passage of time to each of us all that makes a difference. The happy voices that surround us in our homes—some have sprung into life, some, alas! have been hushed for ever; over others has gathered sadness. The multitude of thoughts that are in our hearts,—those oceans that have their calms and their storms, their depths and their shallows, they too have passed through changes, and are not as they were. Some who were fainting and doubting then, have gathered trust now, and are walking in healthy communion with their God; some, whose mountain seemed strong, have been shaken, and find now in all the promises but scanty comfort; others, who trusted and obeyed when we began the year, have gone on from strength to strength, making advance in obedience and self-denial; while others again, hesitating and trifling with the momentous business of man, have passed into deeper shades of unbelief and are more than ever paralysed with irresolution for good.

No, my brothers and sisters, we are none of us what we were. Granted, that in the unbroken vigour of youth, day is as day, and year as year; granted, that in the confirmed health and strength of mature life, business goes on, and week after week passes unobserved; granted, that to the green old age the eye becomes not dim nor the natural force abated: yet if we seem to change not, our times change, and carry us with and in them. For each of us there is an inevitable day, somewhere in the line which stretches its dim perspective before our imagination, known to One only; and to that day we are year by year advancing by long steps:—a day when there will be no more spaces to traverse, no more barriers to pass through; when time for us shall be at an end, and the world shall toll its hours for us no longer. With reference to that day, we are all changed—changed by much—since we closed the door of the last year. It has come closer to us. The feet of them that shall carry us forth are nearer the door. The remaining time is shorter: shorter by all this long space which we have now traversed.

And if it may be allowed us to cast back our thoughts over a few of these breaks in the course of our lives, how different were we, how different was all around us, from our present condition! And how great will the difference also be, if we are spared yet over a few more! Our beginnings—here in this, or in any house of prayer—at first brought thither, the feeblest and least intelligent of the worshippers, and gradually taught to join in the prayers and praises of the great congregation; then taking our place, as now, fathers, mothers, grown up members of households: and then, if we may venture to look onward, will come the gradual enfeebling by infirmity or disease,—the less frequent appearance in the house of God,—the service read, and the holy rite administered, at home; then the space and the faculties narrowing, till one dim room shall be all the range, and a few sentences of the service all that the shattered powers can bear:—and so the strongest pass away; and so those who have preached, and those who have sung, and those who have listened, sink alike into silence and decay together, and are unenquired after, like the heaped leaves of the autumn that is past. So hurry onwards, so spend themselves and come again, so intertwine and crowd out one another, the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

And of all places, a great historical building like this seems most vividly and touchingly to bring before us this fleeting, this fading character of all that belongs to individuals, of all that belongs to generations, of all that belongs to souls of men. These walls have witnessed the fervid teaching of Anselm, the fierce anathemas and fiercer death-scene of Becket, and the crowdings of the pilgrims of Christendom to his gorgeous shrine: these same enclosures have heard the wild tumult of the day when shrines and images were torn down, and have listened to the voices of whole ages of teachers pleading for the purer faith once for all delivered to the saints. Of all this no traces remain, save what are discerned in books and read of in history. All the echoes have passed away. The long-drawn sounds which follow the musical note uttered in the empty nave at night, dying out amidst the aisles and distant chapels, are but emblems of other and longer sounds, uttered by the passing ages, dying one after another as generations pass away, till all is silence save the tread of them that live, and the voice of him who speaks now, but shall soon be silent as the rest.

Nor can I abstain, in thinking of recent changes, from bringing to your mind other scenes, which they forcibly recall to us. Those venerable and tottering arches, which the demolition of modern dwellings* has restored to us in their ruin—strange, indeed, is it to call up the images of those who once inhabited them: the sick ranged in their beds along the vaulted hall which those columns supported—the sick, and those who ministered to them; and the graceful traceries and yet glowing colours in the hospital-chapel, telling of the rites and celebrations of long-forgotten days. This new beginning, as it were, of that which had come to its end, this second journey to decay of that which had already accomplished its course, reminds us not only that even the solid stones are frail like those that raise them,—but that there is no permanence even in decay, no repose even in ruin. Fire did its work, and the ancient walls were thrust dishonoured into oblivion—and now they are brought forth and

* Within the last few months some houses have been pulled down at the north-east of the cathedral, into which had been built the arches of the south side of the old hall of the hospital of the monastery, and the chapel belonging to the same. The result has been the opening of a most imposing and venerable ruin, never before seen by the present generation.

honoured, for time to do its work,—and oblivion again the end.

All is beginning—ever thrusting itself up, ever intruding: the new with its change invading the old, unwelcome even in its necessity: all is ending—something ever crumbling down, some bright colour fading away, some sweet sound dying out, some familiar thing being removed: health and strength ending, feebleness and disease beginning: love and familiarity ending, coldness and alienation beginning: faith and certainty ending, doubt and questioning beginning. Where, my brothers and sisters, where shall we stand and hold fast? Where may any one thing be found, fixed amidst the flux of all other things? Where shall we hear any voice, speaking alike to the babe and to the aged—not too stern for our first childhood, not too fresh and startling for our second?

One, and but One there is, and His voice speaks to us to-day:—"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." One, and one only. But who is it that thus speaks? Is it the Eternal Unseen God? We know that He is all this, that He must be all this: that He cannot change nor pass away. But what is that to us, to us who are changing and passing away? Can darkness gather comfort by thinking on the blaze of noon? To us His light is unapproachable, His changeless Being unimaginable.

No, my brethren: we need for our resting-place one who has trodden our world: one who has passed through our changes: one upon whose history the wounds of our spirits have written their scars. We need one who is unchangeable in the midst of change: purest light amidst gathering and whelming darkness; everlasting joy amidst sorrow passing our sorrow.

And such an One is now before us: the babe of Bethlehem—the subject youth of Nazareth—the wonder-worker of Capernaum—the teacher by the shore and in the temple—the agonised in Gethsemane—the crucified of Calvary—the ascended from Olivet—the Intercessor on the throne of God—the man Christ Jesus. Not in vain do these eight days of Christmas-tide bring Him before us at the end of each fleeting year. All is passing away—we, our generation, our nation, our world: but He passeth not away, nor one word that He hath ever uttered. He is Alpha, the first letter taught to the child on its mother's knee: with Him begins all Christian lore:—the Babe in the Manger, the first lesson to every babe in every home in Christendom. He is Omega, the last completed thought of the wisdom of the wisest: in Him are the unsearchable riches of all knowledge: He alone, and his work alone, can interpret the evil in the world, and the good in the world: for Him, as well as by Him, were all things created, and in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. He is the beginning. Before all the works of God—in the beginning, further back than human imagining can reach, He took not his beginning, but He was with God, and He was God: He is the beginning, for with Him begun the going forth of God to his universe, and with Him must begin all that would come to worthy issue in that universe: He is the beginning, for only by Him is there access to God, and through Him, as the Door, must every pilgrim to bliss enter on his life's journey. And He is the end: for in Him are all things that are in heaven and earth summed up, and these fleeting years of ours are but the steps of putting all things under his feet: He is the end, for to Him, and for the love of Him, must every worthy course of human action find its completion: He is the end, for the Christian course which begun through Him and is continued in Him, shall find Him at its close, as He was at its outset, and pass at last into his presence, and be made glad with the joy of his countenance. He is the First:—First in the counsel, First in the love, First in the glory of his Father: First in esteem of every one who knows Him, First in his claim for obedience, One whom none other may rival, none other pass before, none other supplant. And He is the Last: we cannot pass beyond Him to any thing new: there will never come a time when He shall be exhausted: as none can supplant Him, so shall none supersede Him: only when all things shall have been put under Him, and gathered unto Him, shall He pass into the glory of the Father, subject unto Him that put all things under Him, and God, but still God in Christ, be all in all.

With this enduring One, with this stedfast and abiding One, let us connect our fleeting years, that we may be abiding like Him. Would we, who have but begun the rudiments of knowledge, go on to know the wisdom of God? He of whom are the first steps, the Alpha, is the Omega also, and will make us wise unto salvation, and in salvation wise up to the measure of our renewed faculties. Would we who have begun our course, carry it on to that eternity which will be its only end? He is the beginning and the end: He will not cut short his work in his Church, but will pursue it unto the consummation of the days.

And how shall we bind on our weakness to his strength, our decay to his permanence, our mortal to his incorruptible? Simply, my brethren, by thinking and speaking and living as members of Him: by living our lives in humble following of his: by love, by purity, by gentleness, by prayer for the Holy Spirit, by spending and being spent for Him and for the brethren.

Then, though our years pass on, and we with and in them—though our outward man decay—we shall have a sure hold and a firm abiding-place; though this earthly temple know us no longer, we shall be worshippers in one which shall then be most glorious and most crowded, when all earthly temples have passed away; then, though here on earth our names may be written in water, and our remembrance be but for a day, our names shall be known in heaven, and our reward be on high.

May thoughts and prayers like these end the year which is going and begin that which is coming: thus may all our endings and all our beginnings be bound unto and bound up in Him who is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the First and the Last.

A FUNERAL.

"What now dost thou bury so softly and still?
Oh! this is the grave of my own proud will.
I bid it sleep softly in Death's little room,
And my hopes too I bury with it in the tomb."
De la Motte Fouqué.

BETWIXT the light of the rising sun
And the light of the waning moon,
Along the grassy forest path,
Fair Knight, thou speedest soon.
A chill, faint dawn is on the sky,
And through the wood a breath
Runs fresh, yet cold, as is the sigh
That comes 'twixt life and death.

The forest paths are green and lone,
The forest shade is deep;
The secrets on its stillness thrown
It knoweth well to keep;
And some will seek the forest glade,
A deadly strife to end;
And some there are will seek its shade
To meet a gentle friend.

Yet on this brow I read no frown
Of foeman's vengeful ire;
And in this quiet eye cast down,
No light of soft desire:
Not thus they look who meet by night
Beneath the blossomed thorn,
And cry, when breaks the eastern light,
"How quickly comes the morn!"

The forest lies like one that sleeps,
With tearful, half-shut lid;
A touch, a stir, a rustling creeps,
And all the flow'rets hid
'Mid tangled grasses, drenched with dew
And dreams, are holding up
To heaven each silver starry eye,
To heaven each golden cup;
A light is on each leaf, the light
And sweetness of the morn;
The glory of the summer day,
In summer woodlands born.

A little bird upon the bough
Sang clear; a light breeze stirred
The thick, dark summer leaves, but now
I know not if he heard
The whisper of the summer leaves,
The carol of the bird.

A little brook beside his way
Ran chafing, chiding long;
I know not if he marked its play,
Or heard its ceaseless song;
At length he neared a green, smooth place,
Within the thickest shade,
A still, fair, solitary place,
For quiet spirits made.

And in that solitary place
He knelt and prayed to God;
I saw no mound beneath his knees,
No heaving of the sod:
Unstirred I saw the grasses lie,
Unstirred the daisies wave;
A pleasant spot, and yet I knew
He knelt upon a grave.

He lifted up his steel-clad hands:
"I bring to Thee the first,
I bring to Thee," he said, "the last
Fond hope that I have nursed;
The wish that strengthened with my strength,
And with my being grew;
And the last sweet silent dream that crept
Close to my heart and drew
So soft a breath, that if it slept
Or woke, I scarcely knew.
On earth, in Heaven, whom have I now
But Thee? in death, in life?
Oh! bind my spirit with the vow
That makes an end of strife!

"The dead above their dead may wail,
The living live to Thee,
Oh First and Last! Thou dost not fail,
For Thou art strong, and we,
Thy little ones, are weak and frail;
And Thou our Lord art free;
And we with heavy bonds are bound,
But now of bond or free
I reck not, bitter turns to sweet;
I see Thy hands, I see Thy feet,
Ah, dearest Lord, I see
Thy wounded heart: oh! be Thou found
For First and Last to me!"

He rose and went upon his way:
A moving to and fro
Was in the woods, as of a calm
Strong wind, that gathers slow;
No dew lay on the grassy dell,
The sky was cloudless, clear;
Yet from the clear bright heavens there fell
A solitary tear.

And through the woven boughs I saw
The glory of the sky
Look down, I saw the forest flowers
In quiet bloom and die:
I saw the lowly grasses bend,
I saw the daisies wave:
Oh Jesus, loving to the end,
Thou knowest of that grave!

DORA GREENWELL.

THE PROUD CHARACTER.

IT is not easy to describe pride well, inasmuch as we are all more or less infected with it, and it is difficult for us to see a defect, of which we ourselves furnish an illustration; and inasmuch as pride is the root and foundation of all other sins, which branch off into so many and so various forms that one man is scarcely capable even of surveying them all. Pride indeed is but another name for sin in general. Every breach of God's commandments, when accurately analysed, betrays pride as its moving principle. By its fatal agency our first parents fell, for had they continued humble, believing that their Father was wiser than they, they would never have touched the fruit against which He had so seriously warned them. And

Scripture, as we know, points out no other cause for the fall of Satan and his angels. Attempting to make themselves independent of God, they abode not in the truth, and fell from their first estate. So that, in fact, all the evil which obtains in the universe may be clearly traced to this one source—pride.

It has often been observed that all evils, strictly viewed, are exaggerations of some good principle. Pride is the exaggeration of self-esteem, the over-estimation of one's self—of one's value, strength, capacity or talent. And as there is a tendency to confound virtues with those vices which are their unlawful exaggeration (prudent frugality, for instance, being often stigmatised as meanness, caution as cowardice, and so on), so the self-esteem that is simply right and proper is often condemned as pride. The difference between the two, however, is great and real. The one may as truly be said to characterise a saint as the other to characterise a sinner. It is true, there are many good people who think that such a thing as self-esteem is proper to no human being, because of the Scripture assurance that "we all have sinned and come short of the glory of God;" and they quote a host of texts to the effect that we are all guilty before our Maker, that all our righteousness is as filthy rags, and that in God's sight we are disgusting—full of wounds and bruises and putrefying sores from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot. This they do to prove that, instead of cherishing self-esteem, we should rather cultivate self contempt and self-condemnation. But those good people use these truths as they were never meant to be used, and forget that our want of due self-esteem is one of the chief causes of our dark, helpless, and miserable condition as spiritual creatures; and that if God has anything to reproach us for, as human beings, it is that we have not rightly valued and used that high and honourable position assigned to us in creation. If Adam had but appreciated the royal dignity with which God invested him, as at once bearing the Divine image and being sovereign under Him of the lower creatures, he would never have so degraded himself as to hearken to a creature in the form of one of the inferior animals, which told him that He, whose child and representative he was, was nothing better than an impostor. Christ has said that a man is much better than a sheep; but if a man, instead of acting like a king, conducts himself like one of the lower creatures, he certainly deserves contempt. "We are God's offspring," says the Apostle; and if we esteem ourselves as less than this, we are as guilty as we should be were we to exalt ourselves above all that is called God. It is true that through our apostasy from God we have lost all honour in his sight. But then assuredly the way to get out of this low condition is not by setting ourselves at the lowest level of existence, but rather by trying faithfully to regain the high and dignified position from which, through our recklessness, we fell.

And here two roads present themselves, between which we have to choose. We may try to regain this lost position by the exercise of our own wisdom and energy. This is the way of pride. Or we may try to regain it by the aid of God, who in Christ has graciously stretched out his hand to us to lead us back, not merely to our original position, but to a much higher state than we ever occupied before. This is the way of true Christian faith, which is founded upon a due estimation of ourselves as the offspring of God.

Self-esteem is thus a Christian virtue, as essential to true holiness as pride is to sin. The Apostle Paul gave many beautiful illustrations of it in his life and conduct. We never find him undervaluing his high calling as a child of God, as an Apostle, or as a man gifted by God with high talents, both intellectual and spiritual. Meek and indulgent as he is, he never allows himself to be played with, or tossed about by his jealous and dogmatic opponents in the Church. He cordially esteems and loves his fellow Apostles, yet when it is necessary to vindicate his own special calling, he always meets them with dignified independence, and when it is necessary to the bringing forth of God's glory, he hesitates not to point out that he had laboured more abundantly than they all. He often held up his own life to the churches as an example for imitation, or as a ground for defence against unjust accusation. And when, having undergone an infamous public flogging and a subsequent false imprisonment at Philippi, the magistrates wanted him to slink secretly out of the town, he decidedly refused to do so, and compelled them to withdraw the stigma they had attached to his character, by coming in person to his prison and leading him out with an honourable escort.

Now, if the display of his own excellence had been the Apostle's main object, all this might have been regarded as the fruit of pride; but since the whole of his life exhibits him as a man, than whom no Christian could be more averse to vainglory, all this may teach us that self-respect is an ornament of the Christian character as much as self-humiliation and self-denial are. But self-respect becomes pride when it is carried beyond its due limits; when, for instance, a man exalts himself at the cost of truth, with the intention of earning from others a praise which is unmerited. The praise the proud man delights in is not always undeserved, for every good and useful work is deserving of praise, no matter whether it come from a proud man or a humble one. Honour should be rendered to whom honour is due, even though the person receiving it may make a bad use of it. But when the proud man receives even deserved praise, he abuses it by showing greater delight in the honour his work yields to himself than in the boon which it confers upon others. This disposition of mind is further characterised by a constant attempt at magnifying the praise which accrues to it, and at getting it repeated on every fresh occasion, eliciting it even from the lips of strangers, or from those who are but partially acquainted with the circumstances.

But pride does not always desire praise of men. Among its numerous forms there is one which I would call *haughty* pride. This species is found among that class of people who have such a high idea of themselves that they think other people's praise or censure as incapable of affecting them as the stone from the boy's sling is incapable of reaching the moon. They are mostly people of high birth

and low understanding—with full purses and empty heads, who, too stupid to perceive that there can be anything better than a long pedigree and a fine estate, have no conception of the value of a good man's approbation. They look down upon others with very much the same air of contempt as Pyrrhus' elephant did upon noble Fabricius. They suppose they can in no way better show their superiority over what they call the vulgar people than by adopting a course of life opposed to theirs. Therefore they lounge in idleness, because diligence is common; or they are studious to be intemperate at every meal, because temperance has now become plebeian. They belong to that class of people of whom the Apostle says that "their glory is in their shame." Theirs is the pride of that fool Hierostratus, who, since he saw no chance of getting fame as a builder, set fire to the temple of Diana at Ephesus, that he might at least get fame as a destroyer.

The same sort of pride is also sometimes noticeable in men of extraordinary talent or genius, and also in those who take themselves for such. Their superiority above all other men being conclusively settled in their own mind, they think they cannot better show it than by persistence in all kinds of disorderly habits and foolish irregularities, just as a locksmith will sometimes attempt to prove the indestructibleness of his fire-safe by surrounding it with flames. So you will often find eminent men making a point of being careless and indifferent. If they have promised to do you a service, or to meet you at a certain place or hour, you may expect them to forget it, not perhaps from want of kindness, but from their superabundance of genius. Some of them even give themselves up to profligacy, or at least maintain such equivocal connexions as would be certain to ruin their reputation for ever, were it not that their character is screened by the splendour of their accomplishments. This kind of pride conclusively shows that the man of the greatest genius may at the same time be the greatest fool.

Pride which piques itself upon the possession of merely material privileges—money, beauty, splendour of dress, and such like, may very fitly be called *monkey-pride*. People who are under its influence are like La Fontaine's monkey, which, having put on its master's night-cap and dressing-gown, placed itself at the breakfast-table and rang the bell for toast. Their chief folly consists in forgetting that whatever they are carrying about with them, whether it be a full purse, handsome form, or fine dress, is still but the adornment of a concealed skeleton, which must one day lie five or ten feet deep under the ground; and how pitiful will their case be on that day when a voice shall say to them, "Fools, this night your souls shall be required of you, and whose shall all these things be?"

An apparently more reasonable but not less blameable pride is that which plumes itself upon the successful results of ability, zeal, and energy. This may be called *ambitious* pride. It has often been observed that it is difficult to find able, clever, pushing people who are not apt, with a certain self-approving unction, to compare themselves with others who, owing to their silliness, slothfulness, or sluggishness, have remained behind them. Their fault consists in constantly neglecting to put two questions to themselves: first, What hast thou that thou didst not receive? and, second, What hast thou done that thou mightst not have done better? It would be a great blessing to them to give up comparing themselves with their inferiors, and resolve always to compare themselves with their superiors. This, however, they seldom or never do, except with the purpose of showing that the difference is solely attributable to circumstances not under their control, which is but another way of giving a sop to their pride. Ambition is like that pushing, circling force which makes the tree grow. If combined with humility, it yields abundant fruit; if combined with pride, it turns everything into twigs and leaves, which send forth magnificent foliage, but offer no refreshment to the hungry and thirsty. It is a simple truth, yet it is one of the very hardest to understand, that when we have thrown our whole heart into the work we have to do, and have striven our utmost to make our capacities and talents as productive as possible, still we have only done what it was our duty to do; and that every shade of self-exaltation or the piquing ourselves on having performed something extraordinary, is not only out of place but sinful. Such pride can only rest upon very foolish grounds,—upon the supposition, for instance, that God has given us more power than we need apply even for his service, that mediocrity is the standard of perfection, and that our duty requires nothing more from us than a return of some of the capital we received on loan. Moreover, the excellences of which this sort of pride boasts will, if minutely examined, often be found worth very little. It is as though you plumed yourself upon having invented a wonderful machine. But you forget to tell us how much you learnt from the experiments and failures of those who went before you. Perhaps you have only brought to a conclusion the laborious and unparalleled work of your predecessors. Or perhaps you boast of having managed your business so well that it is now one of the largest and most lucrative in town. But were one to tell your story in other words, he might truly say that you can only boast of being a great lover of your own self. Your conduct strangely contrasts with that of another Man, who was such a lover of others, that, to make them rich, He became poor.

Some people again are proud of their integrity and respectability. Their pride may be called *moral* pride. Scripture calls it Pharisaism—self-righteousness. They may be respectable people indeed, faithful in the discharge of their daily duties, honest as gold, just and true as Aristides, and kind to all who come in contact with them. Through their honesty and probity they may have worked themselves up in life, so that they occupy a respectable, or perhaps even a distinguished, position in society. Consciousness of these praiseworthy attainments often makes them take for granted that they deserve *nothing* but praise and approbation. Consequently they are quite inaccessible to correction of any kind. The moment one tries, even in the most discreet and gentle

way, to convince them of a fault, they get angry, declare abruptly that they will not be so spoken to; or they silence their corrector by arguments proving that what is imputed to them for a fault, is, on the contrary, an excellent virtue If Christians, they readily accept the general title of "sinners," but they carefully cast aside the faintest imputation of being guilty of any special sin. Or should they occasionally be brought to confess that from their own personal experience they had known themselves as sinners, they only point to some absurd and long-past foible. Such people are, now-a-days, very phlegmatic, considerate, cold, and cautious. They do their duty, nothing beyond it. They are never moved into lively sympathy for the good, nor into passion against the evil. Their sympathies are always under the control of strict calculation. However good an object may be, if its pursuit can possibly lead them into any difficulties, or make them the subject of a little unpleasant gossip, they prudently decline having anything to do with it. Sometimes, too, they are extraordinarily active and zealous, but only in such works as will be certain to add to their respectability and reputation. And thus, while earning in their life nothing but praise, they secure to themselves a eulogistic epitaph after death. But whether they will secure anything beyond that, it were difficult to say, since it is not clear that they have not got all their reward on this earth.

Something akin to this is *spiritual* pride. The human heart is indeed a wonderful instrument. It knows how to turn everything, even the holiest and most divine things, into idols. Give man a blessed book like God's Word, and, unless guarded and guided by the true spirit, he will as a scholar, a profound thinker, a sort of prophet, turn it into a magazine of ornaments, to decorate himself with. Give him a blessed doctrine like that of salvation by grace, and he is sure to turn it into an instrument whereby to save himself. Show him true humility, and he will soon weave out of it a cloak, in which to walk abroad to be seen of men. To be favoured with spiritual gifts is indeed a great blessing, but the history of the Church of Corinth shows that even those gifted with them may be puffed up when the best gift of all, love, is neglected. The doctrine of election, for instance, is, if well understood, a precious jewel among the gems of Scripture; but there are not many believers who have wisdom and discretion enough to abstain from unwisely appropriating it as an ornament for their own selves. Believing that they are God's elect, they are easily led to suppose that there must be something more than ordinary about them as Christians. They are, in their own opinion, God's special favourites—through mere sovereign grace, of course—but still they stand nearer to God than other Christians. And so they know a great deal of what other Christians cannot yet understand. Nobody can teach them anything, they will teach everybody. They like to speak in figures, as the prophets; or in parables, as our Lord did. They are fond of giving a lengthened account of their own religious feelings, which they take for special operations of the Holy Spirit in their souls; and they gladly indulge in detailed narratives of the Lord's spiritual dealings with them, that everybody may know what extraordinary objects of God's care they are. Others, again, who through much spiritual exercise have attained a more than common degree of holiness, and live in close communion with the Lord, have often, after successfully overcoming many temptations and besetting sins, found this sin of spiritual pride left as their last enemy, threatening in the end to rob them of all the laurels which they gained in former conquests. Their pride usually manifests itself in their harsh and unchristian judgments of the faults of their neighbours. They often say in effect that they cannot possibly understand how such or such a brother or sister could fall into such or such a sin. They really doubt whether he or she could ever have been a Christian. They appear greatly scandalized at learning that certain people of Christian reputation indulge in certain amusements which they have erased from the list of permissible recreations. They make up their minds to have nothing to do with such people any longer. They are shocked at hearing that this or that minister, whom hitherto they have looked upon as a devout servant of God, could preach such or such a doctrine the other day! They resolve to call upon him to expostulate with him and put him right, and, if he should prove refractory, to renounce his fellowship. Blinded by the idea of their excellence, they forget that nobody can be so perfectly instructed as to be beyond the possibility of learning, and that nobody here on earth can be so holy as to be incapable of falling into some prejudice. To a proud mind nothing is more difficult to learn than the constant practice of that large-hearted magnanimity which claims no greater liberty to itself than it will gladly allow to others; nor is anything so incompatible with pride as that love, which, while rejoicing not in iniquity but in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, and endureth all things.

The chief and common companion of pride is *ignorance*. Our pride feeds itself by dwelling upon the possession of some ornament which we believe to be extraordinarily brilliant. But did we see the precious jewels which adorn many others in like circumstances, we would shun to wear ours, and would meekly set ourselves to increase our store of grace. When the savage points proudly at the glass beads that adorn his neck, or a schoolboy plumes himself upon being able to spell out a common word, we cannot help laughing at their foolish ignorance. One day, when sitting in an express train, I noticed a swallow flying along—now far ahead, now far behind, making flying circles, as it seemed, round the train. "I wonder," thought I, "what that little creature would say if it could describe the impression which our highly-praised invention must make upon it. It must be much amused at the huge engine, with the puffing chimney, and all the snorting, whistling, hissing, and rattling, while it, without the slightest noise or effort, but only with a pair of tiny wings, which one might put into his waistcoat pocket, accomplishes a speed of from eighty to ninety miles

an hour. Surely we have not yet learnt all the art of locomotion, even with our six thousand years' studying and trying!" Once—it was a week-day—I stood in a large country church, and looked at the splendid organ which towered up to the ceiling. It was just being tuned, and the organist sent forth a powerful roll of sound. Adjacent to the church was a meadow, and through the open window came the bellow of a cow, which made the church ring, and drowned the sound of the organ. I looked up to the huge instrument, with its rows of gigantic tubes, realising in my fancy the tremendous bellows and the man blowing them in the sweat of his brow; and then going to the window I looked at the cow, a comparatively little animal, six feet long and five high, and thought of its little throat, from which the powerful note proceeded. And I said to myself, "We have much to learn yet before we shall be able to rival nature's sounds!" The man who has some idea, however dim, of the boundless ocean of knowledge and science, whereof that which we do know is but a little drop, will deem nothing more absurd than proud self-elevation over the little knowledge we have; and it may be safely affirmed that a proud man, even though he were the most eminent among the learned or gifted, must be an *esprit borné*—a man whose range of view is, after all, sadly limited. Nor is this applicable only to science, but to every other sphere of mental development. A man who puts himself forward on the ground of his moral excellence, can only do so by shutting his eyes to the faults which he has left uncorrected, and to the impure motives which disguise themselves under the mask of his moral integrity. Moral or spiritual pride is always a sign of want of self-knowledge. A wise builder will never continue building up a lofty tower after he knows that there are rotten spots in the foundation.

Humiliation and *destruction* are the natural offspring of pride. "When pride cometh, then cometh shame," says the wise king; "and a haughty spirit goeth before a fall." History has in all ages and in all circles of human society put its seal upon these old sayings. From the day when Nebuchadnezzar fell in Babylon down to the moment when the first Napoleon landed in St. Helena, it has been shown in the case of hundreds and thousands of proud men, whether princes or servants, learned or unlearned, rich or poor, old or young, that there is no such slippery path in life as that of the proud. It is because there rules above all a God whose unchangeable principle is to "resist the proud and to give grace to the humble." In many cases, it is true, His divine judgments are not made visible to us in this life, but they are sure to be seen in the next, as we may learn from the story of Dives and Lazarus in the Gospel of Luke. And there is no doubt that many in their pride have had during their lifetime a bitter foretaste of their future degradation. Pride can never make a man feel truly happy. It brings upon him a series of disagreeable experiences which dispel many of the clouds of incense with which he would like to be perfumed. As he constantly crowns himself he finds that few will plait a wreath for him, except those whose flowers nobody envies. "All this availeth me nothing," said Haman, "so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate." Already he felt, as it were, something of the pinching of the rope which was prepared for his neck. And as he always liked to look down upon people, he got just what he wanted when he was suspended on a gallows fifty cubits high.

Pride's only and true *remedy* is the loving faith of the heart in a crucified Saviour. One cannot truly believe oneself saved by such a self-humiliating love, and at the same time continue in conceit. However pious and godly a man may be, the moment pride takes possession of his heart he ceases to realise fully and clearly that for all he is and has he is solely indebted to Christ's having been made a curse for him, and being shamefully crucified in his stead. To speak of a proud Christian is as glaring a contradiction as to speak of wet fire or bitter sweet. We are saved by grace, and one of the old fathers of the Church said rightly: "All we have above hell is grace." Pride cannot dwell in a heart in which that truth lives. This is the reason why the cross of Christ is such a stumbling-block to the world. It silently declares that not the proud, but the meek ones shall inherit the earth. We rightly appreciate knowledge and power, and riches and glory, but we learn on the summit of Calvary that the way to attain them is not by pride, but by humility. The Man who is at present sitting on the throne of glory and power is not named Nebuchadnezzar, nor Augustus, nor Napoleon, nor Gamaliel, nor Antonius, but the lowly exalted Jesus.

The world does not believe it, nor can we prove it to those who are not willing to believe. But the day is not far distant when it shall be made clearly manifest, and when all generations of the earth shall acknowledge, that humility, and not pride, is the way to happiness and glory. ANDREW WHITGIFT.

Drawn by Edward Hughes. Engraved by J. Swain.

THE FIRST TOOTH.

COTTAGE POEMS.

BY A CURATE.

I.—THE FIRST TOOTH.

CURATE of Devilsbye, in County D ——,
I entered on my work of ministry.
And, reader—who exclaims there's no such place
Upon the map of England—by your grace,
Somewhat disguised in Saxon though it be,
There *is* a Devilsbye in County D ——;
And more, the place is worthy of the name;
And often I have pondered how it came
To bear it. Had a spring of tainted life,
From souls with all unholy passions rife,
Stagnated there, and swelled into a sea
Of Sodom, gath'ring fresh impurity?
One of the dismal plague-spots of the land,
Where sin and misery went hand in hand,
Hunger with lust, and nakedness with shame—
Yes—Devilsbye was worthy of the name.
Upon this ground unequal war I waged,
And, faint as mediæval saint engaged
In conflict with the fiend, turned many a day
Into a smiling cottage on my way,
To rest, not body only: heart and soul
Alike were shaken. I could scarce control
Fierce bursts of wrath when cruel wrong prevailed,
While floods of doubt my deepest faith assailed.
The smoke of torment in thick clouds seemed driven
Between me and God's love—the face of Heaven.
My resting-place, the cottage of the Thornes,
A woodbined porch of lattice-work adorns;
Its inmates are the dame, her only son,
With his wife Alice, and a little one.
I married Alice; and, some months before
The time I write of, held her baby o'er
The font. That little nursling made a claim
On pastoral care, and of his free-will came
Into my arms whene'er I took a seat
Within the cottage, beaten, in retreat.
Alice was good, good-tempered, healthful, fair,
But the old grandame had another air—
An air of Heaven's own sweet and awful grace
Marked every feature of the aged face.
The marks of care and suffering it bore:
No self-complacent smile the close lips wore—
Lips that had tasted of the bread of life
And no more hungered; lips that hushed all strife,
Prayed down all discord. And her eyes were dim,
And looked too deep for tears to overbrim.
Yet they had worn with weeping, as I knew
One day.

Unseen by babe and mother too
I entered. Alice sitting in a chair,
The child upon her knee—a smiling pair.
A tiny tooth, long gleaming white beneath
Its covering, had, bud-like, burst its sheath;
The pain had ceased, the infant laughs and crows;
With joy and pride the youthful mother shows
The pearly treasure, and the grandame tries,
With well-wiped spectacles and loving eyes,
Putting the little rose-leaf lips apart,
To see the speck: but with a sudden start
They feel my presence. Then they read my face,
Down to the babe, who made a sad grimace—
A piteous tearful frown—and turned away,
And hid his little head—and not in play.
Looked I so grim, then? The dame turned and said,
"What's happened, sir?" I only shook my head,
And answered, "I have walked this morning through
That dreadful village." What that meant she knew.
"Then, sir, you'll rest a bit, out in the air."
With that she brought the cushion of her chair,
Of clean but faded cotton, to the seat
In the rude porch. The woodbine's breath was sweet,
The little garden was in fair array,
The fields beyond all smiling, glad, and gay.
So, leaving Alice with a nod and smile,
I turned into the porch to rest awhile.
There the dame followed in a little space
And looked her first inquiry in my face.
"Only another infant," I replied.
"Merciful Father! in my hands it died.
And died of hunger. With the helpless thing
In my vain arms, I sternly bade them bring
(The creatures who had gathered round me there
In woman's semblance) food that it could bear,
And found it ravening."

Here there came a sob
From my companion, and I saw her throb
And quiver through the apron she had thrown
Over her face, and sinking on the stone
Over against me, she sat still a space
Ere she uncovered her sweet patient face,
Composed as ever. "Alice does not know,
Not John even, all I've had to undergo,"
She murmured. And although I longed to ask,
I felt I could not; but I wore no mask,
And so revealed my thought, and she went on
Without more words, but quickly and with tone
Subdued. "We married early—John and I—
Early and poor. It was not thoughtlessly:
We both were pious in our youth, and tried
To serve God duly, and our own fire-side
With scanty fare preferred, and holy quiet,
To the farm-kitchen's plenty and its riot.
But things went ill with us, I know not why;
Labour was scarce, for there was two to try
For every bit o' work. The farmers took
The idlest on, such as they knew would look
After the parish pay. O, it was hard!
Thus cheated of our virtue's poor reward,
We waited on. John trusted God at first,
But lost his faith when things got to the worst
And he most needed it. Our baby came
I' the dead o' winter, and its little flame
O' life wanted more kindling than I had
To give it. And I thought John would go mad

To see me kept so poor ; I was so weak
And thin, the bones would almost cut my cheek.
And I was hungry often, and I knew,
Though he said nothing, John was hungry too.
'I'll bear 't no longer,' said my man one night.
I looked at him, and my heart stopped with fright:
He looked so fierce—such trouble in his eye.
'I *have* cursed God, and care not if I die!
But I'll not bear 't,' he said.
'O, my own man,'
I sobbed, 'God help us, for He only can.'
With that, to hush the infant's wailing cry,
I put it to my bosom. It was dry.
I rose up quickly, saying nothing more,
But, walking faintly up and down the floor,
Contrived to still him. Then my husband went,
And my despair in desperate tears had vent.
I will not say for want of food that night
My baby perished. It was famished quite
Before. But ere my husband had returned,
Out on the hearth our scanty fire had burned ;
Our little one lay clay-cold, but at ease ;
And I was in a faint upon my knees.
I need not tell you more—a stolen meal
For once I tasted ; but John would not steal
For himself only, and I would not share,
To save my very life, another hare.
So John and I made up our minds to part
Till better times. God keep us one in heart!
I prayed, and may we re-united be,
Even as we both *do* put our trust in Thee!"
She ceased. I knew it was so :—they did well,
In service until better times befell,
Winning by waiting a fair future, free
For them and theirs from dire necessity.

THE MORAVIANS IN BRITISH GUIANA.

The history of the Moravian Missions in this part of the world is full of interest. It appears that the first step towards their establishment in the colony was taken in the year 1735, when the directors of the Dutch trading company of Surinam held a conference with the Bishop of Spangenberg, and it was determined to send three of the brethren to Surinam in order to inquire into the best mode of founding the desired missions. We have no record of any immediate action resulting from this commission ; but three years afterwards two brethren were sent to the Rio Berbice at the request of the owner of an estate there. They were the first preachers of the Gospel to the negroes. The *predikants* (ministers) heretofore employed came to these shores for the edification of the white planters and officials. These men either considered that the negroes had no souls, or that they were beyond the pale of salvation, for when the self-denying missionaries attempted to spread the knowledge of Christ crucified among their dependants, they were driven away. Despairing of any good result from their labours in this quarter, therefore, they betook themselves to a position higher up the river. Between the Kibiliberi and Tapoeri Creeks on the west bank is an estate named Savonette, marked on the old maps of the colony by the letter A. It is situated about 65 miles in a direct line from the present town of New Amsterdam, but 200 by the windings of the river. Here the disappointed but not disheartened missionaries settled down, and called the name of their station "Pilgerhut"—"Pilgrim's rest." From hence they sallied forth into the forest to convert the natives, and teach them the grand doctrines of Christianity. But even in this work they were pursued by the ill-will of the Dutch settlers, who used every device to discredit them with the Indians. They raised a report that the missionaries came to make slaves of them ; and the credulous natives ran away in alarm at the first sight of their best friends. The Government, so far from assisting, made a show of suspecting them, threw impediments in their way, and required them to take the oath of allegiance. Eventually, however, their affectionate, disinterested behaviour, made them beloved, and they extended their visits to Surinam, Demerara, Essequibo, and Venezuela, sometimes making a circuit of 300 miles in a single journey. Nothing could daunt these single-minded men. They traversed the dense solitudes of the forests, or paddled along the broad streams, throwing themselves among unknown and perhaps hostile tribes with the faith and devotion of true apostles. They carried neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes. Where they were hospitably received, there they remained, eating and drinking such things as were set before them, and crying, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." So far from disdaining labour, they might have said with the Apostle, "These hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." They were the magistrates, teachers, doctors, and artisans of the Indians.

In 1739 the two pioneers were joined by another brother and his wife. In 1745 they had a further addition to their society in the persons of two brethren, who had formed part of a mission on the Cottaka river, in Surinam, which was broken up ; and about the same time two brethren and their wives arrived from Europe. In 1748 another brother arrived—Theos Schumann, who was sent out by the directors to exercise a general superintendence over the mission. He was selected for his learning, and must have had a natural aptitude for philology, for we are told that in twelve months he obtained such a mastery over the language of the natives that not only could he converse with them, but was able to translate the Scriptures for them to read. Before this, the missionaries had compiled an account of the life and sufferings of Christ in the Arawaak dialect, by the assistance of a mulatto boy who had been presented to them by a planter, and who understood the language. We may form some notion of the steady perseverance of these good men when we are told that, although they had been settled at Pilgerhut since 1738, the first native baptism by them did not take

place till 1748. We find it recorded, however, "that the Divine Spirit was exciting a real hunger after the word of God among the Arawaaks." But they were not anxious to make a great show, or to astonish their countrymen by the success of their efforts. They came to the country to make Christians of its inhabitants, and with slow, plodding earnestness they set to work, determined to achieve this result; indifferent as to the time that it might take, but trusting in the mercy of God to assure success to their endeavours. By the end of June in this year they numbered 39 converts, and the little settlement gave shelter to 80 Indians of all ages. In reading the history of the Greenland missions, we meet with a parallel case of long-continued labours without evident result, carried on by some of these brethren in that cold and inhospitable clime. Having consulted together as to the plan most likely to ensure success in their mission, they determined to commence by teaching the people the nature and attributes of God, and his laws. For seven years they pursued their object, and no sign was apparent of any desirable change. They would probably have persevered in their plans, but that they were instructed by an accident (as we should say) to change their tactics. One of their number was engaged in the translation of the Gospel, when a Greenlander approached and inquired of him what he was doing. The missionary read to him the account of the passion of our Lord, with which the man was so struck that he desired to know more. This led the brethren to see that the true method in preaching the Gospel was first to engage the attention of the people by describing to them the life and sufferings of Christ.

In 1749 another brother and his wife were added to the society at Pilgerhut. In the following year an incident occurred—one of those remarkable circumstances that ought to silence for ever those who exclaim against the small results obtained from missions to the heathen, and begrudge the expense necessarily attendant on their maintenance—an incident that gave to the toiling missionaries hope and encouragement. One generation may plant, another may water; in God's own good time He giveth the increase. We are too often impatient, like children who have sown seeds in the garden and are continually digging them up to see if they grow. One of the Indian disciples of the Moravians had been paying a visit to his countrymen on the Orinoco, and had told them all that he had learned from the missionaries. They were so astonished at what they heard that eleven of them determined to hear the word from the mouths of the missionaries themselves. For this purpose they visited Pilgerhut, and the consequence was that several of them settled there and were converted. Similarly the glad news of the Gospel reached the Indians of the Corentyn, and brought several bands from that river to reinforce the settlement at Pilgerhut, where, by this time, there were 200 persons residing, while the congregation amounted to at least 300. Thus the word of God grew and prevailed.

The year 1751 witnessed the arrival of several more missionaries; but the jealousy of the Government deprived the colony of their services. They were of the same persuasion as the Quakers as to the taking of oaths, and based their opinion on the literal interpretation of Matt. v. 34, and James v. 12; and the oath of allegiance being insisted on by the Government, they considered that there was no alternative for them but to return to Europe. We may say that the mission had now reached the height of its prosperity. The natives had been taught, in addition to the truths of the Gospel, some of the useful arts of daily life. It was a rule with the Moravians that every man should learn some handicraft, in order that they might be in a position to earn a subsistence without being a burden on their converts. In this respect they followed the custom of the Jews, and eminently the example of St. Paul. Some of their converts were now capable of being made useful in instructing others, and, indeed, the devoted missionaries needed some assistance; for, by the year 1756, their records showed a total of 367 persons baptized, 48 of whom, however, had died. Next year (1757) the missionaries were sufficiently encouraged to form an establishment on the Corentyn river. Mr. Dachne, who pioneered the way for the founding of this mission, laboured on three years, single-handed, and with but slight visible success, when he was cheered by the arrival of three coadjutors. Welcome indeed were these fellow-labourers. Dreary and desolate as the life of a missionary must needs be in a wild unsettled country, he had been subjected to peculiar dangers and privations. Few Indians could be induced to join him at all, and these gradually fell away, till at length only a solitary companion was left. Soon this man was taken sick, and being intimidated by the prospect of death predicted by a piai-man,* if he continued with the white man, who, he said—was under the influence of the evil spirit—he, too, departed. The intrepid missionary was now alone in the wilderness, and death stared him in the face. He was laid down with fever, and in want of the common necessaries of life; yet his trust in the good providence of God was so firm that nothing would induce him to desert his post. In this condition he was one evening going to his hut to lie down in his hammock, when a large snake attacked him. Of course he used every exertion to rid himself of the reptile, but it unfortunately bit him in several places during the struggle, and eventually succeeded in twining itself round his neck and arms. The thought now occurred to him that, in the event of his death, it would be supposed that the Indians had murdered him, and with wonderful presence of mind he got hold of a piece of chalk and wrote on the table the words, "A serpent has killed me." The same simple faith, however, that had been his stay hitherto still upheld him. He remembered the words of his divine Master to his disciples—"Behold I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions . . . . and nothing shall by any means hurt you;" and by a final effort he shook off the reptile, which was of the boa species, and not venomous. "One day," we are told, "his solitude was broken in upon by a band of Caribisce,

* The priest or sorcerer of the Indians.

some fifty of whom landed from their canoes, flourished their war-clubs, and said they had come to kill him. Dachne bade them welcome, and the chief came forward with an interpreter, and asked who gave him leave to build on their land. He said, 'The governor.' Then, what did he come for? and the missionary answered, 'I have brethren on the other side of the great waters, who having heard that the Indians of this river are ignorant of God, have sent me to tell you of the love of God, and what he has done for you.' Then the chief said, 'Have you never heard that we mean to kill you?' 'Yes,' answered Dachne, 'but I cannot believe it. You have among you some who have lived with me, and they can tell you that I am the friend of the Indians.' To this the chief replied, 'Yes; I have heard so. They say you are a different sort of Christian from the white men in general.' The missionary said, 'I am your friend. How is it you come to kill me?' And at last the chief answered, 'We have done wrong.' And not only did the Indians disperse without harming this servant of God, but they left a bountiful supply of food."

The arrival of the two additional missionaries infused new life and hope into the heart of Dachne, and they all set to work deliberately to establish themselves in the position that they had taken up. They gave the place the name of Ephraim, and soon a little church for the performance of their ministrations, and a dwelling-house, were reared. Their busy hands could not be idle, and they next proceeded to clear the land in the vicinity, and to plant it with provisions.

But a time of trial was now coming on these devoted men. In 1759 the colony was visited by an epidemic that carried off the governor, nearly one half of the Dutch colonists, and forty Christian Indians. A scarcity of provisions added to the horrors of the pestilence. Although natives and Europeans were alike attacked by the fever, advantage was taken of the simplicity of the Indians to instil into their minds a notion that the visitation was sent upon the missionaries as a punishment by the evil spirit, and to work upon their superstitious feelings so as to induce them to desert the mission. For three years the epidemic raged, committing awful ravages among the white population, and not sparing the missionaries. Theos Schumann, who returned from a visit to Europe in 1760, fell a victim to it only six months after his arrival in the colony, and two other brethren, whom he had brought out, suffered the same fate a few weeks after. By the end of 1762 the settlement at Pilgerhut numbered only some twenty-two inhabitants, and the garrison of the colony was reduced to twenty men. The breaking out of the slave insurrection in 1763 was the death-blow of the Pilgerhut mission. The weakened condition of the settlement, and the exasperated state of the insurgents, induced the missionaries to seek safety in flight. So, hearing that a large body of slaves were approaching the settlement, they assembled those of their converts who were willing to share their fortunes; and dividing themselves into two companies, they set out for Demerara, where they arrived in safety, and were cordially welcomed and hospitably treated by the settlers. Here the history of this once-flourishing settlement closes. Some of the fugitive teachers returned to Europe. Two of them, by name Cleman and Vester, remained in Demerara, only to lay their bones in peace in the land where they had borne such grievous crosses for the Gospel's sake. The brethren on the Corentyn sought safety in Surinam.

It may be questioned whether, taking into consideration the leniency exhibited by the negroes towards the other ministers that fell in their way, the Moravians did right in deserting their posts. Bearing in mind their devotedness to the work of their Master, the generally courageous bearing that they displayed, and the power of their faith, it would seem that we must look for some special cause that would impel them to fly even before danger positively threatened them. We find a sufficient explanation of this conduct in the fact that the Indians displayed towards the negro (as they do to this day) an unconquerable animosity. Taking advantage of this, the planters had been in the habit of engaging their services for the recovery of runaway slaves, who had betaken themselves to a wild life in the bush. Consequently the negro came to look upon the Indian as his natural enemy—as the bloodhound that would scent his footsteps in the trackless forest, and render him back to a life of slavery. The missionaries, being the friends and patrons of the Indians, and white men into the bargain, would of course be peculiarly obnoxious to the hatred of the slaves. And so we find that when the Moravians established a mission called "Sharon," on the river Saramaca, in Surinam, in 1757, the bush negroes, who in that colony were a powerful body, made an attack upon the settlement four years after, killed three of the Indians, took eleven prisoners, wounded two of the missionaries, and set fire to the place. If this could be done coolly and deliberately, without any special provocation, we can hardly doubt but that the Berbice settlements would have fared no better at the hands of an infuriated mob of a similar character, with arms in their hands, conscious of innumerable wrongs, thirsting for revenge, and reckless of consequences. The missionaries knew with whom they had to deal; and the fate of the mission at "Sharon" seems to fully justify their precipitate flight, and indeed to give a colouring of wisdom and humanity to it: for, if they had awaited the coming of the negroes and defended themselves, loss of life and other evils would have been the result. Another justification of the missionaries of the Berbice River is afforded in their brethren of the Corentyn (without any opportunity of consultation) pursuing the same course, and retiring to Paramaribo on the outbreak of the insurrection. They returned in the following year only to find the place in ruins, and deserted by their little native flock. They therefore formed a new station, a little higher up the river, and, with unabated confidence, again sought to sow the good seed of the word in the wilderness. The new settlement was called "Hope," and for some years the progress of the missionaries entitled them to

think that the name had been happily selected. But it is not in the nature of things that success should continue long without interruption. In 1783 there were 167 native Christians residing at "Hope." In the following years the numbers fell off, owing to the ravages of small-pox, the scarcity of provisions, and the unsettled habits of the people. The missionaries were very much discouraged, but better days were in store. In 1789, J. J. G. Fischer was appointed to the mission, and set to work so earnestly that matters were soon restored to a more favourable footing. He is described as a man of great power of mind and cultivated intellect, and possessed, moreover, a vigorous constitution,—one of those instances of *mens sana in sano corpore* which are so rarely met with, and which so admirably adapt their possessor for the work of the mission field.

He commenced by making himself acquainted with the Arawaak dialect, which he accomplished in the course of a few months so as to be able to preach in it. A school was established, and everything went on successfully till 1796. Then came the inevitable succession of troubles which have so invariably attended on Indian missions and paralysed the exertions of the teachers—epidemic, famine, desertion. To make matters worse, in 1798 Mr. Fischer, who had proved himself so well fitted for the post he filled, was ordered away from "Hope" by the government of Surinam. In 1799 there was a population of 300 at the settlement; but in the course of the five years following it dwindled down to one-half that number. Even yet the catalogue of disasters was not complete, for in 1806 the whole settlement was burnt down; and though the Brethren clung with a laudable tenacity to their ruined station for two years longer, the fatal scourge of small-pox came and swept away the few disciples that remained steadfast. They had now no alternative but to quit the post and seek in other parts for some more promising sphere of labour. This field was not, however, even yet totally abandoned. In 1812 two missionaries arrived to make a further experiment. But it would seem that such an amount of success was not vouchsafed to their efforts as to justify them in remaining. They therefore quitted the scene of so much self-denial, suffering, patience, and Christian resignation—ay, and of wonderful successes, difficulties surmounted, and prayers mercifully answered, to preach the Gospel to the negroes belonging to the plantations up the river Nicherie. In the year 1862 the writer visited the Corentyn, and found at Orealla one old man, totally blind, named Nathaniel, who appeared to be the sole survivor of the disciples of the Moravian missionaries. He was familiar with the leading truths of the Gospel, and had not forgotten several hymns in Arawaak, composed by the Brethren for their converts.

Thus ended the labours of the Moravians in British Guiana; and a bright and animating picture they present to us of what Christian love and resolution will accomplish. In contemplating their history we feel ourselves carried back to the Apostolic age, and see in these devoted men so many St. Pauls raised up to carry the blessed light of the Gospel among the distant heathen. That apostle they seem to have studied as the model of what a true missionary ought to be. Like him they laboured with their hands lest they should be found burdensome to their flock. With him they might have said, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." "Approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses . . . in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." They might have taken up his words, and gloried in their sufferings for Christ's sake. "In labours more abundant . . in deaths oft . . in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."

W. T. Veness.

A SUNDAY EVENING MEDITATION.

BY A BUSINESS MAN.

Blessed Sunday evening, so quiet and still, how sweet art thou to my heart after a day's enjoyment in the sanctuary! Thou art to the soul what the peaceful summer evening is to nature after the day has been crowned with the goodness of Him whose paths drop fatness. Brightly has the Sun of Righteousness again shone into our hearts, quickening them by his life-giving rays; and like a softening, refreshing dew the gospel of salvation has alighted upon our thirsting souls, preparing, strengthening, encouraging, and sanctifying us for another week's work in the service of Jesus. And now my heart, like a well-

worked, well-watered field, rests in the evening shade, recounting the blessings of the day, and thanking Him who "maketh the outgoings of the evening to rejoice."

Such the Sunday evening ought always to be—a grateful echo of the day's resurrection hymn. Alas! too often it is to me a forecast of the coming bustle of the week. After the last sermon has been heard and the last benediction received, it is as though our earthly hearts thought they had now given to God what is God's, and might safely open the gates of the temple to let in "those that sell oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money." We think we have had for the day enough of the question, "What think ye of Christ?" Other questions may now have their place. What think ye of trade? of the war? of the election? of So-and-so whom you saw at church to-day? of the marriage of your brother? of the pleasure-trip which you have schemed for the ensuing summer? of the last new novel? of the new fashion that has just been introduced from Paris? may each be discussed in turn.

Alas! I deeply feel that I still live a double life. How is it that I can so seldom find out the point where heaven and earth meet? That point is in Christ. In Him heaven and earth are re-united, become one. When on earth He was truly in heaven; now that He is in heaven He is truly on earth. When about to ascend up, He said, "I am with you; and with you I shall remain alway, even unto the end of the world." He was the "free Son of God," easily moving in both provinces of his Father's immeasurable kingdom. Alas! I feel I am not yet free with the freedom of the Son. I have such difficulty in soaring up to heaven! I slide so easily down to the earth again, where for a moment I have risen! Were I to-night to speak to my friends about that "cunning fox," Mr. W——, the shipbroker, who tried to cheat me the other day, I should feel little disposed to speak afterwards about the love of Jesus as manifested on the cross. Perhaps I could bring myself to do so, but with a feeling similar to that of a person who, on a sudden, is taken out of bed.

Jesus was pure when He was on earth; and therefore He could, if necessary, speak even of impure things without his mind receiving any stain from them. His pure heart responded not to the uncleanness without. His was that spirit to which every creature of God is good; that spirit which cannot see the evil except to rejoice all the more in the good, nor the devilish except to press the divine all the more fervently to its bosom. He knew no standpoint from which to look at creation, at heaven and earth, at man and his doings, at the devil and his devices, at history, its progress and its end, but God, the centre of all, from which all things flow and to which all things must return. The chief question with Him was not in what connection the things round about stood to his own self, but to God. Seeing the good, He saw it crowned with the glory of God. Seeing the evil, He saw it conquered and punished by God; He saw it overruled by God for the realisation of his own plan and counsel. So nothing could separate Him from the love of God, neither height, nor depth, nor any other creature. He knew all the evil which Herod was prepared to do to Him, and yet the thought of that raised no desire of revenge, nor ill-feeling in his heart. He knew that the evil, whatever it might be, would be transient, and only enhance his own future glory. But within the range of these thoughts and sympathies, there lay also this question, How Herod might be saved by the good? "Go ye and tell that fox, Behold I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected."

Oh, if I could in the same spirit think of Mr. W——. I feel I ought to be able to speak of him on a Sunday evening without marring in the slightest the sacred character of the day. But I fear I could not. I should most likely turn angry. I fear I should detail all the proceedings to bring out fully that man's villany and my own innocence in the matter; and the whole case would so engross my thoughts as to make me for the moment forget God and Christ, eternity and salvation. All the fruit of my religious engagements during the day, the impressions of two sermons, the effects of so many prayers and hymns, would, as if with one stroke, be swept away, and this blessed day, begun in the Spirit, would be finished in the flesh. And there are hundreds of subjects besides, which, if broached, would entirely spoil my Sunday night. Indeed, I begin to see that I must keep my thoughts strictly fixed upon religious matters to be able to abide with Christ. The moment any secular topic comes in, I am in danger of sliding from the top of the holy mountain, and of being dragged down again into the mire of selfish calculations, worldly reflections, and, sometimes even, of ill-controlled passions.

This indeed is very sad. It shows that I have not yet got rid of my own miserable self—that I am still looking upon that self as the centre of everything, the whole creation moving round it, as the planetary system round the sun. It shows that I have not yet learnt to see God in the middle of the universe, and everything in connection with or in relation to Him. Alas! what a straitened state of mind this is, not to be able to abide with Christ unless all the doors be locked and the windows shut. What a narrow notion of God one must have when he is not able to find Him on earth, and always needs the ladder of solitary meditation to climb up to heaven! It is true, as the singer of the 115th Psalm says, that "the heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's, but the earth hath he given to the children of men." But this saying is preceded by another one, "The Lord made heaven and earth." Again the Spirit says, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." This is just as true at the noisy, bustling Exchange of London, as in the quiet, solitary closet. Indeed, it is heathenish to think that the Lord is God of the hills but not God of the valleys. Thus the Syrians thought who lived without God and without Christ in the world (1 Kings xx. 28). But Rahab, from whom Christ is born after the flesh, said, "The Lord your God, he is God in heaven above and in earth beneath" (Josh. ii. 11). If I could only cease to look at my own self, and begin to see God everywhere, as the One from whom, through whom, and unto whom all things are, it would always

be Sabbath within me, even though I were sitting in the midst of a market crowd.

I heard two good sermons to-day. The one reminded me that Christ is made unto me salvation, the other that He is made unto me sanctification. In other words, this means that He is my greatest treasure for time and eternity. What real harm or profit can there then be for me in any other person or thing? Are they not, taken altogether, only a combination of transient instruments in the hand of God to carry out his glorious purposes, to make that everlasting treasure, Christ, all the richer, and greater, and fuller? One day all things round about me will collapse, and Christ with his Church will rise out of it, full of glory and majesty, just as, after the collapse of the scaffolding, the wonderful palace comes more clearly to light in all the riches of its beauty. What was all that noise and bustle, that loud hammering, and sawing, and chiselling for? "To earn my wages," replied the operative. "To fill my purse," said the builder. But the king's children who are to inhabit that royal mansion, smiled, and thought, "When all of you will have left the place, then shall *we* know what it was for." What, after all, is the end for which God put me in my business, for which He now gladdened me with success, now distressed me with adversity, now alarmed me by failures? Truly *my* person could not be that end, unless so far as it all tended to chisel and to polish, to shape and to fit me for a stone in the great spiritual temple of Christ. Why do I not always look upon my business in that light? Alas! because I so seldom have that temple in my view; and because I so seldom remember that I am a stone, and only a stone in it. My own house is so often the temple in my proud fancy.

We are commanded to rest during one day, and work during six days. But we were never commanded to be heavenly-minded during one day, and earthly-minded during the other six. If it is true that I am bought by Jesus at a price, then I am his property, not only for to-day, but for to-morrow, and the day after to-morrow, and all my life long. Then I am his servant in my office as in my closet. Nay, everything that is mine is his; my house and my garden; my warehouse and its goods; my fire-safe and its contents—it all belongs to Him. I am only his steward, appointed to administer these things for *his* glory, for the support and promotion of *his* cause. Thus they are not profane but holy things, all consecrated to the service of God and his Christ. Why, then, should their management prevent me being heavenly-minded? Or why should the thinking or speaking of them be unfitted for a Sunday evening? If my heart by so doing is drawn away from Christ, surely the fault cannot lie with those things, but with my heart. If my heart was what it ought to be, *nothing* could separate it from Christ. If it is *not* what it ought to be, it will continue separated from Christ, even though it should all day be engaged in reading God's word and praying. A king *is* a king even though clad with rags, and a slave can never become a king by dressing himself in purple, and by adorning himself with a crown and a sceptre. If my heart loves Mammon more than God, it will worship in the temple of Mammon though I be sitting in the temple of God. And if my heart love Jesus more than all the gold in the world, it will worship Jesus though I be sitting in the midst of piles of sovereigns and heaps of bank-notes. Whatever a true priest does is priestly and holy, whether he does it within or without the tabernacle. The priest is more than the tabernacle. The tabernacle does not sanctify the priest, but the priest sanctifies the tabernacle. And is not a Christ-loving heart more than gold? So the gold does not secularise that heart, the heart sanctifies the gold.

It is a sad state of things this having a divided mind. But how am I to prevent a recurrence of it? How am I to secure—not the bending of knees, the folding of hands, the singing of hymns and the utterance of prayers—but the true worshipping of God in the spirit during a Sunday? How am I to preclude the earthly profane things from coming into the heavenward-directed mind? Alas! I know of no Sunday on which it does not happen more or less. I have tried everything to prevent it. In vain! I might just as well have tried to prevent the birds from flying into my garden; I might scare them away for one moment, but they were sure to come back the next. It is *impossible* to keep the world out of one's thoughts during a whole day—utterly impossible.

But if it is impossible, how can it be required? Does God require us to do what we cannot possibly do? *Is* it required? Is the Christian religion given for man as he really *is*, or for man as he is *not?* Is it necessary first to etherealize oneself into an abstract, ideal sort of being, before one can be a truly devoted Christian? Is Christ given to us only to draw our minds away to abstract notions? Or is He given to enable us to worship and glorify God in this real world in which we are placed? The latter no doubt is the case. When making intercession for his disciples, our Lord prayed: "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil." He desired they should remain in the world, that, on seeing their work and witnessing their conduct, "the world should believe that God had sent Him" (John xvii. 21). So the world is the very arena of the Christian's operations—the world, *i.e.*, that vast system of persons and things in which I find myself, with my wife and children, with my clerks and fellow-merchants, with my office and warehouses, with Mr. W—— also. I find myself, by God's providence, placed in connection with all those persons and things, and it is in connection with *them* that my Lord will have me to manifest my religion, to worship Him, to exercise myself in godliness, to fit myself for my everlasting destiny. Now, if all this is true, why should it be improper to allow these persons and things to come into my mind while praying? Is it not absurd to require, at the moment when one's soul, in solitary, hallowed devotion, is musing on its relation to its Saviour, that those very objects which had such a strong, decisive bearing upon that relation, either for better or for worse, should anxiously be excluded? Suppose a king sends his son to the army in a distant country, to have him exercised as a good soldier. Suppose after many months the young man comes back on a visit to his royal

father, whom he approaches with love and reverence. He enters on a confidential conversation, in which he discloses his love for his beloved father, and tells him all he feels for him. But he anxiously abstains from speaking about the army, about the persons with whom he has to deal, about his experiences in the daily turmoil of a soldier's life, about the food, about the dress, about his quarrels and dangers, about his difficulties and pleasures. In short, he anxiously avoids to touch upon any of those very things in the midst of which his father placed him with the expressed purpose of having him trained in them. "These things," he thinks, "are too common, too vulgar for such a sublime prince as my father is. If I want to speak of them I must quit the room and absent myself from him." Would it not be absurd to suppose such a case? Would a tender-hearted father be satisfied with such a conversation? Could a loving son satisfy himself with such an empty show of words?

Yet such an absurd hypocrisy was I guilty of this morning. My Saviour, how grossly have I offended Thee! Thou hast watched me all the week, in all my outgoings and ingoings. Yet I have treated Thee as if Thou wert perfectly ignorant of them. Thou who, in Thy providential wisdom, hadst allowed or caused all those things to pass, in order that I too, with so many thousands of Thy children, should be trained and exercised in the midst of them! Why did I not speak to *Thee* about them? Why did I not tell *Thee* how my heart felt under them? Why did I not pour out my heart's anxiety and fear into *Thy* bosom? I might have given free course to my thoughts, as I really did this morning, even in Thy presence, and Thou wouldst have felt with me, and Thou wouldst have quieted the agitated waves within. But, alas! I withdrew from Thee. I thought Thou wert too spiritual for such material things. Thou, who becamest *man;* who wert in all points tempted like as we are; who even now, though sitting on a throne of glory, art the *man* Jesus Christ! (1 Tim. ii. 5.) Son of God! when shall I really believe that Thou art come in the *flesh?*

I am afraid my Christianity is too sublime, and I am in danger of turning carnal from over-spirituality. I feel I have not yet learnt to make Jesus my all and all, else I should not exclude Him from a thousand things from which I do not exclude myself. I am walking on this earth hoping to go to heaven some day. This is not Christian. I ought to be dwelling in heaven, and only on a visit to this earth to do some work for my Lord and Master. That is the true Christian state. If I am in Christ, I am set with Him in heavenly places, and everything which I am connected with here below stands in connection with Him, because I am his. But, alas! I am so often under an impression that He will have nothing to do with the things with which He bids *me* have to do. As if He had sent me to a place where He refuses to be himself! He who one time most likely was standing at his foster-father's bench, tool in hand! We should not think of calling that a spiritual condition. Still, He who was labouring there in that carpenter's shop, was the quickening Spirit Himself (1 Cor. xv. 45). I have experienced that I may be very unspiritual even while praying. I feel I shall not be able truly to pray, till I have learned to be spiritual even while writing out an invoice.

PHILIP MELANCTHON.

With its apple-trees and pear-trees all round it, with its cherries for the early summer and its walnuts for winter, Bretten is such a village as most boys would like to live in; and, embosomed amidst sunny slopes, which pour forth corn and wine, it ought to be the very home of peace and plenty. Here, four hundred years ago, George Schwarzerd followed his craft as an armourer. His very occupation was a hint of the dangers which have so often surrounded the fruitful Palatinate, and it was with looks which told of a troublesome world that George beat out the corslets and sharpened the swords with which his neighbours, when needful, should defend their orchards and farms. A man of warm affections as well as dark forebodings, he took leave of life somewhat gloomily, praying God to preserve his son amidst the "terrible tempests" which were ready to burst on the world.

That son (born February 16, 1497) was then only eleven. In affectionateness and in a seriousness so deep as to be sometimes mournful, he resembled his father; but the main influence on his mind was exerted by his mother. Well-born—for her father had been chief magistrate of Bretten—and with a remarkable transparency and truthfulness of character, to the grace and elevation of the Christian lady she added the practical talent and sunshiny kindness of the housewife and mother; and thus, whilst the moody blacksmith, nearer the earth than his more angelic helpmate, hung sombre on the domestic horizon, Barbara Reuter kept the sky clear towards the zenith. Her homely rhymes still float about amongst the German peasantry:—

> "Almsgiving beggareth not;
> Church-going hindereth not;
> To grease the wheel delayeth not;
> Gain ill-gotten helpeth not;
> God's book deceiveth not."

Under her fond, though sensible guidance, Philip soon opened up into a gentle, studious child, and made wonderful progress in such learning as Bretten could supply.

In giving a young person a present, it is well to remember how much may sometimes hinge upon it. Even without a little cannon to play with, it is possible that the first Napoleon might have turned out a soldier; nor does the present of a little ship always send a boy to sea: but where the keepsake falls in with existing tastes, it will add to the bias, and may even decide the destiny. A kinsman, himself a

learned man, and who had taken much interest in Philip's progress, sent him two books, and they may be said to have given a turn to all his pursuits as well as a goal for his entire career. One of Reuchlin's books was a Latin Bible; the other was a Greek grammar. To the happy recipient each was a priceless acquisition. Greek, itself one of the finest creations of human intelligence, was a golden key, and opened the door of a spacious treasury which few had yet entered, and where, covered with dust but untarnished, lay ready for the lifting massive ingots and minted money stamped with the image and superscription of the mightiest geniuses amongst the sons of men. The Bible, again, ushered him into God's own world—a world of love and of heavenly fatherliness—that world of Divine perfections and of high human hopes and aspirations of which scarce a glimpse could be gained by those who only looked in through the peep-holes of the Papacy. Into the mind of the docile student and worshipper the "grace and truth" came at once; nay, Christ himself came in, the supreme object of faith and affection.

At a later period the same kinsman sent his young friend another present: he gave him a new name. This was at that period quite the fashion among scholars. Reuchlin's own name, meaning Smoky, or Reekie, had been translated into Capnio; and in the same way he covered with "well-sounding Greek," the gritty German Schwarzerd, or Black-earth, under which his grand-nephew had been born into the world, and thus set a-going the now immortal name MELANCTHON.

When little more than twelve the boy was sent to the neighbouring university of Heidelberg, and thence to Tübingen. So precocious were his abilities, and so rapid his acquirements, that he soon attracted the attention of the learned, and in 1518, when only one-and-twenty, he was invited to the Greek professorship at Wittemberg. Here he found in the chair of theology a broad burly Saxon, with a trace of the tonsure on his crown, but with nothing of the monk in his visage: manifestly no schoolman, but a sincere and earnest seeker after truth, looking out on his hearers with honest human eyes, and speaking in tones which from the deepest and most awe-struck emotion could rise to piercing invective and stormy passion. The theologian, however, could hardly conceal his disappointment when the new professor arrived. A stripling, of slim figure and awkward gait, timid and embarrassed, and, except in his lofty brow, with no air of mastery, he was a striking contrast to his sturdy energetic colleague. A few days passed on, and the new-comer delivered his inaugural oration. It was a marvel of eloquence: the master-piece was unveiled; the lamp was brought out from under the bushel, and as it was held on high all Wittemberg rang with the name of Melancthon. No one was more thoroughly charmed than Luther. With the full force of his intense and ardent nature he gave himself to "Philip," and in such a master of ancient Greek devoutly hailed a helper sent from Heaven. For the next five-and-twenty years the youth of Germany came pouring into Wittemberg to learn the language of Plato and Homer, and as many as fifteen hundred at once have been seen hanging on the lips of the charming interpreter.

But whence the joy of Luther? What has Greek to do with the Gospel? Well, the Reformer was puzzling over the Latin translation of the Bible, and with small knowledge of the original, he was often a good deal perplexed. On the whole, even through that misty medium, it did seem pretty plain that salvation is wholly of grace, and that the work of the sinner has been undertaken and finished by Christ. But what is this? "Perform penance, that your sins may be blotted out. Be penitent and believe the Gospel." "What is it, Philip? In the original tongue, how readest thou?" And when Philip assured him that in the original there was not a word about penitence or penance, that μετανοεῖτε was really nothing more nor less than "take another thought—change your mind," "take another thought and believe the Gospel, that your sins may be blotted out"—"whoso turns to God and amends his ways—whoso changes his mind respecting Christ and is baptised, the same shall be saved"—another snare of the fowler was broken, and Luther clapped his wings with joy.*

In the great effort to give the German people God's Word in their own tongue, the two Reformers were a mighty help to one another—Luther, with his vigorous command of the vernacular; Melancthon, with his delicate sense of the original. And all throughout, in God's wisdom wonderful, the fellow-labourers admirably supplemented and seconded one another. As Luther says of himself, "I was born for struggling on the field of battle with partisans and devils. Thus my writings breathe war and tempest. I must root up stock and stem, clear away thorns and brambles, and fill up swamps and sloughs. I am like the stout pioneer who must clear and level the road. But our master of arts, Philip, goes forward quietly and gently, cultivating and planting, sowing and watering joyfully, according as God has dealt to him so liberally of His gifts." †

There was another service which Melancthon at this period rendered to the cause of a pure Christianity. A work was wanted in which thoughtful readers should find the outlines of revealed religion in orderly arrangement, free from superstitious admixtures, and set forth in language perspicuous and simple. This work the young professor undertook, and it was a task for which he was singularly adapted. He was not an ecclesiastic. As far as we know, he never was ordained. He approached the Gospel with the modesty of a learner and a layman, free from professional trammels, and assuming to know nothing except what he had acquired at the great Master's feet. At the same time he brought to the study and exposition the largeness of an intellect wide in its range and universal in its information, and that fairness of mind and sweetness of spirit which are still more charming than the fluent and elegant style. The result was a little Manual, published in 1521, and which, under the name of "Theological Commonplaces," found such favour that, before the end of the

* Rule's "Spirit of the Reformation."
† D'Aubigné, ii. 72.

century, ninety-nine editions had been published, either in translations or in the original Latin. Of these translations one was in Italian; and at Rome itself it was so greatly admired that it was rapidly circulating in the very precincts of St. Peter's. When the discovery was made that "Signor Ippofilo da Terra Negra" was no other than a German heretic in a Tuscan disguise, the book was ordered to be burned.*

The time of its appearance was opportune. Preceding by fourteen years the Institutes of Calvin, it served as a manifesto of the Reformers and a compendium of evangelical theology, and its temperate, well-guarded statements were readily received by many who would have been irritated by the vehemence, or repelled by the paradoxes of Luther; whilst its plan of simply explaining and proving the truth, without assailing its adversaries, commended it to readers who disliked polemical wrangling.

Indeed, for the period in which he lived it may be allowed that Melancthon had too little taste for doctrinal discussion. If "the faith once delivered to the saints" is assaulted, we are bound to defend it, and it is only by "proving all things" that we can "hold fast that which is good." It is to the honour of Melancthon that he did not evade a distasteful necessity, but accepting it as a "burden of the Lord," bore his own share in the keen and anxious contests of the time, and, second only to one, made a mighty contribution to the cause of Reform.

Still, men may be patriotic, and yet not fond of campaigning; and the battle of the warrior was no joy to Melancthon. His gentle and sensitive spirit shrank from the rude encounter; coarse invective and personal raillery were weapons which he could not use; and the candour which sees good attributes, or a measure of truth, on the opposite side, however fit for a judge, is fatal to a popular champion. To all this must be added, that the sacramentarian controversy and the ecclesiastical questions which came to be so eagerly canvassed, lay remote from that region which was the home of his spirit; and when he would fain have been seeking communion with Heaven, or practising the weightier matters of domestic piety in the midst of his household, he felt it hard to turn out and take part in a theological fray. Every man who would serve his generation, must do a large amount of irksome work, and every Christian has a cross to carry. Ecclesiastical controversy was the cross of Melancthon, and his irksome but inevitable task was to take part in the fruitless discussions between Lutherans and Zuinglians, as well as in the more vital questions between Papists and Protestants.

With his lofty intellect and a spirit at once devout and truth-loving, he would have liked to pursue such studies as are represented by his "Common-Places," and his "Commentary on Romans." Next to these his great delight was the language and literature of ancient Greece. "They are the fountain of all our finest thoughts and fairest arts. Where else can you find a complete philosophy? Where else the history of empires and of those events which are not included in the sacred narrative?" "For rightly understanding the New Testament, containing as it does the Gospel of Jesus Christ, this language is indispensable. There are in it many words, many figures and phrases, many sentences which carry a wondrous weight in the original, whilst a deep divine wisdom breathes through the whole. I should deem him no mean scholar who could translate the Testament truly and happily, and give us anything of its force and energy."* To his students he would say, "Love the doctrine and writings of Paul, and often peruse them. You will find them of more service than whole heaps of commentaries. The man who has got the clue to the Pauline epistles, and who reads them constantly over, will learn much more than he who is continually handling mere commentators." At the same time he loved the language itself, and he banished to the companionship of "pigs and their acorns" the barbarians who disdained its treasures. His eloquent prelections went far to make it popular, and earned for him the title, "Preceptor of Germany."

He died on the 16th of April, 1560, at Wittemberg, and was laid in the grave beside Luther. Hearing that he was ill, his friend Camerarius hastened to see him. The dying scholar repeated the verse in Greek, "I have a desire to depart and be with Christ," and then expatiated on the meaning of the word, ἀναλῦσαι. "I have a desire to weigh anchor. I have a desire to be moving, passing on, setting about my journey, so as to leave this life of toil for the blessed rest of heaven." And when at his own request they moved his couch into his library, he smiled, and, still alluding to the same thought, remarked, "This couch may be called my travelling carriage, since it is in it that I am likely to take my departure." On his last day, with characteristic fondness, he dwelt on those words of the Master which few since that Master have ever so entirely adopted, "That they all may be one, as we are one." He also mentioned that the words lay very near his heart, "To as many as received Him, He gave power to become the sons of God." His medical son-in-law, the excellent Peucer, gave him a cordial, and asked if he would like anything else. He answered "Nothing else but heaven"—"Aliud nihil, nisi cœlum." He fainted, and, thinking him gone, some one called aloud, when he revived, and said his last word, "Disturb not my sweet repose."

During his illness he had been observed writing on a scrap of paper. After his decease it was found, and turned out to be reasons for desiring to die. "Thou shalt depart from sins. Thou shalt be delivered from sorrows, and from the contention of divines. Thou shalt come to the Light. Thou shalt see God. Thou shalt learn those wondrous secrets which in this life thou couldst not fathom. Thou shalt learn why we are thus framed, and what is the union of the two natures in Christ." "O that I had wings like a dove!" had been his frequent exclamation, and he was getting them now. Little did those around him surmise the topics about which for forty years his calm and lofty intellect had been exercised—the mystery of man's existence on earth—"Why thou art thus framed," even the redeemed sons of God, the

* Scott's Continuation of Milner, ii. 184. M'Crie's Italy, 35.

*See his eloquent discourse on the study of Greek, Opera, tom. xi. 892, 858 (Bretschneider's edition).

animal and the angel so strangely linked together; and that other mystery, the Incarnation, the Son of God become the Son of Man. These "wondrous secrets" had absorbed his mind. He had felt their fascination; he had desired to look into them, but he could not fathom them. But now he was going to the Light, and would understand them better. "Thou shalt be delivered from sorrows." These sorrows had been useful. He had said it himself, "If I had no anxieties, I should lose a powerful incentive to prayer, but the cares of life impel to devotion. Trouble sends me to prayer, and prayer drives away trouble." Nevertheless, the sorrows were not joyous but grievous: one of his two daughters married unhappily, the care of all the churches, and those bereavements which tore, and left frightfully wounded, feelings by far too tender.

From one of the greatest of miseries, the torture of malevolent affections, Melancthon was entirely exempted; nor can his be a joyless existence to whose mind such thoughts are familiar as come out in every page of his voluminous writings. If, as a theologian, obnoxious to the Romanists, and buffeted by his own brethren, he was popular as a professor, and he was rich in friends. Nearly seven thousand of his letters have been preserved, glowing with warm feeling and devout affection, and revealing in frequent glimpses a beautiful background of domestic and social happiness. The congenial pencil of Alexander Johnstone has painted a scene described by one of his earlier biographers: A Frenchman who had heard his fame, and who sought out his abode in Wittemberg, when he found him with a book in his hand rocking the cradle, could not conceal his amazement; but, so piously did he discourse on paternal duties and on that kingdom of heaven which belongs to the little children, that "the stranger went away much wiser than he came." In those days there was not the cold remoteness between masters and servants which now exists in many households. For four-and-thirty years there resided under the roof of Melancthon a faithful domestic, a native of Heilbronn, though of Swedish parentage. Through his faithful economy, the Reformer was enabled to maintain his continual charities as well as his extensive hospitality. He was a favourite with the children, who received from him their earliest lessons and no small part of their education; and he was a favourite with the students, who, in a body, attended his funeral. In his own perplexities, his master often sought his advice; and after his death inscribed on his tomb a Latin epitaph:—

"Here, at a distance from his native land,
Came honest John, at Philip's first command:
Companion of his exile, doubly dear,
Who in a servant found a friend sincere;
And more than friend—a man of faith and prayer,
Assiduous soother of his master's care.
Here to the worms his lifeless body's given,
But his immortal soul sees God in heaven."

JAMES HAMILTON.

EVENING THOUGHTS.

STAINED from within and from without,
I come again to Thee;
And as this water now has cleansed,
Cleanse Thou my soul for me.

Just as this raiment is put off,
Put off my pride from me,
And clothe me in the pure white robe
Of meek humility.

Now, even through its lowliness,
My soul to Thee can rise,
And offer as a royal priest
Its vesper sacrifice.

Here all I have and all I am
I on Thy altar lay,
And fill the censers with my thanks
For all Thy love to-day.

Thou hast been with me once again,
And kept me all day long;
And, though so foolish and so weak,
In Thee I have been strong.

Through all the gloomy mist around,
In Thee I have had light;
Through Thee, on Error's darkest ground,
Have fought once more for Right.

Send down Thy blessing on the good
Wrought in these working hours,
Just as Thy dew is falling now
Upon the fruits and flowers.

Thou knowest all that I would say
Of my mistaken deeds:
Thou, in the garden of my soul,
Know'st how to deal with weeds:

Now give me Thy belovèd's sleep,
Beneath Thy care at rest,
Safe as a little child when held
Upon its mother's breast.

And let my last dim waking thought
Rest lovingly on Thee;
And in my wondrous land of dreams
Thy glory may I see;

And when upon my eyes again
Fall morning's golden gleams,
Thou, "Sun of Righteousness," shine too,
"With healing in Thy beams."

S. R. POWERS.

NOTES FOR READERS OUT OF THE WAY.

The "Eirenikon" of Dr. Pusey, in which, as we formerly noticed, he tries to show that in essential doctrines the standards of the Church of Rome and the Church of England, when candidly interpreted, are alike, and in which, from the very depths of his heart, he calls for union and communion between these two sections of Christendom, has caused, as might have been expected, no slight commotion. To the Evangelical section it is matter of profound regret that an able, learned and influential man should be so blind to the vast and vital differences between the system of Rome and the system of the Bible, and should rate so miserably low those great truths of the Reformation for which many of the best and noblest of the land cheerfully shed their blood. One Protestant Society has petitioned for his removal from his Professorship in the University of Oxford, believing him, by the avowal of such views, to have become disqualified to be a teacher in a Protestant University. Some even who favour Tractarian views have come forward to disavow the sentiments expressed in the "Eirenikon," and in letters subsequently published in the newspapers. The Rev. Archer Gurney declares that now Dr. Pusey stands alone in his views, and that though at one time there was a general disposition on the part of Anglo-Catholics to associate the papal system with their principles, yet others had resisted this tendency, which in Dr. Pusey was to be traced to a belief in the absolute endlessness and probable triumph of evil, and the dread of all advance of mind. The *Tablet*, the Dublin organ of the papal body, has given the advances of Dr. Pusey a somewhat rough reception, being extremely ill-pleased with his endeavour to prove that mariolatry is not properly part and parcel of the Roman Catholic system. It makes light of what Dr. Pusey has written against the practice of mariolatry; regards this as feebleness itself compared with what had been written by earlier Protestant writers; and feels assured that from so trivial charges the Church of Rome can sustain no damage whatever. In rehearsing the memorable events of 1865, the *Guardian* newspaper enumerates among others the publication of Dr. Pusey's "Eirenikon"; cautiously admits that on many points he is not to be followed; more than implies that what he aims at is for the present utterly hopeless and impracticable; but commends him for his publication as reminding us "how far we must all come short of the Christian standard while we are not one," and thus leading Anglicans and Catholics to lament their divisions, and labour and pray for their removal.

Meanwhile, another scheme of union has been somewhat unexpectedly brought before the public, or rather revived—a project for the union of the Greek Church with the Church of England. The report of a meeting held on 15th October last, in the office of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in London, has reached this country, *viâ* Moscow, the meeting having been a private one, and the account of it communicated by Count Orloff, who was present, to a friend in Russia, who sent a letter to the *Moscow Gazette*. Among others present were the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishops of Oxford and Lincoln, and the coadjutor-Bishop of Edinburgh. The proceedings pointed to the desirableness of steps being taken for inter-communion between the two Churches. Count Orloff explained that the Russian Church was only one of the five branches of the Eastern Catholic Church, and that it was impossible for any of the inferior clergy to decide questions of inter-communion, which could only be disposed of by the regular authorities. No resolutions were come to at this meeting; but all agreed that the cause should be promoted cautiously but incessantly. It may be presumed that those who favour this project are of opinion that there is nothing in the doctrines and practices of the Greek Church essentially opposed to the principles of the Church of England, an opinion which Count Orloff assumed, when he proposed "that works should to be published in England setting forth the history, doctrine, and present condition of the Anglican Church, with a view to proving that it is not a Protestant but Catholic Church, and accordingly related to the Eastern Church."

It would appear that the friends of the Sunday League, feeling probably that there is less likelihood than before of the British Museum and other scientific collections being opened to the public on Sundays, have resolved to draw on their own resources in order to make Sunday available for the scientific and general instruction of the people. A series of discourses has been commenced at St. Martin's Hall, Long Acre, on Sunday evenings, accompanied with sacred music. Among the lectures and lecturers announced, we find Professor Huxley, on the Desirableness of Improving Natural Knowledge; Sir John Bowring, on Religious Progress outside the Christian pale, amongst Buddhists, Brahmins, Parsees, Mahometans, &c.; Dr. Carpenter, on the Antiquity of Man; and Dr. W. B. Hodgson, on the Antiquity of the Earth. It is said that the lectures are under the patronage of Mr. Dickens, Mr. Darwin, Sir Charles Lyell, Sir J. Lubbock, Mr. Layard, M.P., Mr. J. Stuart Mill, Professor Owen, Professor Tyndall, Sir Joshua Walmsley, Sir J. G. Wilkinson, and others. It does not appear that the subjects are very different from those that, from not a few pulpits, have formed, occasionally at least, the Sabbath repast of Unitarian congregations; but in the shape which the enterprise has assumed, it may be regarded as an attempt to propound a new style of religious worship, a new remedy for the woes of humanity, a new pabulum for the cravings of the human soul. The movement proceeds on the principle that the refreshment and improvement of the intellect is one of the objects contemplated by the day of rest, and that instruction in the works of God, in nature, and elsewhere, is therefore a suitable employment on that day. Our readers may remember

that the question was debated publicly a few years ago, on an occasion when Lord Stanley appeared among the advocates of these views, and that, in refutation of them, one of the best and most conclusive pamphlets ever written was published by the Rev. William Arthur, in a series of letters addressed to that nobleman. The pamphlet is not now beside us, but if we remember rightly its leading position was, that to employ the Sabbath day directly for intellectual improvement, or for physical recreation, was sure to defeat the higher ends for which the day was given, both as a season of rest and of religious exercise and communion with God. Once let the high spiritual character of the day be tampered with, and there is no security against its degenerating into a day of ordinary secular labour, or mere frivolous amusement. Intellectual refreshment will not be left out, where the religious character of the day is recognised; but, if the pursuit of intellectual refreshment become the direct and avowed object, the religious character of the day is sure to be lost. The lectures referred to are an instructive sign of the times. They indicate one of the more plausible modes of subverting the old idea of the Sabbath, which we may expect to be brought to bear for a time with increased vigour by the more intellectual class of secularists. To render such tactics inoperative, it is desirable not only that they be opposed by argument, but that similar lectures under more distinctly Christian auspices, be multiplied on week nights. For our own part, we do not anticipate that the plan will be very effective. Even the eminent names connected with it can hardly prevent one from smiling at the attempt. The class is a very large one that feel it a delight, or at least a duty, to devote the Lord's Day to religion; the class is also a large one that would fain give it to pleasure; but the intervening class, that would use it for mere intellectual advancement, is not a large one, and very far from enthusiastic or self-denying.

The prevalence of fever in London and other large towns, and the dread of cholera, or some other fearful epidemic, has once more attracted attention in influential quarters to the miserable condition of the dwellings in which a large proportion of the poor reside. An important letter was lately published in the *Times*, by Dr. Horace Jeafferson, late resident medical officer to the London Fever Hospital. This gentleman lately devoted a portion of time to a careful inspection of several of the poor districts of London, with a view, partly, to ascertain their sanitary condition, and partly, to find out the composition of the parish-vestries, who form the Sanitary Committee of the metropolis; and are, therefore, answerable for the lives and health of so many thousands. The revelations of Dr. Jeafferson are extremely sad. The want of water is almost universal. Even in the most favourable circumstances, the available water is collected in an old butt, often, perhaps always, extremely filthy; in many cases there is no butt, the water merely flowing for twenty minutes a day through an open pipe, when it is caught by those who bring their vessels to it; and in many other cases, the supply of water is exposed to the ooze of filthy substances, and cannot be drunk without a sickening effect. In some instances, there is no supply at all on Sundays, and the inhabitants of whole courts are dependent on the public-houses, which, of course, will not be likely to supply them with water, unless they are their customers for stronger liquors. It need not be remarked that fever is seldom absent from such localities, and that the utter absence of Christianity, the utterly godless and pagan aspect which many of them present, has some connection, at least, with their physical condition. Dr. Jeafferson found that of the elected members of vestries, publicans formed a more numerous class than the members of any other occupation. Butchers were as numerous as medical men, and very few persons of high social position were to be found in them. It thus became extremely difficult to carry out any real reform. The subject is surely worthy of the most earnest attention of Christian philanthropists. After what has been done in the "Potteries" by the estimable authoress of "Ragged Homes and How to Mend them," and the most interesting and encouraging illustration which that district affords of the blessed effects when earnest Evangelism allies itself with social reform, it does not need to be proved that Christians dare not shut their eyes to the physical miseries of the poor, nor abandon them unhelped to the destructive agencies by which they are surrounded. In Edinburgh, the new Lord Provost, Mr. William Chambers, has inaugurated a movement for opening up to the light and air of heaven the dense and crowded closes which spread out from the main streets of the Old Town. City missionaries and others who have devoted days and years to the endeavour to sow the good seed in such unprepared soil, and have had to encourage themselves with the sight of so very small a percentage of it springing up and bearing fruit, will welcome such movements, with no ordinary joy, and will offer their most earnest prayers that God's blessing may rest upon them.

A distinguished preacher, a barefooted Carmelite, has lately been creating a great impression in Paris. The archbishop, M. Darboy, impressed with the opposition between the spirit of modern times and the spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, had appointed Father Hyacinthe to the pulpit of Notre Dame, that he might endeavour in his sermons to bring them into harmony. With this view, M. Hyacinthe announced as the subject of a series of lectures, the examination of the new system of *independent morality*. Not in France only, but elsewhere, the idea is held by a number of sceptical philosophers, that morality does not depend on religion, but that the principles that are applicable to the ordinary duties of daily life may be sustained on an independent basis. The audiences that crowded to hear him were immense. The energy and eloquence of the preacher were most remarkable. But the tone which he adopted was far too liberal to suit the mass of the priesthood. For one thing, he claimed Protestants as his coadjutors. "I look over into the pale of Christian Protestantism," he exclaimed, "and I say, You are my auxiliaries. True, I cannot forget what

separates us; but I cannot forget what unites us. Do you not believe in Christ, O my auxiliaries! I look no more to the abyss that exists between us; I extend to you a friendly hand, and I thank you for the help that you will lend me here, elsewhere, and everywhere, when I defend religious morals." This was sufficiently bold: but when, on another occasion, he spoke in praise of the institutions of the United States, the sin became unpardonable, and le Pere Hyacinthe was remanded to his convent, to meditate on the insuperable difficulty of reconciling the spirit of the age with a Church the famous Encyclical of whose Head, sent forth in 1864, has not yet passed into oblivion.

Facts are from time to time emerging in France indicative not only of wide-spread dislike to the Romish Church, but of deep-seated hostility to all religion. A new fraternity has been formed for the purpose of protecting its members from "the last rites of the Church." The society of *Les Solidaires* is now said to embrace many thousand persons in Paris, and has branches in all the principal towns of France, who are bound, on the summons of any member of the body or his family, to attend his dying moments, and protect him from the intrusion of priests; to arrange the funeral with economy and decorum; and to form as numerous a *convoi* as is consistent with other duties and occupations. The funerals attended by this society are conducted with a solemnity and importance which not only causes the absence of clerical rites to be less missed, but forms a demonstration against the clergy. The origin of this club is ascribed to the rapacity of priests in attendance on the dying, and the disgust caused by the manner in which they often take advantage of their feeble condition to obtain bequests of their property in favour of the Church. A new novel, *La Croisade Noire*, which has caused some sensation, has for its object to picture the intrigues, falsehoods, deceits, and bad passions that are often employed to secure a rich inheritance for monasteries, and is said to be from the life.

The license of sentiment prevailing among the younger educated men in France has received a remarkable illustration. A great gathering of young men took place at Liège, amounting, it is said, to 1500, of whom many were French students. They discussed all sorts of religious, social, and political problems, with a license to which the most advanced of debating societies, past or present, could afford no parallel. Several speakers, says the correspondent of *Evangelical Christendom*, proclaimed that their object was to abolish all religions, to destroy every church, and to get rid of the idea of God. Other speakers declared that the men of terror fulfilled their duty when, in 1793, France was inundated with blood; and they added that 100,000 heads must yet be struck off, in order to establish society upon a better foundation. Seven of these students, five of medicine and two of law, have been sentenced to be excluded for ever from the Academy of Paris. The correspondent of *Christian Work* refers to the exceedingly great activity of godless men, who are pouring infidel thought in streams into every reading population, through journals, almanacs, novels, and illustrated papers of all sorts. The dislike to clerical education is extreme. The attention of the authorities is frequently called to the strange and often hideous practices of clerical schools; and only the other day, an assistant nun-teacher in Paris was convicted of seizing infants' noses with heated tongs!

In Italy, steps have been lately taken by the Government for rescuing an important branch of education from priestly hands. In that country there are no fewer than 260 "seminaries"—*i. e.*, theological training colleges of the Romish Church, but educating, at the same time, a great many youths destined to secular pursuits. The Government have insisted on having these institutions open to the visits of inspectors. This resolution gave rise to a loud outcry and a great opposition; but the inspectors persevered, and have given in their report. It appears that the education given to those attending these seminaries is utterly mediæval—anything savouring of modern light or progress being either excluded or reduced to a minimum. The inspectors generally remarked on the spiritless appearance of the young men—their very natures seemed crushed into a dull, formal, lumpish type—no free outcome of individual temperament, no joyous overflowing of young fresh life. The result has been that the revenues of these institutions have been put under administration: one-third assigned to the Church for the training of the *bonâ fide* clergy; and the other two-thirds retained for general educational purposes.

An outburst of the reforming sentiments, now prevalent among many of the clergy and people, took place somewhat strangely in the cathedral of Milan. The Bishop of Mandori had gone thither to preach during the Novena of the Immaculate Conception, and in doing so gave utterance to some violent Ultramontane sentiments. "On one occasion" (says the correspondent of the *Guardian*) "he was interrupted by some member of the congregation crying out, 'That is not the law;' and again, 'Let him preach the Gospel of Christ;' and again, 'Don't believe him.' A priest who was present accused the interrupter of being a Protestant; something like a tumult ensued; and the first speaker was apprehended but subsequently let go. Another day the well-known reform preacher, Don Ambrogio, preached on the steps outside the cathedral, while the bishop preached within. A large crowd had assembled to hear him, when suddenly a troop of sacristans and others rushed out of the cathedral and attacked Don Ambrogio and his hearers with sticks, when a complete street row ensued, Don Ambrogio being finally removed by the police. On the day of the *fête* itself some one fixed a petard to the front of the pulpit, which exploded just as the Bishop began to preach, creating of course great consternation. The Bishop returned thanks to the Virgin for his miraculous preservation; but the authorities of the city, getting alarmed at these continuous scenes of commotion, telegraphed to the Government for instructions, and the minister replied by orders to make the Bishop desist from further public functions in Milan, on pain of being sent back forcibly to his diocese. Such scenes remind us vividly

of the sixteenth century, with the essential difference, however, that the secular arm is no longer to be found taking part with one side."

An interesting narrative is given in *La Semaine Religieuse*, of the singular adventures of a young Turk in search of the Gospel. This youth is the son of a pasha who filled a high position at Constantinople. At a very early age, he had read the Koran with great attention, and was dissatisfied with its contradictions; an earnest desire arose to become acquainted with the sacred writings of the Christians, and other religious bodies. One day in Constantinople he found in a shop a Turkish Bible, which he purchased, carried home, and along with his mother read it with deep interest, being particularly struck with its account of the character of Christ. His father, hearing of what was going on, was greatly enraged, treated him very harshly, and uttered terrible threats to deter him from his Bible-reading. But for three years he read on, and had his convictions more and more confirmed. At the end of that time, he was sent to Damascus, to study Syriac. Then he was ordered to go a pilgrimage to Mecca. On the voyage to Alexandria, a Romish priest became acquainted with him, and seeing his Christian tendencies, gave him such a glowing account of the Christianity of Rome, that he was persuaded to go with him to that city. But at Rome he was utterly dissatisfied with the showy and gorgeous worship, which was quite inconsistent with his Mahometan notions of simplicity, and presented nothing of the holy, spiritual life which his New Testament led him to look for in Christianity. To emancipate himself from the fetters of Romanism, especially after he had been baptised, and was so much in the hands of the priests, was a new achievement. At last, however, he succeeded. At Marseilles, whither he had been sent, to embark for the East, he found a Protestant pastor, who brought him to Florence, where he has been admitted among the students of theology of the Waldensian college. His religious education cannot but be defective, and his views obscure; but he is said to have a most child-like faith, and a remarkable knowledge of the Bible. His age is only nineteen. We heartily echo the prayer of the writer in *La Semaine* —"May God enlighten him with the light of life, and bring him a captive to the feet of Jesus Christ."

The *American Bible Society's Record* contains a letter from the Rev. Mr. Hickey, its agent in Mexico, giving some very interesting details of the religious movement among the priesthood of that Empire, to which we alluded in our last Number:—"The movement," he says, "seems to have begun with the priests rather than with the people, though both classes are concerned in it. Certain priests were much dissatisfied, not to say disgusted, with the vices of the clergy, and became doubtful about some of the dogmas of the Church of Rome. They entered upon a course of investigation, formed circles of inquiry which met together to study the Scriptures and consult authorities in Biblical interpretation. Many such circles of inquiry were instituted. The Rev. Mr. Gomez was a leader in this movement, and he was seized and put in prison. Others also began to preach the pure Bible. Among them was Don Henriquez Orestes, now in New York. For three years he preached the truth, and resigned a large income for conscience' sake, reducing himself to entire poverty. The number actually engaged in the reform movement it is not easy to estimate. The number connected with each circle is not uniform nor continuous; but it is safe to say there are at least 100 engaged in it, and not less than 500 who are interested in it, and desire to see it succeed. This is inferred from the facts that many letters of inquiry are received by the reforming priests from those who are seeking information, and many secret calls are made on them, when travelling, by persons of whom they had not previously heard. They come like Nicodemus, by night, to inquire into the truth, of which they have heard some vague report." The movement is quite of a religious nature. The priests belonging to it renounce auricular confession, worship of images, adoration of the Virgin and the saints, transubstantiation, and the celibacy of the clergy. They give the communion in both kinds, and advocate the reading of the Bible by the people. Many of the laity sympathise with them. Some newspapers containing articles on the reform movement are sold in double the usual numbers, and read with remarkable avidity. The leaders of the movement have not yet settled their future course. They are anxiously seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, being men of prayer and deep religious conviction.

From the opposite side of the earth, we have an interesting account by Dr. Legge of a visit lately paid by him to Japan:—"It is a lovely country," he writes, "and the climate is delicious. The eye rests everywhere on a verdure as rich as that of England; and there is a boldness and loftiness about the mountains in many places which give a grandeur to the aspects of the scenery which is not found in England. Largely metalliferous, the country is favourable to the intellectual and physical development of the inhabitants. The people are cleaner in their habits, more simple and child-like in their character, and more impressible, than the Chinese. At the same time they are less observant of the proprieties of decency, more revengeful, and perhaps less moral. Their language is easily acquired. Anyone at all a Chinese scholar would find the learning of Japanese a very easy task.

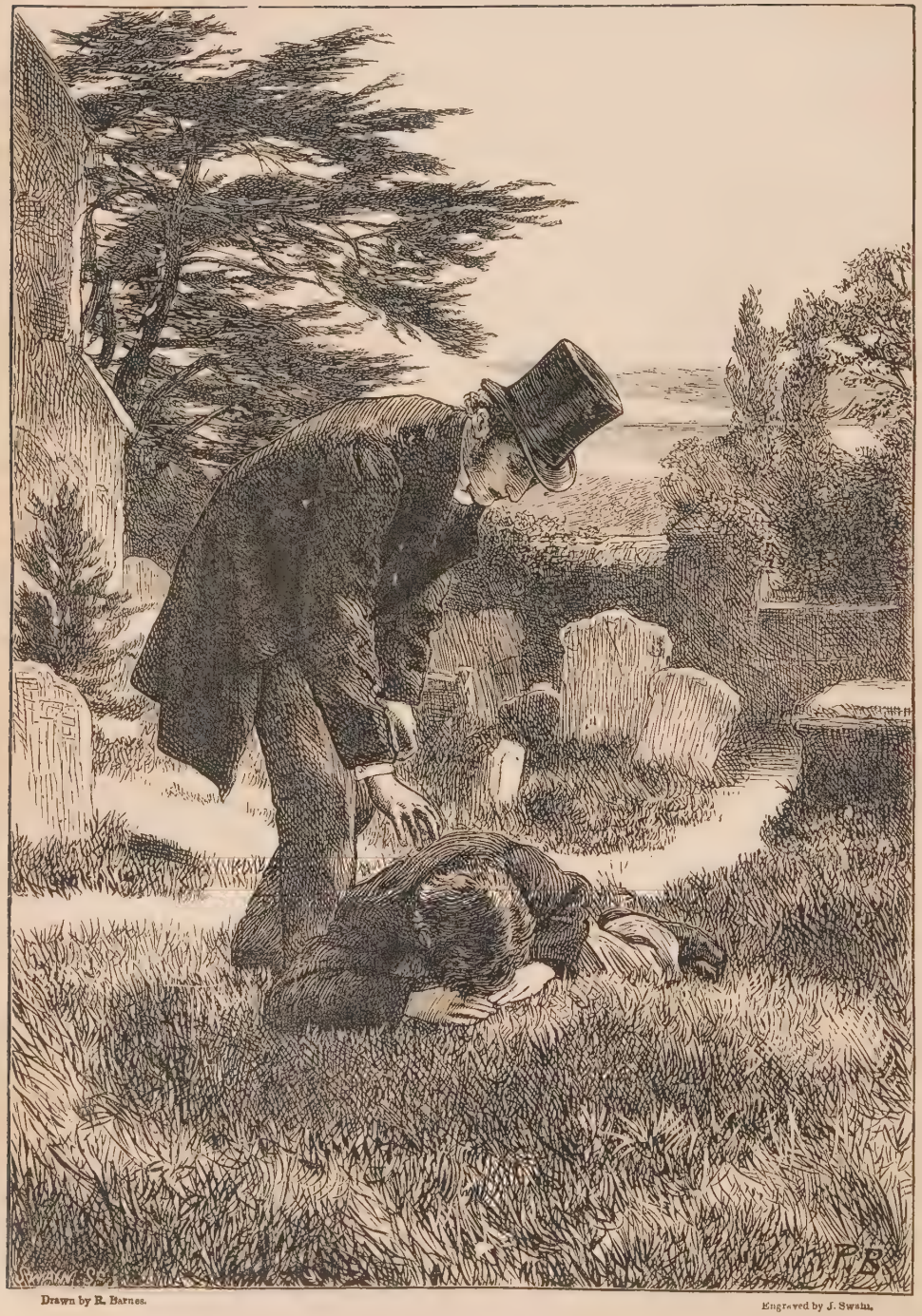
"One is struck with the contrast which the appearance and movements of foreigners present to what he has been accustomed in China. In Japan they look healthy and vigorous, as at home. The constitution there will wear out with lapse of time, as it must do everywhere; but it will not be prematurely exhausted. Hakodadi seemed to me as cool as Scotland, and much more balmy. The laws against Christianity are not yet repealed. Over the gateways of villages I saw in many places an outline of these laws written up. Things, however, are evidently working to a toleration. Following the great changes that have occurred, and along with the greater which are in progress, there must come shortly the freedom

to missionaries of preaching, and liberty of profession and worship to Japanese converts.

"At Nagasaki and Yokohama there are missionaries, six in all, the representatives of three societies in the United States; also there are Roman Catholic missionaries. These are occupied in the study of the language, in preparing translations, and in teaching English and French in the schools instituted by Government, some of them gratuitously, and others for a stated remuneration. There is not a single agent from any or all of the missionary societies of Great Britain. This ought surely to be for a lamentation. The population of the Japan Islands is probably about the same as that of our British Islands. God is moving, in his providence, to open a great and effectual door for the entrance of his truth among them. Shall the opening come, and no messengers from the churches of our country be found prepared to go in at it?"

The Church Missionary Society has had to deplore the loss, since their last annual meeting, of several of their most valuable missionaries. The *Intelligencer* for December contains obituary notices of the Rev. Edward Rogers, a missionary in Western India, who died at Bombay on 8th August; Rev. Joseph Fleet, of the Travancore Mission, who died in the mission field, after a service of thirty-two years; and of the Rev. Gottlob Friedrich Bühler, of the Yoruba Mission, who, losing his health in Africa, returned to Stuttgart, and died there on the 27th of July last, at the early age of thirty-six. The number of the *Intelligencer* for January adds the record of *four* more deaths in the mission field: "Cockran, whose forty years of service comprises the history of the North-West American Mission; Noble, who with such holy constancy surrendered himself to the foundation work of the Telugu Mission, and who was satisfied to expend his life in digging deep, that he might lay the foundation on a rock; Pfander, the eminent Mahometan controversialist, whose works have already brought conviction to the minds of many Mussulmans, both in India and Turkey; besides these, a young missionary, the Rev. H. Bartlett, of Madras, who had just buckled on his armour—all these have gone." The loss of so many labourers, when the supply is at any rate so inadequate, is a serious trial, and may well lead, not only the Church Missionary Society, but all the friends of missions, to increase the earnestness of their cry to God to send forth labourers to his harvest.

An interesting account appeared in the *Monthly Record of the Free Church of Scotland* for December of the breaking up of the Brahma Somaj of Calcutta, a circumstance very significant in relation to the future of Brahminism. The Brahma Somaj was instituted by the celebrated Rajah Rammohun Roy. The object of it was to lead his countrymen to renounce polytheism, and to worship the one god, Brahma, of whom the Vedas were assumed to be a divinely authoritative revelation. The Brahma Somaj was an assembly or congregation established for his worship. Since the death of its founder, his followers have greatly increased. They include the *élite* of the educated native Hindoos. But they have been departing from his principles. The inspiration or infallible authority of the Vedas has been rejected. Natural theology, based on the manifestation of God's attributes in the works of creation, has been rejected. And for some years past, all religion has been declared to rest solely on the intuitions of the mind. Of late years the Somaj contained two parties—a progressive and a conservative. The progressive party, feeling painfully the practical antagonism between their avowed principles and the retention of certain old social habits and usages connected with caste, intermarriage, &c., began to plead for the modification or abandonment of these. The conservative party resisted the demand. The consequence has been a disruption of the Somaj. The advanced section are under the leadership of Babu Kesub Chandra Sen, formerly secretary of the Society. This gentleman delivered a lecture a few months ago in Calcutta, attended by seven hundred educated natives, mostly young men, besides a few Europeans. The principles and position of the progressive Somaj were set forth. An attempt was made at the close of the lecture to get an opportunity of reply, but the meeting was so enthusiastic in favour of the lecturer, that the opposition could not be heard. Dr. Duff, who is greatly interested in this movement, thinks that perhaps the most notable part of it was the resolution to establish a *female* Brahma mission. Accordingly, a Brahmica Somaj, consisting of thirteen ladies of respectable families, and mostly wives of persecuted Brahmins, has been established in Calcutta. At its formation, the presiding minister delivered a sermon in which he exhorted them to labour with earnestness, sincerity and trustful humanity, to cultivate their minds and souls under the shadow of the true church, looking for strength to the merciful providence of the holy God. It appears that several Christian ladies were present at the opening of this female Brahma Mission. The women were all intelligent, able to read, and wonderfully devout. An arrangement was made to meet with these women every Saturday, after their service, to talk with and instruct them. Of their own accord, they asked many questions on subjects of the deepest interest. "We cannot say" (Dr. Duff remarks) "what may come out of this, for with God all things are possible. Let earnest prayer ascend to the Father of spirits that fruit may result from the movement that shall redound to his praise and glory."



Drawn by R. Barnes. Engraved by J. Swain.

"THERE LAY SOMETHING DARK UPON ONE OF THE GRASSY MOUNDS."

Page 357.

ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BY THE VICAR.

XII.

It will not appear strange that I should linger so long upon the first few months of my association with a people who, now that I am an old man, look to me like my own children. For those who were then older than myself are now "old dwellers in those high countries" where there is no age, only wisdom; and I shall soon go to them. How glad I shall be to see my Old Rogers again, who, as he taught me upon earth, will teach me yet more, I thank my God, in heaven! But I must not let the reverie which always gathers about the feather-end of my pen the moment I take it up to write these recollections, interfere with the work before me.

After this Christmas-tide, I found myself in closer relationship to my parishioners. No doubt I was always in danger of giving unknown offence to those who were ready to fancy that I neglected them, and did not distribute my *favours* equally. But as I never took offence, the offence I gave was easily got rid of. A clergyman, of all men, should be slow to take offence, for if he does, he will never be free or strong to reprove sin. And it must sometimes be his duty to speak severely to those, especially the good, who are turning their faces the wrong way. It is of little use to reprove the sinner, but it is worth while sometimes to reprove those who have a regard for righteousness, however imperfect they may be. "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee; rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee."

But I took great care about *interfering;* though I would interfere upon request—not always, however, upon the side whence the request came, and more seldom still upon either side. The clergyman must never be a partisan. When our Lord was requested to act as umpire between two brothers, He refused. But He spoke and said, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." Now, though the best of men is unworthy to loose the latchet of His shoe, yet the servant must be as his master. Ah me! while I write it, I remember that the sinful woman might yet do as she would with His sacred feet. I bethink me: Desert may not touch his shoe-tie: Love may kiss his feet.

I visited, of course, at the Hall, as at the farm-houses in the country, and the cottages in the village. I did not come to like Mrs. Oldcastle better. And there was one woman in the house whom I disliked still more: that Sarah whom Judy had called in my hearing a white wolf. Her face was yet whiter than that of her mistress, only it was not smooth like hers; for its whiteness came apparently from the small-pox, which had so thickened the skin that no blood, if she had any, could shine through. I seldom saw her—only indeed caught a glimpse of her now and then as I passed through the house.

Nor did I make much progress with Mr. Stoddart. He had always something friendly to say, and often some theosophical theory to bring forward, which, I must add, never seemed to me to mean, or at least to reveal, anything. He was a great reader of mystical books, and yet the man's nature seemed cold. It was sunshiny, but not sunny. His intellect was rather a lambent flame than a genial warmth. He could make things, but he could not grow anything. And when I came to see that he had had more than any one else to do with the education of Miss Oldcastle, I understood her a little better, and saw that her so-called e-ducation had been in a great measure re-pression—of a negative sort, no doubt, but not therefore the less mischievous. For to teach speculation instead of devotion, mysticism instead of love, word instead of deed, is surely ruinously repressive to the nature that is meant for sunbright activity both of heart and hand. My chief perplexity continued to be how he could play the organ as he did.

My reader will think that I am always coming round to Miss Oldcastle; but if he does, I cannot help it. I began, I say, to understand her a little better. She seemed to me always like one walking in a "watery sunbeam," without knowing that it was but the wintry pledge of a summer sun at hand. She took it, or was trying to take it, for *the* sunlight; trying to make herself feel all the glory people said was in the light, instead of making haste towards the perfect day. I found afterwards that several things had combined to bring about this condition; and I know she will forgive me if, for the sake of others, I endeavour to make it understood by-and-by.

I have not much more to tell my readers about this winter. As out of a whole changeful season only one day, or, it may be, but one moment in which the time seemed to burst into its own blossom, will cling to the memory; so of the various interviews with my friends, and the whole flow of the current of my life, during that winter, nothing more of nature or human-nature occurs to me worth recording. I will pass on to the summer season as rapidly as I may, though the early spring will detain me with the relation of just a single incident.

I was on my way to the Hall to see Mr. Stoddart. I wanted to ask him whether something could not be done beyond his exquisite playing to rouse the sense of music in my people. I believed that nothing helps you so much to feel as the taking of what share may, from the nature of the thing, be possible to you; because, for one reason, in order to feel, it is necessary that the mind should rest upon the matter, whatever it is. The poorest success, provided the attempt has been genuine, will enable one to enter into any art ten times better than before. Now I had, I confess, little hope of moving Mr. Stoddart in the matter; but if I should succeed, I thought it would do himself more good to mingle with his humble fellows in the

attempt to do them a trifle of good, than the opening of any number of intellectual windows towards the circumambient truth.

It was just beginning to grow dusk. The wind was blustering in gusts among the trees, swaying them suddenly and fiercely like a keen passion, now sweeping them all one way as if the multitude of tops would break loose and rush away like a wild river, and now subsiding as suddenly, and allowing them to recover themselves and stand upright, with tones and motions of indignant expostulation. There was just one cold bar of light in the west, and the east was one grey mass, while overhead the stars were twinkling. The grass and all the ground about the trees were very wet. The time seemed more dreary somehow than the winter. Rigour was past, and tenderness had not come. For the wind was cold without being keen, and bursting from the trees every now and then with a roar as of a sea breaking on distant sands, whirled about me as if it wanted me to go and join in its play.

Suddenly I saw, to my amazement, in a walk that ran alongside of the avenue, Miss Oldcastle, struggling against the wind, which blew straight down the path upon her. The cause of my amazement was twofold. First, I had supposed her with her mother in London, whither their journeys had been not infrequent since Christmas-tide; and next—why should she be fighting with the wind, so far from the house, with only a shawl drawn over her head?

The reader may wonder how I should know her in this attire in the dusk, and where there was not the smallest probability of finding her. Suffice it to say that I did recognise her at once; and passing between two great tree-trunks, and through an opening in some underwood, was by her side in a moment. But the noise of the wind had prevented her from hearing my approach, and when I uttered her name, she started violently, and, turning, drew herself up very haughtily, in part, I presume, to hide her tremor.—She was always a little haughty with me, I must acknowledge. Could there have been anything in my address, however unconscious of it I was, that made her fear I was ready to become intrusive? Or might it not be that, hearing of my footing with my parishioners generally, she was prepared to resent any assumption of clerical familiarity with her; and so, in my behaviour, any poor innocent "bush was supposed a bear"? For I need not tell my reader that nothing was farther from my intention, even with the lowliest of my flock, than to presume upon my position as clergyman. I think they all *gave* me the relation I occupied towards them personally.—But I had never seen her look so haughty as now. If I had been watching her very thoughts she could hardly have looked more indignant.

"I beg your pardon," I said, distressed; "I have startled you dreadfully."

"Not in the least," she replied, but without moving, and still with a curve in her form like the neck of a frayed horse.

I thought it better to leave apology, which was evidently disagreeable to her, and speak of indifferent things.

"I was on my way to call on Mr. Stoddart," I said.

"You will find him at home, I believe."

"I fancied you and Mrs. Oldcastle in London."

"We returned yesterday."

Still she stood as before. I made a movement in the direction of the house. She seemed as if she would walk in the opposite direction.

"May I not walk with you to the house?"

"I am not going in just yet."

"Are you protected enough for such a night?"

"I enjoy the wind."

I bowed and walked on; for what else could I do?

I cannot say that I enjoyed leaving her behind me in the gathering dark, the wind blowing her about with no more reverence than if she had been a bush of privet. Nor was it with a light heart that I bore her repulse as I slowly climbed the hill to the house. However, a little personal mortification is wholesome—though I cannot say either that I derived much consolation from the reflection.

Sarah opened the glass door, her black, glossy, restless eyes looking out of her white face from under grey eyebrows. I knew at once by her look beyond me that she had expected to find me accompanied by her young mistress. I did not volunteer any information, as my reader may suppose.

I found, as I had feared, that, although Mr. Stoddart seemed to listen with some interest to what I said, I could not bring him to the point of making any practical suggestion, or of responding to one made by me; and I left him with the conviction that he would do nothing to help me. Yet during the whole of our interview he had not opposed a single word I said. He was like clay too much softened with water to keep the form into which it has been modelled. He would take *some* kind of form easily, and lose it yet more easily. I did not show all my dissatisfaction, however, for that would only have estranged us; and it is not required, nay, it may be wrong, to show all you feel or think: what is required of us is, not to show what we do not feel or think; for that is to be false.

I left the house in a gloomy mood. I know I ought to have looked up to God and said: "These things do not reach to Thee, my Father. Thou art ever the same; and I rise above my small as well as my great troubles by remembering Thy peace, and Thy unchangeable Godhood to me and all Thy creatures." But I did not come to myself all at once. The thought of God had not come, though it was pretty sure to come before I got home. I was brooding over the littleness of all I could do; and feeling that sickness which sometimes will overtake a man in the midst of the work he likes best, when the unpleasant parts of it crowd upon him, and his own efforts, especially those made from the will without sustaining impulse, come back upon him with a feeling of unreality, decay, and bitterness, as if he had been unnatural and untrue, and putting himself in false relations by false efforts for good. I know this all came from selfishness—thinking about myself instead of about God and my neighbour. But so it was.—And so I was walking down the avenue, where it was now very dark, with my head bent to the ground, when I in my turn started at the sound of a woman's

voice, and looking up, saw by the starlight the dim form of Miss Oldcastle standing before me.

She spoke first.

"Mr. Walton, I was very rude to you. I beg your pardon."

"Indeed, I did not think so. I only thought what a blundering awkward fellow I was to startle you as I did. You have to forgive me."

"I fancy"—and here I know she smiled, though how I know I do not know—"I fancy I have made that even," she said pleasantly; "for you must confess I startled you now."

"You did; but it was in a very different way. I annoyed you with my rudeness. You only scattered a swarm of bats that kept flapping their skinny wings in my face."

"What do you mean? There are no bats at this time of the year."

"Not outside. In 'winter and rough weather,' they creep inside, you know."

"Ah! I ought to understand you. But I did not think you were ever like that. I thought you were too good."

"I wish I were. I hope to be some day. I am not yet, anyhow. And I thank you for driving the bats away in the meantime."

"You make me the more ashamed of myself to think that perhaps my rudeness had a share in bringing them.—Yours is no doubt thankless labour sometimes."

She seemed to make the last remark just to prevent the conversation from returning to her as its subject. And now all the bright portions of my work came up before me.

"You are quite mistaken in that, Miss Oldcastle. On the contrary, the thanks I get are far more than commensurate with the labour. Of course one meets with a disappointment sometimes, but that is only when they don't know what you mean. And how should they know what you mean till they are different themselves?—You remember what Wordsworth says on this very subject in his poem of *Simon Lee?*"—

"I do not know anything of Wordsworth."

"—'I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
With coldness still returning;
Alas! the gratitude of men
Hath oftener left me mourning.'"

"I do not quite see what he means."

"May I recommend you to think about it? You will be sure to find it out for yourself, and that will be ten times more satisfactory than if I were to explain it to you. And, besides, you will never forget it, if you do."

"Will you repeat the lines again?"

I did so.

All this time the wind had been still. Now it rose with a slow gush in the trees. Was it fancy? Or, as the wind moved the shrubbery, did I see a white face? And could it be the White Wolf, as Judy called her?

I spoke aloud:

"But it is cruel to keep you standing here in such a night. You must be a real lover of nature to walk in the dark wind."

"I like it. Good night."

So we parted. I gazed into the darkness after her, though she disappeared at the distance of a yard or two; and would have stood longer had I not still suspected the proximity of Judy's Wolf, which made me turn and go home, regardless now of Mr. Stoddart's *doughiness.*—I do not think I had ever passed through that iron gate without looking up at the grotesque creatures on the pillars, and I fear I have mentioned them too often already; but this time I did not even look at them, I know—for I remembered it afterwards.

I met Miss Oldcastle several times before the summer, but her old manner remained, or rather had returned, for there had been nothing of it in the tone of her voice in that interview, if *interview* it could be called where neither could see more than the other's outline.

XIII.

By slow degrees the summer bloomed. Green came instead of white; rainbows instead of icicles. The grounds about the Hall seemed the incarnation of a summer which had taken years to ripen to its perfection. The very grass seemed to have aged into perfect youth in that "haunt of ancient peace;" for surely nowhere else was such thick delicate-bladed, delicate-coloured grass to be seen. Gnarled old trees of may stood like altars of smoking perfume, or each like one million-petalled flower of upheaved whiteness—or of tender rosiness, as if the snow which had covered it in winter had sunk in and gathered warmth from the life of the tree, and now crept out again to adorn the summer. The long loops of the laburnum hung heavy with gold towards the sod below; and the air was full of the fragrance of the young leaves of the limes. Down in the valley below, the daisies shone in all the meadows, varied with the buttercup and the celandine; while in damp places grew large pimpernels, and along the sides of the river the meadow-sweet stood amongst the reeds at the very edge of the water, breathing out the odours of dreamful sleep. The clumsy pollards were each one mass of undivided green. The mill-wheel had regained its knotty look, with its moss and its dip and drip, as it yielded to the slow water, which would have let it alone but that there was no other way out of the land to the sea.

I used now to wander about in the fields and woods, with a book in my hand, at which I often did not look the whole day, and which yet I liked to have with me. And I seemed somehow to come back with most upon those days in which I did not read. In this manner I prepared almost all my sermons that summer. But, although I prepared them thus in the open country, I had another custom, which perhaps may appear strange to some, before I preached them. This was, to spend the Saturday evening, not in my study, but in the church. This custom of mine was known to the sexton, and the church was always clean and ready for me after about mid-day, so that I could be alone there as soon as I pleased. It would take more space than my limits will afford to explain thoroughly why I liked to do this. But I will venture to attempt a partial explanation in a few words.

This fine old church in which I was honoured to lead the prayers of my people, was not the expression of the religious feeling of my time. There was a gloom about it—a sacred gloom, I know, and I loved it; but such gloom was not in my feeling when I talked to my flock. I honoured the place; I rejoiced in its history; I delighted to think that even by the temples made with hands outlasting these bodies of ours, we were in a sense united to those who in them had before us lifted up holy hands without wrath or doubting; and with many more who, like us, had lifted up at least prayerful hands, without hatred or despair. The place soothed me, tuned me to a solemn mood—one of self-denial, and gentle gladness in all sober things. But, had I been an architect, and had I had to build a church—I do not in the least know how I should have built it—I am certain it would have been very different from this. Else I should be a mere imitator, like all the church-architects I know anything about in the present day. For I always found the open air the most genial influence upon me for the production of religious feeling and thought. I had been led to try whether it might not be so with me by the fact that our Lord seemed so much to delight in the open air, and late in the day as well as early in the morning would climb the mountain to be alone with his Father. I found that it helped to give a reality to everything that I thought about, if I only contemplated it under the high untroubled blue, with the lowly green beneath my feet, and the wind blowing on me to remind me of the Spirit that once moved on the face of the waters, bringing order out of disorder and light out of darkness, and was now seeking every day a fuller entrance into my heart, that there He might work the one will of the Father in heaven.

My reader will see then that there was, as it were, not so much a discord, as a lack of harmony between the surroundings wherein my thoughts took form, or, to use a homelier phrase, my sermon was studied, and the surroundings wherein I had to put these forms into the garments of words, or preach that sermon. I therefore sought to bridge over this difference (if I understood music, I am sure I could find an expression exactly fitted to my meaning),—to find an easy passage between the open-air mood and the church mood, so as to be able to bring into the church as much of the fresh air, and the tree-music, and the colour-harmony, and the gladness over all, as might be possible; and, in order to this, I thought all my sermon over again in the afternoon sun as it shone slantingly through the stained window over Lord Eagleye's tomb, and in the failing light thereafter and the gathering dusk of the twilight, pacing up and down the solemn old place, hanging my thoughts here on a crocket, there on a corbel; now on the gable-point over which Weir's face would gaze next morning, and now on the aspiring peaks of the organ. I thus made the place a cell of thought and prayer. And when the next day came, I found the forms around me so interwoven with the forms of my thought, that I felt almost like one of the old monks who had built the place, so little did I find any check to my thought or utterance from its unfitness for the expression of my individual modernism. But not one atom the more did I incline to the evil fancy that God was more in the past than in the present; that He is more within the walls of the church, than in the unwalled sky and earth; or seek to turn backwards one step from a living Now to an entombed and consecrated Past.

One lovely Saturday, I had been out all the morning. I had not walked far, for I had sat in various places longer than I had walked, my path lying through fields and copses, crossing a country road only now and then. I had my Greek Testament with me, and I read when I sat, and thought when I walked. I remember well enough that I was going to preach about the cloud of witnesses, and explain to my people that this did not mean persons looking at, witnessing our behaviour—not so could any addition be made to the awfulness of the fact that the eye of God was upon us—but witnesses to the truth, people who did what God wanted them to do, come of it what might, whether a crown or a rack, scoffs or applause; to behold whose witnessing might well rouse all that was human and divine in us to choose our part with them and their Lord.—When I came home, I had an early dinner, and then betook myself to my Saturday's resort.—I had never had a room large enough to satisfy me before. Now my study was to my mind.

All through the slowly fading afternoon, the autumn of the day, when the colours are richest and the shadows long and lengthening, I paced my solemn old-thoughted church. Sometimes I went up into the pulpit and sat there, looking on the ancient walls which had grown up under men's hands that men might be helped to pray by the visible symbol of unity which the walls gave, and that the voice of the Spirit of God might be heard exhorting men to forsake the evil and choose the good. And I thought how many witnesses to the truth had knelt in those ancient pews. For as the great Church is made up of numberless communities, so is the great shining orb of witness-bearers made up of millions of lesser orbs. All men and women of true heart bear individual testimony to the truth of God, saying, "I have trusted and found Him faithful." And the feeble light of the glowworm is yet light, pure, and good, and with a loveliness of its own. "So, O Lord," I said, "let my light shine before men." And I felt no fear of vanity in such a prayer, for I knew that the glory to come of it is to God only—"that men may glorify their Father in heaven." And I knew that when we seek glory for ourselves, the light goes out, and the Horror that dwells in darkness breathes cold upon our spirits. And I remember that just as I thought thus, my eye was caught first by a yellow light that gilded the apex of the font-cover, which had been wrought like a flame or a bursting blossom: it was so old and worn, I never could tell which; and then by a red light all over a white marble tablet in the wall—the red of life on the cold hue of the grave. And this red light did not come from any work of man's device, but from the great window of the west, which little Gerard Weir wanted to help God to paint. I must have been in a happy mood

that Saturday afternoon, for everything pleased me and made me happier; and all the church-forms about me blended and harmonized graciously with the throne and footstool of God which I saw through the windows. And I lingered on till the night had come; till the church only gloomed about me, and had no shine; and then I found my spirit burning up the clearer, as a lamp which has been flaming all the day with light unseen becomes a glory in the room when the sun is gone down.

At length I felt tired, and would go home. Yet I lingered for a few moments in the vestry, thinking what hymns would harmonize best with the things I wanted to make my people think about. It was now almost quite dark out of doors—at least as dark as it would be.

Suddenly through the gloom I thought I heard a moan and a sob. I sat upright in my chair and listened. But I heard nothing more, and concluded I had deceived myself. After a few moments, I rose to go home and have some tea, and turn my mind rather away from than towards the subject of witness-bearing any more for that night, lest I should burn the fuel of it out before I came to warm the people with it, and should have to blow its embers instead of flashing its light and heat upon them in gladness. So I left the church by my vestry-door, which I closed behind me, and took my way along the path through the clustering group of graves.

Again I heard a sob. This time I was sure of it. And there lay something dark upon one of the grassy mounds. I approached it, but it did not move. I spoke.

"Can I be of any use to you?" I said.

"No," returned an almost inaudible voice.

Though I did not know whose was the grave, I knew that no one had been buried there very lately, and if the grief were for the loss of the dead, it was more than probably aroused to fresh vigour by recent misfortune.

I stooped, and taking the figure by the arm, said,

"Come with me, and let us see what can be done for you."

I then saw that it was a youth—perhaps scarcely more than a boy. And as soon as I saw that, I knew that his grief could hardly be incurable. He returned no answer, but rose at once to his feet, and submitted to be led away. I took him the shortest road to my house through the shrubbery, brought him into the study, made him sit down in my easy-chair, and rang for lights and wine; for the dew had been falling heavily, and his clothes were quite dank. But when the wine came, he refused to take any.

"But you want it," I said.

"No, sir, I don't, indeed."

"Take some for my sake, then."

"I would rather not, sir."

"Why?"

"I promised my father a year ago, when I left home, that I would not drink anything stronger than water. And I can't break my promise now."

"Where is your home?"

"In the village, sir."

"That wasn't your father's grave I found you upon, was it?"

"No, sir. It was my mother's."

"Then your father is still alive?"

"Yes, sir. You know him very well—Thomas Weir."

"Ah! He told me he had a son in London. Are you that son?"

"Yes, sir," he answered, swallowing a rising sob.

"Then what is the matter? Your father is a good friend of mine, and would tell you you might trust me."

"I don't doubt it, sir. But you won't believe me any more than my father."

By this time I had perused his person, his dress, and his countenance. He was of middle size, but evidently not full grown. His dress was very decent. His face was pale and thin, and revealed a likeness to his father. He had blue eyes that looked full at me, and, as far as I could judge, betokened, along with the whole of his expression, an honest and sensitive nature. I found him very attractive, and was therefore the more emboldened to press for the knowledge of his story.

"I cannot promise to believe whatever you say; but almost I could. And if you tell me the truth, I like you too much already to be in great danger of doubting you; for you know the truth has a force of its own."

"I thought so till to-night," he answered. "But if my father would not believe me, how can I expect you to do so, sir?"

"Your father may have been too much troubled by your story to be able to do it justice. It is not a bit like your father to be unfair."

"No, sir. And so much the less chance of your believing me."

Somehow his talk prepossessed me still more in his favour. There was a certain refinement in it, a quality of dialogue which indicated thought, as I judged; and I became more and more certain that, whatever I might have to think of it when told, he would yet tell me the truth.

"Come, try me," I said.

"I will, sir. But I must begin at the beginning."

"Begin where you like. I have nothing more to do to-night, and you may take what time you please. But I will ring for tea first; for I dare say you have not made any promise about that."

A faint smile flickered on his face. He was evidently beginning to feel a little more comfortable.

"When did you arrive from London?" I asked.

"About two hours ago, I suppose."

"Bring tea, Mrs. Pearson, and that cold chicken and the ham, and plenty of toast. We are both hungry."

Mrs. Pearson gave a questioning look at the lad and departed to do her duty.

When she returned with the tray, I saw by the unconsciously eager way in which he looked at the eatables, that he had had nothing for some time; and so, even after we were left alone, I would not let him say a word till he had made a good meal. It was delightful to see how he ate. Few troubles will

destroy a growing lad's hunger; and indeed it has always been to me a marvel how the feelings and the appetites affect each other. I have known grief actually make people, and not sensual people at all, quite hungry. At last I thought I had better not offer him any more.

After the tea-things had been taken away, I put the candles out; and the moon, which had risen, nearly full, while we were at tea, shone into the room. I had thought that he might possibly find it easier to tell his story in the moonlight, which, if there were any shame in the recital, would not, by too much revelation, reduce him to the despair of Macbeth, when, feeling that he could contemplate his deed, but not his deed and himself together, he exclaimed,

"To know my deed, 't were best not know myself."

So, sitting by the window in the moonlight, he told his tale. The moon lighted up his pale face as he told it, and gave rather a wild expression to his eyes, eager to find faith in me.—I have not much of the dramatic in me, I know; and I am rather a flat teller of stories on that account. I shall not, therefore, seeing there is no necessity for it, attempt to give the tale in his own words. But, indeed, when I think of it, they did not differ so much from the form of my own, for he had, I presume, lost his provincialisms, and being, as I found afterwards, a reader of the best books that came in his way, had not caught up many cockneyisms instead.

He had filled a place in the employment of Messrs. ——— and Co., large silk mercers, linen drapers, &c., &c., in London; for all the trades are mingled now. His work at first was to accompany one of the carts which delivered the purchases of the day; but, I presume because he showed himself to be a smart lad, they took him at length into the shop to wait behind the counter. This he did not like so much, but, as it was considered a rise in life, made no objection to the change.

He seemed to himself to get on pretty well. He soon learned all the marks on the goods intended to be understood by the shopmen, and within a few months believed that he was found generally useful. He had as yet had no distinct department allotted to him, but was moved from place to place, according as the local pressure of business might demand.

"I confess," he said, "that I was not always satisfied with what was going on about me. I mean I could not help doubting if everything was done on the square, as they say. But nothing came plainly in my way, and so I could honestly say it did not concern me. I took care to be straightforward for my part, and, knowing only the prices marked for the sale of the goods, I had nothing to do with anything else. But one day, while I was showing a lady some handkerchiefs which were marked as *mouchoirs de l'aris*—I don't know if I pronounce it right, sir—she said she did not believe they were French cambric; and I, knowing nothing about it, said nothing. But, happening to look up while we both stood silent, the lady examining the handkerchiefs, and I doing nothing till she should have made up her mind, I caught sight of the eyes of the shop-walker, as they call the man who shows customers where to go for what they want, and sees that they are attended to. He is a fat man, dressed in black, with a great gold chain, which they say in the shop is only copper gilt. But that doesn't matter, only it would be the liker himself. He was standing staring at me. I could not tell what to make of it; but from that day I often caught him watching me, as if I had been a customer suspected of shop-lifting. Still I only thought he was very disagreeable, and tried to forget him.

"One day—the day before yesterday—two ladies, an old lady and a young one, came into the shop, and wanted to look at some shawls. It was dinner-time, and most of the men were in the house at their dinner. The shop-walker sent me to them, and then, I do believe, though I did not see him, stood behind a pillar to watch me, as he had been in the way of doing more openly. I thought I had seen the ladies before, and though I could not then tell where, I am now almost sure they were Mrs. and Miss Oldcastle, of the Hall. They wanted to buy a cashmere for the young lady. I showed them some. They wanted better. I brought the best we had, inquiring, that I might make no mistake. They asked the price. I told them. They said they were not good enough, and wanted to see some more. I told them they were the best we had. They looked at them again; said they were sorry, but the shawls were not good enough, and left the shop without buying anything. I proceeded to take the shawls upstairs again, and, as I went, passed the shop-walker, whom I had not observed while I was attending to the ladies. 'You're for no good, young man!' he said with a nasty sneer. 'What do you mean by that, Mr. B.?' I asked, for his sneer made me angry. 'You'll know before to-morrow,' he answered, and walked away. That same evening, as we were shutting up shop, I was sent for to the principal's room. The moment I entered, he said, 'You won't suit us, young man, I find. You had better pack up your box to-night, and be off to-morrow. There's your quarter's salary.' 'What have I done?' I asked in astonishment, and yet with a vague suspicion of the matter. 'It's not what you've done, but what you don't do,' he answered. 'Do you think we can afford to keep you here and pay you wages to send people away from the shop without buying? If you do, you're mistaken, that's all. You may go.' 'But what could I do?' I said. 'I suppose that spy B——,'—I believe I said so, sir. 'Now, now, young man, none of your sauce!' said Mr. ——. 'Honest people don't think about spies.' 'I thought it was for honesty you were getting rid of me,' I said. Mr. —— rose to his feet, his lips white, and pointed to the door. 'Take your money and be off. And mind you don't refer to me for a character. After such impudence I couldn't in conscience give you one.' Then, calming down a little when he saw I turned to go, 'You had better take to your hands again, for your head will never keep you. There, be off!' he said, pushing the money towards me, and turning his back to me. I could not touch it. 'Keep the money, Mr. ——,' I said. 'It'll make up for what you've lost by me.' And I left the room at once without waiting for an answer.

"While I was packing my box, one of my chums came in, and I told him all about it. He is rather a good fellow, that, sir; but he laughed, and said, 'What a fool you are, Weir! *You'll* never make your daily bread, and you needn't think it. If you knew what I know, you'd have known better. And it's very odd it was about shawls, too. I'll tell you. As you're going away, you won't let it out. Mr. ——' (that was the same who had just turned me away) 'was serving some ladies himself, for he wasn't above being in the shop, like his partner. They wanted the best Indian shawl they could get. None of those he showed them were good enough, for the ladies really didn't know one from another. They always go by the price you ask, and Mr. —— knew that well enough. He had sent me up-stairs for the shawls, and as I brought them he said, "These are the best imported, madam." There were three ladies; and one shook her head, and another shook her head, and they all shook their heads. And then Mr. —— was sorry, I believe you, that he had said they were the best. But you won't catch him in a trap! He's too old a fox for that.' I'm telling you, sir, what Johnson told me. 'He looked close down at the shawls, as if he was short-sighted, though he could see as far as any man. "I beg your pardon, ladies," said he, "you're right. I am quite wrong. What a stupid blunder to make! And yet they did deceive me. Here, Johnson, take these shawls away. How could you be so stupid? I will fetch the thing you want myself, ladies." So I went with him. He chose out three or four shawls, of the nicest patterns, from the very same lot, marked in the very same way, folded them differently, and gave them to me to carry down. "Now, ladies, here they are!" he said. "These are quite a different thing, as you will see; and, indeed, they cost half as much again." In five minutes they had bought two of them, and paid just half as much more than he had asked for them the first time. That's Mr. ——! and that's what you should have done if you had wanted to keep your place.'—But I assure you, sir, I could not help being glad to be out of it."

"But there is nothing in all this to be miserable about," I said. "You did your duty."

"It would be all right, sir, if father believed me. I don't want to be idle, I'm sure."

"Does your father think you do?"

"I don't know what he thinks. He won't speak to me. I told my story—as much of it as he would let me, at least—but he wouldn't listen to me. He only said he knew better than that. I couldn't bear it. He always was rather hard upon us. I'm sure if you hadn't been so kind to me, sir, I don't know what I should have done by this time. I haven't another friend in the world."

"Yes, you have. Your Father in heaven is your friend."

"I don't know that, sir. I'm not good enough."

"That's quite true. But you would never have done your duty if He had not been with you."

"*Do* you think so, sir?" he returned, eagerly.

"Indeed I do. Everything good comes from the Father of lights. Every one that walks in any glimmering of light walks so far in *his* light. For there is no light—only darkness—comes from below. And man apart from God can generate no light. He's not meant to be separated from God, you see. And only think then what light He can give you if you will turn to Him and ask for it. What He has given you should make you long for more; for what you have is not enough—Ah! far from it."

"I think I understand. But I didn't feel good at all in the matter. I didn't see any other way of doing."

"So much the better. We ought never to feel good. We are but unprofitable servants at best. There is no merit in doing your duty; only you would have been a poor wretched creature not to do as you did. And now, instead of making yourself miserable over the consequences of it, you ought to bear them like a man, with courage and hope, thanking God that He has made you suffer for righteousness' sake, and denied you the success and the praise of cheating. I will go to your father at once, and find out what he is thinking about it. For no doubt Mr. —— has written to him with his version of the story. Perhaps he will be more inclined to believe you when he finds that I believe you."

"Oh, thank you, sir!" cried the lad, and jumped up from his seat to go with me.

"No," I said; "you had better stay where you are. I shall be able to speak more freely if you are not present. Here is a book to amuse yourself with. I do not think I shall be long gone."

But I was longer gone than I thought I should be.

When I reached the carpenter's house, I found, to my surprise, that he was still at work. By the light of a single tallow candle placed beside him on the bench, he was ploughing away at a groove. His pale face, of which the lines were unusually sharp, as I might have expected after what had occurred, was the sole object that reflected the light of the candle to my eyes as I entered the gloomy place. He looked up, but, without even greeting me, dropped his face again and went on with his work.

"What!" I said, cheerily, for I believed that, like Gideon's pitcher, I held dark within me the light that would discomfit his Midianites, which consciousness may well make the pitcher cheery inside, even while the light as yet is all its own—worthless, till it break out upon the world, and cease to illuminate only glazed pitcher-sides—"What," I said, "working so late?"

"Yes, sir."

"It is not usual with you, I know."

"It's all a humbug!" he said fiercely, but coldly notwithstanding, as he stood erect from his work, and turned his white face full on me—of which, however, the eyes drooped—"It's all a humbug; and I don't mean to be humbugged any more."

"Am I a humbug?" I returned, not quite taken by surprise.

"I don't say that. Don't make a personal thing of it, sir. You're taken in, I believe, like the rest of us. Tell me that a God governs the world! What have I done, to be used like this?"

I thought with myself how I could retort for his young son: "What has he done to be used like

this?" But that was not my way, though it might work well enough in some hands. Some men are called to be prophets. I could only "stand and wait."

"It would be wrong in me to pretend ignorance," I said, "of what you mean. I know all about it."

"Do you? He has been to you, has he? But you don't know all about it, sir. The impudence of the young rascal!"

He paused for a moment.

"A man like me!" he resumed, becoming eloquent in his indignation, and, as I thought afterwards, entirely justifying what Wordsworth says about the language of the so-called uneducated,—"A man like me, who was as proud of his honour as any aristocrat in the country—prouder than any of them would grant me the right to be!"

"Too proud of it, I think—not too careful of it," I said. But I was thankful he did not heed me, for the speech would only have irritated him. He went on.

"Me to be treated like this! One child a . . . ."

Here came a terrible break in his speech. But he tried again.

"And the other a . . . ."

Instead of finishing the sentence, however, he drove his plough fiercely through the groove, splitting off some inches of the wall of it at the end.

"If any one has treated you so," I said, "it must be the devil, not God."

"But if there were a God, he could have prevented it all."

"Mind what I said to you once before: He hasn't done yet. And there is another enemy in his way as bad as the devil—I mean our *selves*. When people want to walk their own way without God, God lets them try it. And then the devil gets a hold of them. But God won't let him keep them. As soon as they are 'wearied in the greatness of their way,' they begin to look about for a Saviour. And then they find God ready to pardon, ready to help, not breaking the bruised reed—leading them to his own self manifest—with whom no man can fear any longer, Jesus Christ, the righteous lover of men—their elder brother—what we call *big brother*, you know—one to help them and take their part against the devil, the world, and the flesh, and all the rest of the wicked powers. So you see God is tender—just like the prodigal son's father—only with this difference, that God has millions of prodigals, and never gets tired of going out to meet them and welcome them back, every one as if he were the only prodigal son He had ever had. There's a father indeed! Have you been such a father to your son?"

"The prodigal didn't come with a pack of lies. He told his father the truth, bad as it was."

"How do you know that your son didn't tell you the truth? All the young men that go from home don't do as the prodigal did. Why should you not believe what he tells you?"

"I'm not one to reckon without my host. Here's my bill."

And so saying, he handed me a letter. I took it and read:

"Sir,—It has become our painful duty to inform you that your son has this day been discharged from the employment of Messrs. —— and Co., his conduct not being such as to justify the confidence hitherto reposed in him. It would have been contrary to the interests of the establishment to continue him longer behind the counter, although we are not prepared to urge anything against him beyond the fact that he has shown himself absolutely indifferent to the interests of his employers. We trust that the chief blame will be found to lie with certain connexions of a kind easy to be formed in large cities, and that the loss of his situation may be punishment sufficient, if not for justice, yet to make him consider his ways and be wise. We enclose his quarter's salary, which the young man rejected with insult, and,

"We remain, &c.,

"—— and Co."

"And," I exclaimed, "this is what you found your judgment of your own son upon! You reject him unheard, and take the word of a stranger! I don't wonder you cannot believe in your Father when you behave so to your son. I don't say your conclusion is false, though I don't believe it. But I do say the grounds you go upon are anything but sufficient."

"You don't mean to tell me that a man of Mr. ——'s standing, who has one of the largest shops in London, and whose brother is Mayor of Addicehead, would slander a poor lad like that!"

"Oh you mammon-worshipper!" I cried. "Because a man has one of the largest shops in London and his brother is Mayor of Addicehead, you take his testimony and refuse your son's! I did not know the boy till this evening; but I call upon you to bring back to your memory all that you have known of him from his childhood, and then ask yourself whether there is not at least as much probability of his having remained honest as of the master of a great London shop being infallible in his conclusions—at which conclusions, whatever they be, I confess no man can wonder, after seeing how readily his father listens to his defamation."

I spoke with warmth. Before I had done, the pale face of the carpenter was red as fire; for he had been acting contrary to all his own theories of human equality, and that in a shameful manner. Still, whether convinced or not, he would not give in. He only drove away at his work, which he was utterly destroying. His mouth was closed so tight, he looked as if he had his jaw locked; and his eyes gleamed over the ruined board with a light which seemed to me to have more of obstinacy in it than contrition.

"Ah, Thomas!" I said, taking up the speech once more, "if God had behaved to us as you have behaved to your boy—be he innocent, be he guilty—there's not a man or woman of all our lost race would have returned to him from the time of Adam till now. I don't wonder that you find it difficult to believe in Him."

And with those words I left the shop, determined to overwhelm the unbeliever with proof, and put him to shame before his own soul, whence, I thought, would come even more good to him than to his son. For there was a great deal of self-satisfaction

mixed up with the man's honesty, and the sooner that had a blow the better—it might prove a death-blow in the long run. It was pride that lay at the root of his hardness. He visited the daughter's fault upon the son. His daughter had disgraced him; and he was ready to flash into wrath with his son upon any imputation which recalled to him the torture he had undergone when his daughter's dishonour came first to the light. Her he had never forgiven, and now his pride flung his son out after her upon the first suspicion. His imagination had filled up all the blanks in the wicked insinuations of Mr. ——. He concluded that he had taken money to spend in the worst company, and had so disgraced him beyond forgiveness. His pride paralysed his love. He thought more about himself than about his children. His own shame outweighed in his estimation the sadness of their guilt. It was a less matter that they should be guilty, than that he, their father, should be disgraced.

Thinking over all this, and forgetting how late it was, I found myself half-way up the avenue of the Hall. I wanted to find out whether young Weir's fancy that the ladies he had failed in serving, or rather whom he had really served with honesty, were Mrs. and Miss Oldcastle, was correct. What a point it would be if it was! I should not then be satisfied except I could prevail on Miss Oldcastle to accompany me to Thomas Weir, and shame the faithlessness out of him. So eager was I after certainty, that it was not till I stood before the house that I saw clearly the impropriety of attempting anything further that night. One light only was burning in the whole front, and that was on the first floor.

Glancing up at it, I knew not why, as I turned to go down the hill again, I saw a corner of the blind drawn aside and a face peeping out—whose, I could not tell. This was uncomfortable—for what could be taking me there at such a time? But I walked steadily away, certain I could not escape recognition, and determining to refer to this ill-considered visit when I called the next day. I would not put it off till Monday, I was resolved.

I lingered on the bridge as I went home. Not a light was to be seen in the village, except one over Catherine Weir's shop. There were not many restless souls in my parish—not so many as there ought to be. Yet gladly would I see the troubled in peace—not a moment, though, before their troubles should have brought them where the weary and heavy-laden can alone find rest to their souls—finding the Father's peace in the Son—the Father himself reconciling them to himself.

How still the night was! My soul hung, as it were, suspended in stillness; for the whole sphere of heaven seemed to be about me, the stars above shining as clear below in the mirror of the all but motionless water. It was a pure type of the "rest that remaineth"—rest, the one immovable centre wherein lie all the stores of might, whence issue all forces, all influences of making and moulding. "And, indeed," I said to myself, "after all the noise, uproar, and strife that there is on the earth, after all the tempests, earthquakes, and volcanic outbursts, there is yet more of peace than of tumult in the world. How many nights like this glide away in loveliness, when deep sleep hath fallen upon men, and they know neither how still their own repose, nor how beautiful the sleep of nature! Ah, what must the stillness of the kingdom be! When the heavenly day's work is done, with what a gentle wing will the night come down! But I bethink me, the rest there, as here, will be the presence of God; and if we have Him with us, the battle-field itself will be—if not quiet, yet as full of peace as this night of stars." So I spoke to myself, and went home.

I had little immediate comfort to give my young guest, but I had plenty of hope. I told him he must stay in the house to-morrow; for it would be better to have the reconciliation with his father over before he appeared in public. So the next day neither Weir was at church.

As soon as the afternoon service was over, I went once more to the Hall, and was shown into the drawing room—a great faded room, in which the prevailing colour was a dingy gold, hence called the yellow drawing-room when the house had more than one. It looked down upon the lawn, which, although little expense was now laid out on any of the ornamental adjuncts of the Hall, was still kept very nice. There sat Mrs. Oldcastle reading, with her face to the house. A little way further off, Miss Oldcastle sat, with a book on her knee, but her gaze fixed on the wide-spread landscape before her, of which, however, she seemed to be as inobservant as of her book. I caught glimpses of Judy flitting hither and thither among the trees, never a moment in one place.

Fearful of having an interview with the old lady alone, which was not likely to lead to what I wanted, I stepped from a window which was open, out upon the terrace, and thence down the steps to the lawn below. The servant had just informed Mrs. Oldcastle of my visit when I came near. She drew herself up in her chair, and evidently chose to regard my approach as an intrusion.

"I did not expect a visit from you to-day, Mr. Walton, you will allow me to say?"

"I am doing Sunday work," I answered. "Will you kindly tell me whether you were in London on Thursday last? But stay, allow me to ask Miss Oldcastle to join us."

Without waiting for answer, I went to Miss Oldcastle, and begged her to come and listen to something in which I wanted her help. She rose courteously though without cordiality, and accompanied me to her mother, who sat with perfect rigidity, watching us.

"Again let me ask," I said, "if you were in London on Thursday."

Though I addressed the old lady, the answer came from her daughter.

"Yes, we were."

"Were you in —— & Co.'s, in —— Street?"

But now before Miss Oldcastle could reply, her mother interposed.

"Are we charged with shoplifting, Mr. Walton? Really, one is not accustomed to such cross-questioning—except from a lawyer."

"Have patience with me for a moment," I returned. "I am not going to be mysterious for more

than two or three questions. Please tell me whether you were in that shop or not."

"I believe we were," said the mother.

"Yes, certainly," said the daughter.

"Did you buy anything?"

"No. We——" Miss Oldcastle began.

"Not a word more," I exclaimed eagerly. "Come with me at once."

"What *do* you mean, Mr. Walton?" said the mother, with a sort of cold indignation, while the daughter looked surprised, but said nothing.

"I beg your pardon for my impetuosity; but much is in your power at this moment. The son of one of my parishioners has come home in trouble. His father, Thomas Weir——"

"Ah!" said Mrs. Oldcastle, in a tone considerably at strife with refinement. But I took no notice.

"His father will not believe his story. The lad thinks you were the ladies in serving whom he got into trouble. I am so confident he tells the truth, that I want Miss Oldcastle to be so kind as accompany me to Weir's house——"

"Really, Mr. Walton, I am astonished at your making such a request!" exclaimed Mrs. Oldcastle, with suitable emphasis on every salient syllable, while her white face flushed with anger. "To ask Miss Oldcastle to accompany you to the dwelling of the ringleader of all the *canaille* of the neighbourhood!"

"It is for the sake of justice," I interposed.

"That is no concern of ours. Let them fight it out between them. I am sure any trouble that comes of it is no more than they all deserve. A low family—men and women of them!"

"I assure you, I think very differently."

"I daresay you do."

"But neither your opinion nor mine has anything to do with the matter."

Here I turned to Miss Oldcastle and went on—

"It is a chance which seldom occurs in one's life, Miss Oldcastle—a chance of setting wrong right by a word; and as a minister of the Gospel of truth and love, I beg you to assist me with your presence to that end."

I would have spoken more strongly, but I knew that her word given to me would be enough without her presence. At the same time, I felt not only that there would be a propriety in her taking a personal interest in the matter, but that it would do her good, and tend to create a favour towards each other in some of my flock between whom at present there seemed to be nothing in common.

But at my last words, Mrs. Oldcastle rose to her feet, no longer red—now whiter than her usual whiteness with passion.

"You dare to persist! You take advantage of your profession to persist in dragging my daughter into a vile dispute between mechanics of the lowest class!—against the positive command of her only parent! Have you no respect for her position in society?—for her sex? *Mister Walton*, you act in a manner unworthy of your cloth."

I had stood looking in her eyes with as much self-possession as I could muster. And I believe I should have borne it all quietly, but for that last word. If there is one epithet I hate more than another, it is that execrable word *cloth*—used for the office of a clergyman. I have no time to set forth its offence now. If my reader cannot feel it, I do not care to make him feel it. Only I am sorry to say it overcame my temper.

"Madam," I said, "I owe nothing to my tailor. But I owe God my whole being, and my neighbour all I can do for him. 'He that loveth not his brother is a murderer,' or murderess, as the case may be."

At that word *murderess*, her face became livid, and she turned away without reply. By this time her daughter was half way to the house. She followed her. And here was I left to go home, with the full knowledge that, partly from trying to gain too much, and partly from losing my temper, I had at best but a mangled and unsatisfactory testimony to carry back to Thomas Weir. Of course I walked away—round the end of the house and down the avenue; and the further I went the more mortified I grew. It was not merely the shame of losing my temper, though that was a shame—and with a woman too, merely because she used a common epithet!—but I saw that it must appear very strange to the carpenter that I was not able to give a more explicit account of some sort, what I had learned not being in the least decisive in the matter. It only amounted to this, that Mrs. and Miss Oldcastle were in the shop on the very day on which Weir was dismissed. It proved that so much of what he had told me was correct—nothing more. And if I tried to better the matter by explaining how I had offended them, would it not deepen the very hatred I had hoped to overcome? In fact, I stood convicted before the tribunal of my own conscience of having lost all the certain good of my attempt, in part at least from the foolish desire to produce a conviction *of* Weir rather than *in* Weir, which should be triumphant after a melodramatic fashion, and—must I confess it?—should *punish* him for not believing in his son when *I* did; forgetting in my miserable selfishness that not to believe in his son was an unspeakably worse punishment in itself than any conviction or consequent shame brought about by the most overwhelming of stage-effects. I assure my reader, I felt humiliated.

Now I think humiliation is a very different condition of mind from humility. Humiliation no man can desire: it is shame and torture. Humility is the true, right condition of humanity—peaceful, divine. And yet a man may gladly welcome humiliation when it comes, if he finds that with fierce shock and rude revulsion it has turned him right round, with his face away from pride, whither he was travelling, and towards humility, however far away upon the horizon's verge she may sit waiting for him. To me, however, there came a gentle and not therefore less effective dissolution of the bonds both of pride and humiliation; and before Weir and I met, I was nearly as anxious to heal his wounded spirit, as I was to work justice for his son.

I was walking slowly, with burning cheek and downcast eyes, the one of conflict, the other of shame and defeat, away from the great house, which seemed to be staring after me down the avenue with all its

window-eyes, when suddenly my deliverance came. At a somewhat sharp turn, where the avenue changed into a winding road, Miss Oldcastle stood waiting for me, the glow of haste upon her cheek, and the firmness of resolution upon her lips. Once more I was startled by her sudden presence, but she did not smile.

"Mr. Walton, what do you want me to do? I would not willingly refuse, if it is, as you say, really my duty to go with you."

"I cannot be positive about that," I answered. "I think I put it too strongly. But it would be a considerable advantage, I think, if you *would* go with me and let me ask you a few questions in the presence of Thomas Weir. It will have more effect if I am able to tell him that I have only learned as yet that you were in the shop on that day, and refer him to you for the rest."

"I will go."

"A thousand thanks. But how did you manage to—— ?"

Here I stopped, not knowing how to finish the question.

"You are surprised that I came, notwithstanding mamma's objection to my going ?"

"I confess I am. I should not have been surprised at Judy's doing so, now."

She was silent for a moment.

"Do you think obedience to parents is to last for ever ? The honour is, of course. But I am surely old enough to be right in following my conscience at least."

"You mistake me. That is not the difficulty at all. Of course you ought to do what is right against the highest authority on earth, which I take to be just the parental. What I am surprised at is your courage."

"Not because of its degree, only that it is mine !"

And she sighed.—She was quite right, and I did not know what to answer. But she resumed.

"I know I am cowardly. But if I cannot dare, I can bear. Is it not strange ?—With my mother looking at me, I dare not say a word, dare hardly move against her will. And it is not always a good will. I cannot honour my mother as I would. But the moment her eyes are off me, I can do anything, knowing the consequences perfectly, and just as regardless of them ; for, as I tell you, Mr. Walton, I can endure ; and you do not know what that might *come* to mean with my mother. Once she kept me shut up in my room, and sent me only bread and water, for a whole week to the very hour. Not that I minded that much, but it will let you know a little of my position in my own home. That is why I walked away before her. I saw what was coming."

And Miss Oldcastle drew herself up with more expression of pride than I had yet seen in her, revealing to me that perhaps I had hitherto quite misunderstood the source of her apparent haughtiness. I could not reply for indignation. My silence must have been the cause of what she said next.

"Ah ! you think I have no right to speak so about my own mother ! Well ! well ! But indeed I would not have done so a month ago."

"If I am silent, Miss Oldcastle, it is that my sympathy is too strong for me. There are mothers and mothers. And for a mother not to be a mother is too dreadful."

She made no reply. I resumed.

"It will seem cruel, perhaps ;—certainly in saying it, I lay myself open to the rejoinder that talk is *so* easy ;—still I shall feel more honest when I have said it : the only thing I feel should be altered in your conduct—forgive me—is that you should *dare* your mother. Do not think, for it is an unfortunate phrase, that my meaning is a vulgar one. If it were, I should at least know better than to utter it to you. What I mean is, that you ought to be able to be and do the same before your mother's eyes, that you are and do when she is out of sight. I mean that you should look in your mother's eyes, and do what is *right*."

"I *know* that—know it *well*." (She emphasized the words as I do). "But you do not know what a spell she casts upon me ; how impossible it is to do as you say."

"Difficult, I allow. Impossible, not. You will never be free till you do so."

"You are too hard upon me. Besides, though you will scarcely be able to believe it now, I *do* honour her, and cannot help feeling that by doing as I do, I avoid irreverence, impertinence, rudeness—whichever is the right word for what I mean."

"I understand you perfectly. But the truth is more than propriety of behaviour, even to a parent ; and indeed has in it a deeper reverence, or the germ of it at least, than any adherence to the mere code of respect. If you once did as I want you to do, you would find that in reality you both revered and loved your mother more than you do now."

"You may be right. But I am certain you speak without any real idea of the difficulty."

"That may be. And yet what I say remains just as true."

"How could I meet *violence*, for instance ?"

"Impossible !"

She returned no reply. We walked in silence for some minutes. At length she said,

"My mother's self-will amounts to madness, I do believe. I have yet to learn where she would stop of herself."

"All self-will is madness," I returned—stupidly enough. For what is the use of making general remarks when you have a terrible concrete before you ? "To want one's own way just and only because it is one's own way is the height of madness."

"Perhaps. But when madness has to be encountered as if it were sense, it makes it no easier to know that it is madness."

"Does your uncle give you no help ?"

"He ! Poor man ! He is as frightened at her as I am. He dares not even go away. He did not know what he was coming to when he came to Oldcastle Hall. Dear uncle ! I owe him a great deal. But for any help of that sort, he is of no more use than a child. I believe mamma looks upon him as half an idiot. He can do anything or everything but help one to live, to *be* anything. Oh me ! I *am* so tired !"

And the *proud* lady, as I had thought her, perhaps not incorrectly, burst out crying.

What was I to do? I did not know in the least. What I said, I do not even now know. But by this time we were at the gate, and as soon as we had passed the guardian monstrosities, we found the open road an effectual antidote to tears. When we came within sight of the old house where Weir lived, Miss Oldcastle became again a little curious as to what I required of her.

"Trust me," I said. "There is nothing mysterious about it. Only I prefer the truth to come out fresh in the ears of the man most concerned."

"I do trust you," she answered. And we knocked at the house-door.

Thomas Weir himself opened the door, with a candle in his hand. He looked very much astonished to see his lady-visitor. He asked us, politely enough, to walk up stairs, and ushered us into the large room I have already described. There sat the old man, as I had first seen him, by the side of the fire. He received us with more than politeness—with courtesy; and I could not help glancing at Miss Oldcastle to see what impression this family of "low, free-thinking republicans" made upon her. It was easy to discover that the impression was of favourable surprise. But I was as much surprised at her behaviour as she was at theirs. Not a haughty tone was to be heard in her voice; not a haughty movement to be seen in her form. She accepted the chair offered her, and sat down, perfectly at home, by the fire-side, only that she turned towards me, waiting for what explanation I might think proper to give.

Before I had time to speak, however, old Mr. Weir broke the silence.

"I've been telling Tom, sir, as I've told him many a time afore, as how he's a deal too hard with his children."

"Father!" interrupted Thomas angrily.

"Have patience a bit, my boy," persisted the old man, turning again towards me.—"Now, sir, he won't even hear young Tom's side of the story; and I say that boy won't tell him no lie if he's the same boy he went away."

"I tell you, father," again began Thomas; but this time I interposed, to prevent useless talk beforehand.

"Thomas," I said, "listen to me. I have heard your son's side of the story. Because of something he said, I went to Miss Oldcastle, and asked her whether she was in his late master's shop last Thursday. That is all I have asked her, and all she has told me is that she was. I know no more than you what she is going to reply to my questions now, but I have no doubt her answers will correspond to your son's story.

I then put my questions to Miss Oldcastle, whose answers amounted to this:—That they had wanted to buy a shawl; that they had seen none good enough; that they had left the shop without buying anything; and that they had been waited upon by a young man, who, while perfectly polite and attentive to their wants, did not seem to have the ways or manners of a London shop-lad.

I then told them the story as young Tom had related it to me, and asked if his sister was not in the house and might not go to fetch him. But she was with her sister Catherine.

"I think, Mr. Walton, if you have done with me, I ought to go home now," said Miss Oldcastle.

"Certainly," I answered. "I will take you home at once. I am greatly obliged to you for coming."

"Indeed, sir," said the old man, rising with difficulty, "we're obliged both to you and the lady more than we can tell. To take such a deal of trouble for us! But you see, sir, you're one of them as thinks a man's got his duty to do one way or another, whether he be clergyman or carpenter. God bless you, miss. You're of the right sort, which you'll excuse an old man, miss, as 'll never see ye again till ye've got the wings as ye ought to have."

Miss Oldcastle smiled very sweetly, and answered nothing, but shook hands with them both, and bade them good-night. Weir could not speak a word; he could hardly even lift his eyes. But a red spot glowed on each of his pale cheeks, making him look very like his daughter Catherine, and I could see Miss Oldcastle wince and grow red too with the gripe he gave her hand. But she smiled again none the less sweetly.

"I will see Miss Oldcastle home, and then go back to my house and bring the boy with me," I said, as we left.

It was some time before either of us spoke. The sun was setting, the sky the earth and the air lovely with rosy light, and the world full of that peculiar calm which belongs to the evening of the day of rest. Surely the world ought to wake better on the morrow.

"Not very dangerous people, those, Miss Oldcastle," I said, at last.

"I thank you very much for taking me to see them," she returned, cordially.

"You won't believe all you may happen to hear against the working people now?"

"I never did."

"There are ill-conditioned, cross-grained, low-minded, selfish, unbelieving people amongst them. God knows it. But there are ladies and gentlemen amongst them too."

"That old man is a gentleman."

"He is. And the only way to teach them all to be such, is to be such to them. The man who does not show himself a gentleman to the working people—why should I call them the poor? some of them are better off than many of the rich, for they can pay their debts, and do it.——"

I had forgot the beginning of my sentence.

"You were saying that the man who does not show himself a gentleman to the poor——"

"Is no gentleman at all. Only a gentle without the man; and if you consult my namesake old Izaak, you will find what that is."

"I will look. I know your way now. You won't tell me anything I can find out for myself."

"Is it not the best way?"

"Yes. Because, for one thing, you find out so much more than you look for."

"Certainly that has been my own experience."

"Are you a descendant of Izaak Walton?"

"No. I believe there are none. But I hope I have so much of his spirit that I can do two things like him."

"Tell me."

"Live in the country though I was not brought up in it, and know a good man when I see him."

"I am very glad you asked me to go to-night."

"If people only knew their own brothers and sisters, the kingdom of heaven would not be far off."

I do not think Miss Oldcastle quite liked this, for she was silent thereafter; though I allow that is not conclusive. And we had now come close to the house.

"I wish I could help you," I said.

"In what?"

"To bear what I fear is waiting you."

"I told you I was equal to that. It is where we are unequal that we want help. You may have to give it me some day—who knows?"

I left her most unwillingly in the porch, just as Sarah (the white wolf) had her hand on the door, rejoicing in my heart, however, over her last words.

My reader will not be surprised, after all this, if, before I get very much farther with my story, I have to confess that I loved Miss Oldcastle.

When young Tom and I entered the room, his grandfather rose and tottered to meet him. His father made one step towards him and then hesitated. Of all conditions of the human mind that of being ashamed of himself must have been the strangest to Thomas Weir. The man had never in his life, I believe, done anything mean or dishonest, and therefore he had had less frequent opportunities than most people of being ashamed of himself. Hence his fall had been from another pinnacle—that of pride. When a man thinks it such a fine thing to have done right, he might almost as well have done wrong, for it shows he considers right something *extra*, not absolutely essential to human existence, not the life of a man. I call it Thomas Weir's fall; for surely to behave in an unfatherly manner to both daughter and son—the one sinful, and therefore needing the more tenderness—the other innocent, and therefore claiming justification—and to do so from pride, and hurt pride, was fall enough in one history, worse a great deal than many sins that go by harder names; for the world's judgment of wrong does not exactly correspond with the reality. And now if he was humbled in the one instance, there would be room to hope he might become humble in the other. But I had soon to see that, for a time, his pride, driven from its entrenchment against his son, only retreated, with all its forces, into the other against his daughter.

Before a moment had passed, *justice* overcame so far that he held out his hand and said:

"Come, Tom, let by-gones be by-gones."

But I stepped between.

"Thomas Weir," I said, "I have too great a regard for you,—and you know I dare not flatter you—to let you off this way, or rather leave you to think you have done your duty when you have not done the half of it. You have done your son a wrong, a great wrong. How can you claim to be a gentleman—I say nothing of being a Christian, for therein you make no claim—how, I say, can you claim to act like a gentleman, if, having done a man wrong—his being your own son has nothing to do with the matter one way or other, except that it ought to make you see your duty more easily—having done him wrong, why don't you beg his pardon, I say, like a man?"

He did not move a step. But young Tom stepped hurriedly forward, and catching his father's hand in both of his, cried out:

"My father shan't beg my pardon. I beg yours. father, for everything I ever did to displease you, But I *wasn't* to blame in this. I wasn't, indeed."

"Tom, I beg your pardon," said the hard man, overcome at last. "And now, sir," he added, turning to me, "will you let by-gones be by-gones between my boy and me?"

There was just a touch of bitterness in his tone.

"With all my heart," I replied. "But I want just a word with you in the shop before I go."

"Certainly," he answered, stiffly; and I bade the old and the young man good night, and followed him down stairs.

"Thomas, my friend," I said, when we got into the shop, laying my hand on his shoulder, "will you after this say that God has dealt hardly with you? There's a son for any man God ever made to give thanks for on his knees! Thomas, you have a strong sense of fair play in your heart, and you *give* fair play neither to your own son nor yet to God himself. You close your doors and brood over your own miseries, and the wrongs people have done you; whereas, if you would but open those doors, you might come out into the light of God's truth, and see that his heart is as clear as sunlight towards you. You won't believe this, and therefore naturally you can't quite believe that there is a God at all; for, indeed, a being that was not all light would be no God at all. If you would but let Him teach you, you would find your perplexities melt away like the snow in spring, till you could hardly believe you had ever felt them. No arguing will convince you of a God, but let Him once come in, and all argument will be tenfold useless to convince you that there is no God. Give God justice. Try Him as I have said.—Good night."

He did not return my farewell with a single word. But the grasp of his strong rough hand was more earnest and loving even than usual. I could not see his face, for it was almost dark; but, indeed, I felt that it was better I could not see it.

I went home as peaceful in my heart as the night whose curtains God had drawn about the earth that it might sleep till the morrow.

(To be continued.)

IN THE LIFE OF OUR LORD.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

Matt. v., vi., vii. ; Luke vi. 20—49.

The traveller from Jerusalem gets his first sight of the Sea of Galilee from the top of Mount Tabor. It is but a small corner of the lake, lying miles away, deep sunk among the hills, that he sees. Descending from the height whence this first glimpse of the lake is got, the road to Tiberias leads over an elevated undulating plateau, the one marked feature of which is a curious double-peaked hill, rising about fifty or sixty feet above the general level of the surrounding table-land, and sloping down on its eastern side into the plain of Gennesaret. From the two prominences it presents this hill is called the Horns of Hattin, Hattin being a village at its base. It overlooks the lake and the plain. You see Capernaum from its summit, lying across the valley about seven miles off. As seen again from Capernaum and the plain, it appears as the highest and loneliest elevation that rises upon that side of the lake. It would naturally be spoken of by the inhabitants of Capernaum and its neighbourhood, even as St. Matthew speaks of it, as *the* mountain. It would naturally be the place to which any one seeking for solitude would retire. When somewhere in its neighbourhood there came around our Lord "a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, and from Galilee and Decapolis, and from Idumea and from beyond Jordan," * and when, seeking relief from the pressure, it is said that He went up into a mountain, no one so likely to be the one referred to by the Evangelist as the Horns of Hattin,—to which, as the supposed place of their utterance, the name of the Mount of the Beatitudes has for ages been given.

The night upon this mountain was spent by Christ in prayer—alone perhaps upon the higher summit, the disciples slumbering below. At dawn he called them to him, and out of them he chose the twelve, and ordained them "that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach." But on what principle was the selection made? in what manner was the ordination effected? It may be presumed that some regard was had to the personal qualifications of those whom the Lord chose for this high office. We know indeed too little of any but two or three of the twelve to trace the special fitness of the human instrument for the work given it to do. Of all but one, however, we may believe that such fitness did exist. But how came that one to be numbered with the rest? It is possible that Judas may have done much to obtrude himself, or that others may have done much to obtrude him upon the notice of the Saviour. We read of one who, with great professions of attachment, volunteered to become a disciple, saying to Jesus, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest;" whom Jesus neither rejected nor welcomed, meeting his declaration of adherence with the ominous words, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." If, as some have thought, the man who came forward in this way and pressed himself into the discipleship were Judas—if he was a man of acknowledged ability and considerable influence, whom no one at the time had the slightest reason to suspect, who was welcomed by all the other disciples, and commended by them to their Master as a most desirable associate—if the rejection of such a man in such circumstances could have seemed to be an act of caprice without known or apparent reason, this might serve perhaps in some slight degree to explain to us how Judas came at first to be numbered with the twelve. Many will feel as if there were something like profanity in any conjecture of this kind, and all will be satisfied in simply accepting the fact that Jesus chose those twelve men, and yet that one of them was a devil.

Was it by simple designation to the office without any form or ceremony? or was it by laying of Christ's hand solemnly on the head of each, then gathering the circle round him and offering up a consecration prayer, that the Apostles were set apart? We cannot tell. It is surely singular, however, that the manner of the ordination of the Apostles by our Lord himself, in like manner as the ordination of the first Presbyters or Bishops of the Church by the Apostles, should have been left unnoticed and undescribed.

The ordination over, Jesus descended to a level spot, either between the two summits or lying at their base.* The day had now advanced, and the great multitude that had followed Him, apprised of his place of retreat, poured in upon Him, bringing their diseased along with them. He stood for a time healing all who were brought to him. Retreating then again to the mountain-side, He sat down. His disciples seated themselves immediately around Him, and the great multitude stood or sat upon the level ground below.

Such were the circumstances under which the Sermon on the Mount was delivered. It may have been the first discourse of the kind which St. Matthew had heard; all the more natural, therefore, that he should have been directed to preserve so full a record of it. We have no authority for saying that it was actually the first formal and lengthened address delivered by our Lord. Many other longer or shorter discourses, to smaller or larger audiences, may Jesus have spoken during this period of his ministry. But this was the one selected by Divine Wisdom to be presented as a specimen or sample of our Lord's teaching as addressed to mixed Galilean audiences in the earlier stages of his ministry. There was a change in his mode of teaching afterwards, even in Galilee, as there was a marked difference between all his dis-

* Luke vi. 17; Mark iii. 8; Matt iv. 25.

* Luke vi. 17.

courses there, and those addressed to very different audiences in Jerusalem. Here upon the mount He had a vast concourse of people of all castes and from all quarters before Him. Nearest to Him were his own disciples. To them his words were in the first instance spoken, but they were meant to reach the consciences and hearts of the motley crowd that lay beyond.

Now, if there was one sentiment more widely than another spread throughout this crowd, it was the vague yet ardent expectation, beating then in almost every Jewish breast, of some great national deliverance—of the near approach of a new kingdom—the kingdom of God. Of this kingdom they had no higher conception than that it would be a free and independent outward and visible Jewish monarchy. And when it came, then would come the days of liberty and peace, of honour and triumph, and all kinds of blessedness for poor oppressed Judea. With what a delicate hand—not openly and rudely rebuking, yet laying the axe withal at its very roots—was this deep national prejudice now treated by our Lord. What could have run more directly counter to the earthly ambitious hopes, swelling up within the hearts of those around him? what could have served more effectually to check them, than the very first words which Jesus uttered? "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you." How different the kind of blessedness thus described from that which his hearers had been hungering and thirsting after! How different the kind of kingdom thus described from that which they had been expecting He should set up! And, apart from their special use and immediate service as addressed of old to the Galilean audience, these beatitudes remain to teach us wherein the only true, pure, lasting blessedness for man consists; not in anything outward, not in the gratification of any of our natural passions or desires, our covetousness, or our pride, or our ambition, or our love of pleasure; not in what we have, but in what we are in God's sight and in relation to his empire over our souls. The poor in spirit, those most deeply conscious of their spiritual poverty, their want of that which can alone find favour with God; the mourners whose grief is the fruit of guilt and unworthiness realised and deeply felt; the meek, who bow patiently and submissively to every stroke, whoever be the smiter; the hungerers and thirsters after righteousness, the pure in heart, the peace-makers, the persecuted for righteousness' sake,—do we regard these as the happiest of our race? is theirs the kind of happiness upon which our heart is chiefly set, and which we are labouring with our utmost efforts to realise? If not, however ready we may be to extol the pure and high morality of the Sermon on the Mount, we have failed to take in the first and one of the greatest truths which it conveys, as to the source, and seat, and character, and conditions of the only abiding and indestructible blessedness of sinful man.

But while the multitude were cherishing false ideas and expectations about his kingdom, many were cherishing false ideas and fears about Christ himself that equally required to be removed. They had noticed in his teaching the absence of any reference to many of those religious services that they so punctiliously performed, some disregard of them in his own practice and in that of his disciples. This man, they began to say, is an enemy to Moses. He is aiming at nothing short of a subversion of the old, the heaven-given law. Jesus must proclaim how untrue the accusation was. "Think not," He said, "that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." But in what did the true fulfilment of the Mosaic law consist? It was a vast and complicated code, embracing a body of laws for a peculiar people, existing at a particular period, and organised for a special purpose; subject therefore to all the limitations and exhibiting all the adaptations to existing circumstances which, in proportion to the wisdom with which it is framed, all such legislation must display. It had in it commands of a purely ethical and religious character, conveyed in more general and abstract forms; and it had in it a large apparatus of positive enactments and ordinances chiefly meant to symbolise the truths and facts of the Christian dispensation. It was not throughout an expression of God's absolute will, perfect, immutable, meant to be of permanent and universal obligation. Part of it, perfectly adapted to its design, was inherently imperfect; part of it as necessarily transitory. When the time came that the Jewish nation should either cease to exist or cease to have its old functions to discharge, and when all its types and ceremonies had their true meaning expressed and their ends accomplished—then out of this complicated law there would come to be extracted that which was absolutely perfect and universally obligatory. Jesus knew that at his advent that time had come, and assuming the very place and exercising the very prerogative of the Divine Legislator of the Jews, He begins in this Sermon on the Mount to execute this task. He treats the old Jewish practice of divorce as imperfect, being adapted to a single nation at a particular stage of its moral training, and lays down the original and perfect law of the marriage relationship. In like manner He deals with the *lex talionis*—the rule of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, and with the law and custom as to oaths. But it is especially in his treatment of those commandments about whose permanent obligation

there was and could be no doubt, that the novelty and value of his teaching displayed itself. These were negative and prohibitory in their form. Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, &c., &c. They had been looked at in the letter rather than in the spirit. They had been regarded simply as prohibitions of certain outward acts or crimes. Abstinence from the forbidden deeds had been taken as a keeping of the divine commands. Obedience had thus come to be looked upon as a thing of outward constraint or mechanical conformity, its merit lying in the force of the constraint, the exactness of the conformity. It was thus that the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees consisted mainly in a stiff and formal adherence to the letter of the precept, to the neglect often, and sometimes to the contradiction of its spirit. This fatal error Christ exposes, taking up commandment after commandment, unfolding the spirituality and extent of the requirement, showing how it reached not simply or mainly to the regulation of the outward conduct, but primarily and above all things to the state of the heart; that murder lay in embryo in an angry feeling, that adultery lurked in a licentious look, that it was not alone when the name of God was vainly used that irreverence might be exhibited and profane swearing practised, that the old Jewish rule of retaliation was no rule for the regulation of the affections or the guidance of the conduct in a pure and perfect state, that from the heart every sentiment of malice or revenge must be banished, and in the conduct the evil done to us by another remain unresented, unavenged, the enemy to be loved, the persecutor to be prayed for; and all this done that we might be merciful as our Father that is in heaven is merciful, perfect as He is perfect, children of Him who maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sendeth his rain on the just and on the unjust.

This end and aim of being like to, of being imitators of God, was one too pure, too high, too holy to suffer corruption and the worm to enter into it by admixture with the selfish and ignoble motive of courting human approval, winning human applause. Too much of the almsgiving and the fasting and the praying that He saw practised around Him was done to be seen of men—prompted by no other motive, was nothing but hypocrisy, utterly offensive to his Father in heaven. Concealed and unostentatious let the givings and the fastings be, short and simple and secret the prayers of those who would be his disciples and true children of his Father, who seeing in secret would in due time openly reward.

Let all be done as unto Him with an undivided allegiance, for no man can serve two masters; and with an unbounded trust, for, having such a Father, why should there be any over-carefulness for earthly things, —those things that He knows we have need of, or any undue concern about a future which is not ours but his? Why so anxious about food and raiment? It is God who sustains the life of the body, you must trust him for that—the greater thing; then why distrust Him for the less? Behold the fowls of the air; consider the lilies of the field; look at the grass that grows beneath your feet. Not theirs, as yours, the capacity for trust and toil and foresight. A worthless fleeting existence theirs as compared with yours; yet see how they are not only cared for but lavishly adorned. "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Conscious of your own far shortcomings from that perfect confidence you should cherish—that constant service you should be rendering, be not severe in criticising or condemning others. Judge not that ye be not judged. "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, and considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite; first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

It may be very difficult to be all, to do all that I am now telling you you ought to be and to do; but is there not an open and effectual way for having every felt spiritual want relieved? "Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." "Ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him."

Drawing from the exhaustless fountain of grace and strength that in Him is opened to you, fear not to adopt this as the one comprehensive rule of your whole bearing and conduct toward others. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

Before the days of Christ there was a great Jewish teacher, Hillel. An inquirer once came to him asking the strange question: "Can you teach one the whole law during the time that I am able to stand on one foot?" "Yes," said Hillel, "it is contained in this one rule: Whatsoever ye would not wish that your neighbour should do to you, do it *not* to him." This and other sayings of preceding Rabbis have been quoted with a view of detracting somewhat from the originality of the moral teaching of Christ. Yet even here, when the resemblance between the lessons taught is so marked, one difference may be discerned—a difference that runs through so large a part of the Saviour's precepts as compared with those of all other moral legislators. He translates the negative into the positive. With Him it is not—be not, do not; but, be and do. In few instances are any specific rules of conduct laid down. To plant the right spirit and motive in the heart, out of which all true morality proceeds, is the great object he aims at. Look up to God, he says to us, as indeed your Father—ever living, ever loving, patiently bearing with you, largely providing for you, willing to forgive you. Walk humbly, meekly, trustingly before Him. Commit your way to Him, cast all your care on Him, seek all your supplies from Him, render all your returns to Him. Look upon all your fellow-men as children of the same father, members of the same family. Love each

other, and live together as brethren, bearing yourselves towards all around you patiently, forgivingly, generously, hopefully. The gate thus opened is strait, the way is narrow, but it is the only one that leadeth unto life. And finally, remember that it is practice, not profession, that can alone conduct you along the path to the throne in heaven. Hear then, and do, that ye may be like the wise man who built his house upon a rock, "and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock."

Such is a rapid, imperfect sketch of the Sermon on the Mount, regarded mainly from a historical point of view, in its bearings upon the audience to which it was originally addressed. The people who first heard it, we are told, were astonished at its doctrine. Well they might. It was so different from what they had been accustomed to. No laboured argument, no profound discussion, no doubtful disputation, no nice distinctions, no scheme of doctrines formally and elaborately propounded, no exact routine of religious services prescribed. It dealt with the simplest, plainest moral and religious truths and duties; and did this in the simplest, plainest manner;—directly, familiarly, colloquially—a freshness about it like that of the morning breeze which played over the mountain-side. The thing, however, that seems to have struck the listeners most, was the calm, unhesitating, authoritative tone in which the whole was uttered. "They were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Here is One who comes forth from none of the great schools,—who has sat at the feet of none of the great masters,—who uses no book language,—who appeals to no authority but his own—a young untaught Nazarene; and yet He takes it upon Him to pronounce with the utmost confidence as to who the truly blessed are, and reckons among these those who were to be railed at and persecuted for his sake. Here is One who does not shrink from taking into his hands the law and the prophets, acting not simply as their expositor—the clearer of them from all false traditional interpretations. He is bold enough to say that He came to fulfil them; in one remarkable instance, at least—that of the law which permitted divorce—speaking as the original lawgiver was alone entitled to do, declaring that the time for this permission had now ceased, and that henceforth such divorces as Moses had tolerated were not to be allowed. Here is One who speaks of God as one who fully knew and had a right to declare how his children were to act so as to please Him; whom He would forgive, whom He would reward, upon whom He would bestow his gifts. Here is One who, though seated on that Galilean mountain, with nothing to distinguish Him from the humble fishermen around Him, speaks of a day on which He would be seated on the throne of universal judgment, to whom many would say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?"—to whom He was to say, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

In consequence of the simplicity, purity, and elevation of the moral precepts which it contains, and still more, perhaps, because of none of the peculiar doctrines as to the person, character, office, and work of Christ as the Mediator being found in it, this Sermon on the Mount has been greedily seized upon and highly extolled by many as the true epitome of Christianity—as Christ's own gospel coming from his own lips. But it is far less difficult for us to discern the reasons why the truths of the incarnation and the propitiatory sacrifice were not at this time and to that audience alluded to or dwelt upon by Jesus, than it is for any who would reduce Him to the level of a mere moral legislator to account for the position which, even when enunciating the simplest moral precepts, He assumed—for the tone of authority in which He speaks. Dimly, indeed, through this Sermon on the Mount does the Jesus of the Cross appear, but the Jesus of the Throne is here, and once that we have learned from other after-teachings of Himself and his Apostles to know, and love, and trust in Him as our great High Priest, who has bought us with his blood, it will be the habit and the delight of every true and faithful follower of his to take up and dwell upon that wonderful discourse, in which, more clearly and fully than in any other words of human speech, the very spirit and essence of a humble child-like faith in God, and the lofty ideal of a perfect, a heavenly morality, is unfolded and enforced. WILLIAM HANNA.

GOD'S DAY.

BY THE REV. J. H. RIGG, D.D., AUTHOR OF "MODERN ANGLICAN THEOLOGY," &c.

THE Rev. W. Arthur, in his "People's Day," one of the closest, keenest, and most polished pieces of argument ever addressed to a statesman, lays down the principle that, as respects the sacred day of rest, "man's rights rest upon God's rights; the repose of the Sunday on the religion of the Sabbath;" or, as he otherwise expresses the same principle, that "the public sense of the Sabbath-day's sacredness is the only protection of the working man." In the same pamphlet he admirably describes the manner in which a devout but happy Christian would have the sacred day employed. He is writing to Lord Stanley, to whom, under the title of "an appeal against his advocacy of a French Sunday," the pamphlet is addressed in the form of a letter. "More adroitly than accurately," he says, "you described that opinion as being that the day must be devoted to subjects 'exclusively theological.' These terms are not ill-chosen, if meant to edge the antipathy of those to whom the service of God is a dry matter; but very ill, if meant

to express the view taken of the Sabbath by those to whom this service is a delight. They would never think of saying that the whole of the Sabbath was to be employed in subjects and studies 'exclusively theological.' They would rather say that it was to be religiously kept; meaning by this, that it must be spent in thankful rest; in glad and single-hearted enjoyment of the mercies of Providence; in doing good to the poor, the sick, and the ignorant; in acts of private, family, and public worship; in useful reading, innocent intercourse, and the singing of psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs." There is, indeed, one omission in this summary; the aspect of the blessed day towards family life is only glanced at under the head of family worship, or intimated under the phrase "innocent intercourse." We will, however, let Mr. Arthur himself supply the omission from another page of his "Appeal." "There is another respect in which the Lord's day is the People's day; their day for fostering domestic affection, which, next to religion, promotes national stability. It is with multitudes the only day when a father can spend some hours with his wife and children; when an old man can see his daughter, when a lad stands again by his mother's knee, and a young man sits once more by that fireside, the very sight of which retouches all his good feelings, and shames some which he is beginning to learn in the world."

It is very important, especially in the present period of earnest controversy on the subject of Sabbath observance, that we should do full justice to those who differ, more or less widely, from the views which we ourselves hold on this subject. It is at least something, it may be very much, for a man to hold to the sacredness of the day, even though he should not rest his convictions as to its sanctity on the same grounds as ourselves; to regard its religious observance as a solemn obligation, even although he should not deduce that obligation from the same scriptural premises as we do. We must be careful not to confound such a man with the mere secularist, who has neither conviction nor feeling as to the holiness of the day, with whom it is nothing better or higher than a holiday, and whether it shall or shall not be protected from violation is a mere problem of political economy, at the most a question of national education.

The late Dr. Pye Smith, one of the most illustrious names among modern Nonconformist divines in England, held the sanctity of the Sabbath on grounds which, although closely approximating to those generally maintained in North Britain, did not fully coincide with them. Writing to a staunchly orthodox friend, he thus concludes what he has to say on this point: "These [arguments] furnish me with the very same doctrine as yours, in a manner which seems to me of invincibly demonstrative strength; whereas a *direct* argument [from the *positive* law] is capable of being quite refuted."

On this point Dr. Smith's biographer has some observations which I wish to quote, and, indeed, for the sake of which I have quoted the foregoing sentence. It appears that Dr. Smith's own observance of the Sabbath was most strict, most spiritual, most religious. Although a passionate devotee of learning and science, and although, as a Fellow of the Royal Society, he was regularly invited to attend the Saturday *soirées* given by the President of the Royal Society, yet, for fear of infringing upon the sanctity of the Lord's Day, he scrupulously abstained from attending these brilliant, fascinating, and to him peculiarly congenial, assemblies. Not even once did he attend. Religious self-denial, for the sake of the high proprieties of religion, could hardly go farther. It is scarcely possible to imagine a finer instance of sensitive regard for the holiness and the spiritual improvement of the Sabbath. It may, without any breach of charity, be believed that some of the highest sticklers for all dogmatic orthodoxy on the subject of the Sabbath law would have been less precise and scrupulous.

"On that day," says his biographer, "he felt himself in a purer and more thoroughly congenial element than on other days; as though his renewed nature was less in the world of care and of common duty, and was, therefore, more completely in the possession, or at least in the pursuit, of delights which filled him at times with almost unutterable gratitude. . . . O, that it were possible for all who plead against the obligation of the [letter of the] Mosaic law in this particular, to be 'a law unto themselves' in the spirit and style in which Dr. Smith was! When the life of a duty is found to supersede the necessity of the letter, then the great interests of truth and holiness have a distinction put upon them on earth, akin to that which will be their glory in heaven. But, alas! many persons appear to think themselves very good Christians, in proportion as they succeed in proving that they ought not to be Jews; just as though they would directly reverse the words of Christ, and make Him say—'I came not to fulfil the law, but to destroy.'"*

There are three general forms in which the principle of the religious obligation of the Lord's Day may be held, with two of which we shall deal in this paper. The third, which we regard as the right and full form, will be set forth separately. The first is that the first day of the week is to be celebrated and kept holy as the Lord's Day, and in commemoration of his resurrection, because the Church, which "has authority" in matters of faith and worship, has so decreed and required.† This, however, is a view which leaves the Sabbath entirely defenceless. It ignores the *authority* of *Scripure*. It reduces the sanctity of the Sabbath to that of a Church festival; it leaves it really at a lower

* "Life of Dr. Pye Smith." By John Medway. Pp. 444-5.

† It is only fair to say that the Council of Trent teaches a far higher view of the day than this. It recognises the Lord's Day as corresponding to the moral element in the Fourth Commandment. It recommends, if it does not enjoin, "cessation from bodily labour and from business," in order to the performance of "the duties of piety and religion,"—"the religious and holy observance of the Sabbath." This, however, is not in accordance with the popular understanding of the day among Romanists; and, in fact, the system and the popular teaching of the Romish communion cannot but nullify all that is sound and good in the letter of the Tridentine decree, ambiguous in some places as this is, and inadequate throughout. Bellarmine's catechism is commonly in use, which substitutes, "Remember the festivals to keep them holy," instead of the Fourth Commandment, thus merging the Lord's Day among the scores of saints' days celebrated by the Romish superstition, which are far too numerous, and in their nature too puerile and heathenish, for any savour of real sanctity or intelligent devotion ("reasonable service") to be connected with them.

level than that of Good Friday, or Christmas Day, as observed by the same religionists with whom this merely ecclesiastical view finds favour. It empties the Sabbath ordinance of the blessed *law of rest.* Moreover, being based only on the authority of Church Councils, it can have no force excepta mong those who render reverence to such Councils. The man who denies priestly power, and rejects patristic corruptions, if he has not meantime been shown some better foundation on which the Sabbath-law may firmly rest, will, together with the superstition which he rejects, cast off all reverence for the sacred day. Its claims will be regarded as the spurious pretensions of a fertile and exacting superstition, and will be thrown overboard with the saints' days and the mummeries of a "creed outworn." What, in fact, is the Lord's Day of Romanist countries? To the devotee, a day of blind and besotted drudgery, ending, however, it may be, with a dance; to loyal Catholics of an average sort, a hurried day which begins in superstitious formalism, which ends in dissipation, and which, in its middle hours, is given to driving a brisker trade than on most other days; to the people at large, a market day and holiday in one, with not even a pretence of religion, as regards multitudes of the men, with no family union, no home-blessings, no thought of God, no glimpse of the rest or holiness of heaven. Such is "the Lord's Day" at Paris, at Brussels, at Munich, in the cities of Italy:—such, alas! is also the Sunday of High-Lutheran Berlin. Such an ecclesiastical Sabbath may be sanctioned and guarded by the authority of the Church; but it may be questioned whether it be worth guarding. It is a Sabbath without rest, a Sabbath without authority in Scripture, a Sabbath without a Sabbath-law. Cut off from the primeval institute; resting on no higher authority than that of an ecclesiastical arrangement; denuded of all the historic grandeur and sanctity which belong to the moral law; able to claim no connection with the Christian Lawgiver's word, "the Sabbath was made for man;" standing in no organic relation to the family or family-life; there is left to it no divinity or grace. There waits upon it no power from on high; neither has it any charm to win and hold the human heart. No Grahame could draw inspiration for his verse from such a Sabbath as this; nor could any such strains of exquisite feeling as those in which even Burns, the gifted but the reckless and misguided, has paid his tribute to the beauty and blessedness of the preparation for the Sabbath, have been suggested to any poet, however richly endowed, in a country where the Sunday is but an ecclesiastical festival.

The second form in which the principle of the religious obligation of the Lord's Day may be held, is that the Lord's Day is of Divine authority, because of apostolic origin. Probably, indeed, most who hold this view would say that Christ himself must be regarded as having instituted the festival of his own resurrection. But it is regarded as by no means to be identified with the Jewish Sabbath. *That* is held to have passed away with the Jewish dispensation. A common principle is, indeed, by some admitted to underlie both institutions, the principle, viz., of the consecration of a fixed portion of time, of a regularly recurring seventh day, to the service of God. Many, however, of the class of divines of whom I am now speaking would not admit this, for the decisive reason that they regard the Jewish Sabbath as having been pre-eminently and characteristically, if not exclusively, a day of bodily rest, while they view the Lord's Day as a religious festival, which by no means includes as a part of its essential definition or purpose any idea whatever of bodily rest. General rejoicing, as for the grandest and most comprehensive good, affecting both the body and soul; and especially, as giving the key-note to the whole festival, devout thanksgiving and holy meditation, at appointed times, in regard to God's great gift of his Son to man, the divine and redeeming sacrifice of the Saviour, and all that the Christian religion teaches and requires—would be considered as summing up the duties of the day.

It is plain, however, that, *as thus defined*, the view at which we are now glancing provides no charter for mankind, as such. It gives no title to a day of rest. It warrants, on the part of the Legislature, no further action, at the most, than what is needed to secure a decent provision of vacancy and facility for worship in church-hours, whether those be regarded, as at present in England, as the hours of morning and afternoon service, or whether, as in some Protestant cities of the Continent, and in accordance with a growing fashion among many classes of our own population, a single forenoon service might be deemed sufficient homage to the duties and sanctity of the day. It may be doubted, indeed, whether, on any other ground than *the right* of the people *to a day of rest*, any legislation at all with regard to hours of worship, or cessation from business, could fairly be maintained. Let the Sabbath be reduced to a mere festival, and even although its properly Christian origin and authority, and its Divine character, be admitted, it will not thence follow that the Legislature of a Christian land is bound to preserve some portion of it free from business for the purposes of worship. It would only follow that Government itself was bound, in all its departments, to give its own *employés* facilities for worship,—for what hours who should say? and that the sittings of the Legislature ought to be suspended during certain hours,—what hours, again, who could determine? As it is not the duty of the Legislature to compel attendance on worship, so it may well be doubted whether, except on the ground of the common rights of man, as divinely sanctioned and as hitherto recognised by a sort of "common law" among Christians, Parliament could have a right to compel vacancy from business even during church-hours. Many divines and many Christians believe Good Friday, as a solemn festival sanctioned by the Church, to be entitled to the most religious observance. They would place the obligation to keep this day on grounds fully equivalent to those on which, according to the view I am now considering, the obligation to keep holy the Lord's Day is placed. With them the ordination of the Church is equivalent to apostolic institution or even the command of Christ. But would any of those

who hold such views in regard to the duty of the religious observance of Good Friday seriously contend that the law ought to prohibit all persons from working on that day, or compel all employers to give holiday on that day? Public opinion, the general feeling of the nation, at least in England, does in effect secure the almost universal observance of Good Friday as a complete public holiday. It is also secured, in some cases, by means of private indentures or specific terms of engagement, that clerks, apprentices, servants, and workpeople shall have Good Friday as a vacant day, just as in the case of Christmas-day. But yet the universal feeling seems to be that, as no right of labour or evident claim of humanity demands that the day should be free, no state-legislation can impose upon the population the duty of universally abstaining from labour. So far as we can understand, even if the decided majority of the population of Great Britain regarded Good Friday as High-Churchmen do, the law would not be invoked to compel, by any general enactment, the intermission of labour on that day. What is *merely* a matter of religious principle and conviction, according to the spirit of modern legislation, is left to work its own way and assert its own power by merely voluntary agency and by moral means.

It seems probable, therefore, that the fence which at present, for the sake of man's own natural rights, his physical and intellectual well being, his family affections, his moral and religious capacities and sensibilities, protects one day in seven from the encroachment of selfish claims, and the tyranny of competition in the labour market, is the only legal protection which, in such a commonwealth as that of Britain, could be available on behalf of the blessed sanctities and delights of Christian worship on the Lord's Day. Deny man's rights in this matter, and God's rights, even as to the hours of worship, will be endangered. Concede to man, as man, the rights which God's beneficent law vindicates for him, and then, but then only, our rights as worshippers of God will be preserved, and the claims of our Saviour as to his own day will be held safe from violation. Thus, as man's rights, as man, repose on God's law, so on the recognition of these human rights by man depends the security of those still higher rights and blessings which appertain to man in his relation to the covenant of grace. The Sabbath can only be maintained as the People's day, if it be indeed and to the full extent left free from human dominion, as the Lord's day. And, again, it can never continue to be held sacred, in any effective manner or measure, as the Lord's Day, unless it be held sacred as the People's day.

I may indeed be told that the right of man to rest must be determined by political science. I answer that, on the grounds of a true political economy, I have no doubt whatever that the necessity might be shown of setting apart for rest one day in seven. But political economy is one of the latest-born and most complicated of all the sciences. It would have been a poor case for man if he had had to wait for political economy to determine his right to rest. Moreover, selfishness would oppose such a determination, as it did the shortening of the hours of labour by the Factory Bill. Political and moral science would no doubt agree in deciding adultery or theft to be a crime; but surely a law on this point antecedent to merely human legislation was needed. Such a law has been furnished to us. And the same Decalogue which prohibits murder, adultery, and covetousness prescribes a seventh-day rest. These laws are happily in advance of legislation. They are the lessons of a primeval, Divine morality. Science afterwards justifies them; but meanwhile thousands of years have passed away. And at what late date science would have come to justify them—if it ever would—without a foregoing Divine law, who can guess: or at how much later a date legislation, ever following slowly in the track of scientific truth, would have embodied them in law? Man has ever needed the *law* of the seventh-day rest; man, it is very evident from a thousand signs at home, and ten thousand abroad, will still need it long. Take away the Divine law, take away religious conviction, and not long will an imperfectly-apprehended science, a science which is only known at all by the few, avail to secure for the toiler his seventh-day rest.

But, in truth, that only can be a day of worship which is a day of rest. Worship that is not merely formal or ritual implies meditation, implies preparation, implies that the mind and heart be given to it with such a concentration and fulness as to make it the chief business, as the great joy and privilege, of the day. A Romanist *may* rush from business or from dissipation to his superstitious ritualism, and again from his "vain repetitions" and theatrical worship may hasten to bury himself in business or to plunge into dissipation; because his worship is too commonly a mere performance. So also the Anglican ritualist, after his lip-worship and customary ritual was over, might go, according to the precept of his forefathers, to cricket on the green, or even to masque or morrice-dance, and thus close his day of mock solemnities; but it cannot be thus with the worshipper who feels that the Sabbath is his one great day for entering into the meaning of the Scriptures, for gathering and garnering, week by week, the lessons of the week, for rising to the utmost height possible for him of spiritual worship and pure and heavenly thought and aspiration; it cannot be thus with him who desires to worship God "in spirit and in truth," and in "the beauty of holiness." We cannot set hours of spiritual service of the highest style, in which body, soul, and spirit contribute their full powers and service, in the midst of a close hard framework of business and worldly thought. As little can such service, fully rendered, rendered as it must be the design of God that it should be rendered, be the "morning exercise," by which the appetite is to be edged for the evening dissipation. To realise any approach to the ideal of holy Christian worship, a day must be consecrated into which nothing harshly dissonant shall be permitted to intrude.

Any who desire to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" must feel that such an end, seriously and religiously contemplated, as the great end of life, which is to be subserved and promoted by the consecration to it of one day in seven,

in which the science, the methods, the spiritual motives and laws, proper and needful to its accomplishment, shall be the great object of regard and study, must imply that the heart of the day be given to this one object, that all throughout the day be so arranged and attuned as to harmonise with it, that the bondage of work, the care of business, and the pursuits of mere pleasure, be excluded from such a day. Hence a truly godly man who thoroughly acts on the principle that for him and his the Lord's Day is, by the Lord's own appointment, to be signalised as a high day of worship, will assuredly learn by experience that, in order to this, it must, for him and them, be a sacred day of rest.

And, indeed, as I have already intimated, some of those who hold the Lord's Day to be a purely Christian institution, having no organic or proper connection with the Sabbath of the Decalogue, and to be primarily a day for worship, nevertheless maintain that it is also to be regarded as a day of rest; and teach that the whole day should be religiously consecrated to worship and to rest. They regard rest, as we have just seen, as necessary to due and fitting worship. They also regard rest as necessary to man's physical and general well-being. And although they would scarcely contend that, viewed purely as an apostolic institute and a festival of the primitive Church, the Lord's Day can be regarded as properly a day of physical rest, yet, taking all things into account, and especially paying due respect to what they speak of as the *analogy* of the Fourth Commandment, they deem themselves fully warranted in contending for the sanctification of the whole Sabbath as a day of worship and rest. A very few of these even go so far as to recognise the observance of a holy seventh day as a part of patriarchal morality, and to maintain that, as such, it found a fitting place in the Decalogue by the side of the other commandments of the two tables. Such were the views of Dr. Pye Smith, to whom I have already referred; and such also, as explained by Prof. Fairbairn in his "Typology," would appear to have been the views of Calvin and of others among the Reformers. Such, also, notwithstanding a fling which he throws in at what he calls "the unspiritual, unevangelical bondage," of our British observance of the Sabbath, is apparently the view of Kurtz, the learned and able German theologian. "We regard," he says, "the Sabbath festival as ante-legal,—in other words, as an institution of Paradise. The institution *received* its *legal* character for the first time in connection with the giving of the law at Sinai, and *lost* it again through the love which, in the New Testament, is the fulfilment of the law; but the *institution* of the Sabbath continued to exist after the law was fulfilled, as it had already existed, or rather as it ought to have existed before the law was given, and it is destined to continue until it has attained to its fulfilment and completion in the eternal Sabbath of the creature." *

Now, when divines who go so far as this, refuse to recognise the law of the Lord's Day in the law of the Sabbath, refuse to base the claims of the Christian Sabbath upon the fourth commandment of the Decalogue, we scarcely understand them. The Decalogue was the embodiment for the immediate benefit of the Jews of a principle of primeval and patriarchal morality. It is admitted that the institution of the Lord's Day for the Christian embodies the same principle. It is admitted that physical rest and the worship of God were required by the Jewish law; and that the same are required by the Christian law; in each case also one seventh day is what is demanded. Where is the difficulty about identifying the Sabbath and the Lord's Day? It may be said that the principal thing enjoined upon the Jew was physical rest, worship being subordinate; whereas, for the Christian the principal thing is worship, rest being subordinate. Our answer is that, in the Jewish law, rest was but a means to an end, that end the refreshment of the whole man, and of course, most of all, the highest refreshment, which is that of "the inner man." Rest was the basis; but in the rest God was to be remembered and honoured, and out of the rest worship was to arise; and under the Christian law of the Sabbath, as we have seen, rest is needful in order to worship. The Jewish Sabbath was, in fact, a Sabbath for children; children need more rest and can sustain less worship. But even the Jewish Sabbath developed into a highly spiritual ordinance; as witness Isaiah lviii.; it became more spiritual as the ages passed on, and as revelation grew; it included more and more of worship. What the Sabbath of Isaiah was to the Sabbath of the wilderness; the Sabbath of "the Prophets" to the Sabbath of "the law," *i. e.*, the Pentateuch; such is the Sabbath of Christianity to the best Sabbath of Judaism. Let the Sabbath-law be expounded by the light of our Saviour's teachings and actions, and pre-eminently of that divine maxim, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath;" let the true spirit and principle of the Commandment be attained to and put into practice, and the Sabbath and the Lord's Day will be found to coincide. In this Christian age there are still a vastly predominant proportion of those who must be more or less dealt with as children; their Sabbath cannot be all worship, but they need the charter of rest. Only, as the ages advance, the physical element will become more and more subordinate to the spiritual, and the character of the day will be more and more sublimed.

Except, then, the mere circumstance of the change of the day from the seventh to the first, we can find no difference remaining on which such devout Christian observers and upholders of the Lord's-day-rest as we have now been speaking of, can insist upon separating themselves from those who, with Christian intelligence and in the spirit of evangelical freedom and obedience combined, profess themselves to be upholders of the Lord's-day-rest as the veritable Sabbath of the Christian dispensation, to which the solemn sanctions of the fourth commandment in the holy Decalogue appertain. In respect to all but that single circumstance they and we are well agreed. How that circumstance could not but of necessity supervene; how the glory of the Sabbath could not but pass from the seventh to the first day; how there could not but at first be a season of

* "Hist. of the Old Covenant," vol. iii., p. 43.

transition during which the spirit of the Sabbath-law was strugglinga mid many embarrassments and against many barriers, to conquer for itself, as the bright Lord's Day, all the observance proper to the Sabbath-law, with more of gladness and of grace than had been known under the Jewish dispensation ; how the transmigration was at length completely effected, and the Lord's Day recognised as the lineal heir of all the high claims and honour and immunities which had belonged to the Sabbath, with added irradiation of the Christian glory; all this belongs to a later stage in this discussion.

THE WALDENSES.

Jerusalem alone excepted, no city can boast an interest so world-wide and varied as Rome. No visitor to that renowned city can view with indifference the Scipios' tomb, the forum where Cicero thundered, or the spot where Cæsar fell ; but if the stranger be a Christian, Rome will have to him other than classic memories ; and he will seek out with a yet deeper interest the spots associated with two men who have done more for the world than either Cicero or Cæsar, —Paul the Apostle and Luther the Reformer.

Writing to Timothy of Onesiphorus, Paul says, "When he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me." But though we should seek ever so diligently, we cannot expect, after 1800 years, to find the "hired house" where St. Paul dwelt for "two whole years, and received all that came in unto him" ;—yet it may interest some readers to mention that, while residing in Rome last spring, the writer saw a house whose threshold it is at least possible Paul may frequently have crossed. Of the three hundred and sixty-five churches in Rome, one of the oldest and quaintest is that of St Pudentiana (of which, by the way, Cardinal Wiseman was the titular incumbent). The foundation of this church, if we remember aright, dates as early as that of Westminster Abbey—the eighth or ninth century—and the tradition has always been that it was built on or over the house of Pudens, one of Paul's Roman brethren, (2 Tim. iv. 21.) It was only, however, within a very recent period that excavations made beneath the church itself have revealed the curious fact that here, many feet below the level of the modern city, there does exist an ancient Roman dwelling of several chambers, which when first discovered were filled by the rubbish of centuries. This house we visited with no common interest : and as we descended by torchlight into its long-silent chambers, it was strange to think that these vaulted roofs, whose plaster still retains rude and faded frescoes, may have looked down on this early Christian and his family, and perchance resounded to the voice of Paul.

The so-called house of Pudens may after all have no better foundation than tradition. But the Appian Way needs no tradition to attest its identity : and as one treads that gigantic causeway, and with the eye follows its southward course straight as an arrow for miles across the breezy Campagna, through the vista of eighteen centuries we seem to see a group approaching. It is Paul and his fellow-prisoners in charge of Julius, the good-hearted centurion ; and with them that band of loving Roman Christians who had gone thirty long miles to escort the great Apostle from Appii Forum to Rome, (Acts xxviii. 15.)

Paul had appealed to Cæsar. Let us follow him to Nero's judgment hall. But can we identify the very spot? We believe we can. The colossal ruins on the Palatine Hill, known as "the Palace of the Cæsars," speak for themselves ; but until Napoleon III., some years since, purchased them from the Pope and commenced excavations which are still advancing, it was impossible to distinguish the chamber we are in search of amid the rubbish that encumbered the whole mass of building. The visitor can now happily identify the Tribunal of the Palace, the very apartment, in all probability, where Paul faced the emperor. Its walls and roof are gone. It lies open to the brilliant sunshine—exposed, as the unjust deeds once enacted there shall one day also be. But a semicircular bench of marble running round the upper end of the spacious hall, and a raised space in the centre for the imperial chair, reveal the intention of the chamber ; as does also the marble ledge which, traversing the breadth of the floor, supported a balustrade to separate the prisoner at the bar from his judges beyond. Of this balustrade, or railing, happily a portion four or five feet in length and about three feet high still remains *in situ* and entire—its pure white marble of admirably carved openwork well-nigh as fresh as if chiselled by living hands. Standing to-day against this marble barrier—standing, as it were, in the very footprints of Paul, one reads with an altogether new interest those memorable words, "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me : I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Nevertheless, the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me ; . . . and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." "The second epistle unto Timotheus . . . was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time."

Nearly fifteen centuries have come and gone when a friar from Wittemberg is seen approaching the seven-hilled city ; and as in the distance he catches the first glimpse of the capital of Catholicism, he throws himself on the ground, exclaiming, "Holy Rome, I salute thee!" He is not long, however, within its walls ere he discovers his mistake. The Church which, in 1510, Luther found in Rome was very different from that to which Paul wrote an epistle, and whose members he instructed with his living voice. That visit to Rome had mighty consequences for Luther and for the world. "I would not take," said he, "a hundred thousand florins not to have seen Rome." And why? Because the sight opened his eyes to the hypocrisy and vileness which hid themselves under the purple and the scarlet within

Rome's most sacred shrines. Luther learned in Rome itself how revolting was the contrast between the Paul and the Peter of his New Testament and their pretended successors. But the truth dawned on him by degrees. For a time he officiated in the churches of Rome, and we were specially interested by visiting one in particular, close by the Porta del Popolo, whose interior is crowded with ancient monuments, and where Luther often said mass, and sometimes preached. Nor could we leave Rome without seeing the "Santa Scala" for Luther's sake, if not for its own. This "Santa Scala," or Holy Stair, is believed by Papists to have been brought from Jerusalem, and to be the veritable staircase which led to Pilate's Judgment Hall, and therefore consecrated by the Saviour's footsteps. A sad spectacle it presented as we saw it one day last Easter. Some dozen of men and women (two French soldiers among the rest) were painfully ascending it on their knees, telling their beads at every step. In the very same act of blind devotion we remembered that Martin Luther was engaged 360 years ago; when there thrilled through his disquieted spirit a voice from heaven which seemed to call in trumpet tones, "The just shall live by faith." In that moment the "Holy Stair" lost all its virtue. He rose from his knees a believing man. The truth had made him free.

But what, it may be asked, connects Rome, Paul, or Luther with the Waldenses? Not a little, as we shall see. Papists in all ages have endeavoured to parry assaults on their faith and practice, by taking refuge in the alleged antiquity and universal sway of their church. They allege that our doctrines and worship are, so to speak, of yesterday. To this we reply; with all the Reformers, that the Church of the Reformation was no new church—that, on the contrary, the truths which in the sixteenth century broke the power of Rome in Switzerland, in France, in Germany and in Britain, were the same old truths which conquered the Paganism of Greece and Rome in primitive times. We utterly deny the claim of that church which has its seat in Rome to be the true representative of the Roman Christianity of Paul's day; and we affirm that the faith which Calvin and Luther proclaimed is the very faith in which the confessors of the Roman Catacombs lived and died—the very faith which early martyrs sealed in the Colliseum with their blood.

It is at this point, and to bear testimony to this very thing, that we wish to call a special witness into court. Who is this witness? She comes forth from her lone mountain home in Northern Italy. She is old, very old, but her eye is not dim, neither is her natural strength abated. She is poor, but she has ever borne an unsullied fame, and has come chastened out of many a sore tribulation. Our witness is the ancient suffering Church of the Waldenses. Possessing for long centuries her own standards, worship, and discipline, this Church maintains that she has never been subject to the yoke of Rome. Her very enemies cannot deny that she was alive not only at the era of the Reformation, but for many centuries previous to that great event. She herself maintains that she was alive long ere Rome acquired ecclesiastical supremacy in Europe—that her evidence, in fact, goes back to the times of the primitive Church. If, then, the Romanist ask contemptuously, Where was your church before Luther?—we reply, Its doctrines were in the Word of God, and its worship was preserved among the Waldenses.

It was in early May of last year that the writer had the happiness to spend nearly a fortnight among this interesting people, and to visit most of those historic spots in their territory which truly entitle it to be called "consecrated ground." And should any of my readers contemplate a visit to Italy, I may be permitted to suggest from my own experience how grateful a visit to the Waldensian valleys will be found after a sojourn in Naples and Rome. All who know anything of the inner life of Naples will mourn how truly of that city and its delicious environs we may say with the poet,

> "Here every prospect pleases,
> And only man is vile."

No doubt the Waldensians have the faults of other men; but among these simple mountaineers the traveller will be sure to find the utmost courtesy of manner allied to a high tone of moral purity. It is exceedingly refreshing, too, being wearied with the mummery and mere scenic display of what is called "Holy Week" in Rome, to get away to the quiet solitudes of these wooded mountains, and to join, when the Lord's Day comes, in the simple worship of these Christian peasants—a worship which, to one from Scotland especially, brings home-scenes vividly to mind. Or should one of my readers, whose tendencies are amiable and æsthetic, find an Easter week in Rome to have had quite the opposite effect from that which we have supposed: should he find (as some have done) his traditional horror of Popery melting away under the beaming smile of Pio Nono, as, borne shoulder high along the resounding nave of St. Peter's, he waves his paternal blessing on kneeling faithful and unbending heretic alike;—and, what with the music and the magnificence, should he begin to doubt whether the Church of Rome be so evil after all,—then a visit to the Waldenses will prove an admirable tonic and corrective to his moral system. Let our supposed friend acquaint himself with this people's history—let him, in sight of the very scenes themselves, learn what they have endured for righteousness' sake—let him, in the pages of Leger, read of the fiendish rage and bloody cruelties inflicted by Rome and her emissaries on an unoffending people, and he will know what an intolerant and intolerable system Popery is. Try to circulate the Italian Bible in Rome at this present hour, and you are imprisoned or expelled for your pains. But here, in the Waldensian valleys of Piedmont, every house has its open Bible in the people's own tongue; and as you worship God in their humble temples, and hear how faithfully the one Mediator is proclaimed, the stage-oratory of the preacher at the *Gesu* in Rome will seem a poor substitute for this bread of life; and the wild cadence of these poor mountaineers, as they raise their simple hymns, will touch a deeper chord in your heart than the best sung *Miserere* at the Vatican.

When one has himself become interested in a subject and studied it a little, he wonders to find so little information about it among persons otherwise well informed, forgetting that not long ago the case was his own; and perhaps I shall do no injustice to some of my readers if I take it for granted that their ideas about the Waldenses are somewhat vague and obscure. Waldenses and Albigenses, Vaudois and the Canton de Vaud—these perfectly distinct subjects are in some minds confused together. The locality of the Albigenses was in France, on the other side of the Alps, and as a distinct religious community they exist no more. The Waldenses again, though in the French language invariably styled Vaudois, have nothing to do with the Canton de Vaud, which I need hardly say belongs to Switzerland. The Waldenses or Vaudois are *Italian* Protestants, subjects of Victor Emmanuel while King of Sardinia, and now when King of Italy. The valleys where they dwell are in the north of Italy, and lie at the foot of the eastern chain of the Alps, known specifically as the Cottian Alps, which here separate Italy from France. The resemblance of Italy, as represented on a map, to a boot has been often remarked; and it may help to define the precise locality of the Waldensian valleys in the reader's mind to say that they occupy a little corner of the boot just where it would touch the knee.

This territory is small. Somewhat triangular in shape, about twenty miles in length, by some eighteen at the broadest parts, it is almost entirely mountainous in character, and encloses three principal valleys—by name Lucernæ, San Martino, and Perosa—with several smaller and wilder glens going off from these; the streams which descend these valleys forming some of the many ramifications which ultimately gather themselves into the great river of Italy, the Po. The present population is about 23,000 souls. Both Protestants and Romanists are found through the whole district; but taking an average of the entire territory the Protestants outnumber the Romanists in the proportion of seven to one.

Had these valleys no other charm than that of mere natural beauty, they would be well worthy our turning aside from the beaten track of tourists. We had been told they were very picturesque, but "the half had not been told" us. True, they do not admit of comparison with the grand passes of the high Alps in Switzerland, but they have attractions which in Swiss scenery we wholly miss. We have never seen in Switzerland umbrageous foliage to compare with that which clothes the mountain slopes of Piedmont, and while the eye is distressed in many of the finest Swiss valleys by the opaque and dirty white of their glacier water, here, the gushing mountain streams are transparent as crystal itself. But I shall have occasion again to speak of the natural features of this district in connection with localities memorable in the stirring annals of the Vaudois; and therefore, attractive as the subject is, I pass it for the present, to ask my reader's attention to two special claims which the Church of these valleys has on our interest and sympathy.

I. Her past history.

II. Her present position.

I. The past history of the Waldensian Church presents two outstanding features, on both of which I wish to touch, though my space prevents me doing justice to either. And here I may say that such of my readers as desire fuller information on the whole subject would do well to read some of the following books (and I mention but a few of those which are accessible): in English, Sir S. Morland's "History of the Churches of Piemont;" Dr. Henderson's "Vaudois;" Dr. Gilly's "Waldensian Researches," his article in Encycl. Britt., and Miss Williams' "History of the Waldensian Church":—in French, the works of Peyran, Leger, Muston, or Monastier.

The past history of the Waldensian Church embraces two points—her antiquity and her sufferings.

(1.) The antiquity of the Waldensian Church.

> "Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
> Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
> E'en them who kept thy truth so pure of old
> When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones."

So wrote John Milton two hundred years ago. The two latter lines discover to us that in his day the faith of the Waldenses was known to be ancient as well as pure. We cannot enter here into the much-controverted question of the precise origin and antiquity of the Waldensian Church, but we unhesitatingly claim for it the high distinction of being the oldest Evangelical Church that exists in Europe; and for the twofold proof of this claim we point to the pages of ancient history, and to the evidence furnished by the Waldensian manuscripts. Among the latter, an ancient version of the New Testament, in the dialect of the Waldenses (three MSS. copies of which exist, of dates between the 12th and 14th centuries) proves that in these remote valleys a vernacular version of the Word of God was circulating some centuries before it had been translated into our own tongue, or into that of any other people—a most striking fact! And when we point to what we are pleased to call the venerable standards of our different Churches here at home, we should remember that they are documents of yesterday when placed alongside of the yellow parchments, some in the library of Geneva, others in that of Cambridge, which are veritable manuscripts in the Waldensian dialect. Collected in the Valleys in the times of persecution, they had been handed down among these people since the distant time whose date they bear—a period of more than 700 years. I do wish that space permitted me to make some extracts from that most curious poem, the "Nobla Leyzon," which with the Confession of Faith, the Catechism, and the tracts called "Antichrist" and "Purgatory" set forth the truth and exposed the corruptions of Rome. The fact that such writings were at so distant an era as the 12th century composed by men living in these remote solitudes, plainly indicates that long before even that date a people existed there who were separate from the Roman Church and familiar in their own tongue with the Word of God. A conclusion this which is amply borne out by the statements of ancient historians—themselves Papists, and therefore not likely to give partial testimony in a matter like this.

Some of my readers doubtless have heard the

origin of the Waldensian Church assigned to Peter Waldo, the merchant Reformer of Lyons in the twelfth century; leaving us to infer that, prior to that date, the people of the Valleys were sitting under the shadow of Popish darkness. The fact that Waldo's name bears a similarity to the designation Waldenses is probably the source of this, as we believe, untenable statement. Waldo was a French, not an Italian "Reformer before the Reformation," whose followers in his own day were invariably called "the poor men of Lyons," and never "Waldenses." Moreover, it does seem unaccountable that the Waldenses themselves never spoke of Waldo as their founder—(had he been so, they had no more reason to be ashamed of him than we of Knox in Scotland). On the contrary, they have at every period of their history asserted that the truth had been retained among them since its first proclamation in Northern Italy after the Apostolic age.

Let us now glance (and we can do no more) at what ancient history itself says in regard to this assertion. The following testimony on the point is most important:—"With the *dawn of history*," writes Sir James Mackintosh, "we discover some simple Christians in the valleys of the Alps, where they still exist under the ancient name of Vaudois, who, by the light of the New Testament, saw the extraordinary contrast between the purity of primitive times, and the vices of the gorgeous and imperial hierarchy which surrounded them."

It were vain to expect that we should be able to define accurately each several link of the chain which connects the existing Waldensian Church with the Apostolic age; but just as in a dark night at sea you can trace the direction of your landing-place by the lights planted at intervals along the winding shore, so do the scattered hints which come to light here and there of the existence during the dark ages of a "peculiar people" in the Cottian Alps, indicate a line which, if followed out, leads us to the conviction that the faith of the Waldenses has come down to them from primitive times. Their documents, as we have seen, go back to A.D. 1100. Then in the 9th century we find that remarkable man, Claude, Bishop of Turin, who may truly be styled a Reformer within the Church herself, accused in 840 by Jonas of Orleans, not only of personal heterodoxy, but of encouraging persons "in the neighbourhood of his diocese" in their rejection of image worship, and separation from what Jonas styles "Catholic unity." Ascending the stream of time to the 4th century, we find Jerome recording that Vigilantius, the opponent of ecclesiastical corruption in that early age, had taken refuge among the Cottian Alps (the very locality where the Waldenses still exist), because there he found a people holding sentiments similar to his own. This carries us up to the year 396; —and we know that towards the end of the 2nd century the Gospel had penetrated from Italy into Gaul, across the Alpine barrier that divides the two countries. Who can doubt that these early missionaries, carrying with them the seed of the kingdom, scattered some of it as they passed on their way across the Alps?—where, falling among those secluded valleys, it grew; and, sheltered by the encircling mountains, was preserved through long centuries in native vigour, unblighted by the blasts of error which swept across the plains of central Italy.

He must be strangely blind who does not perceive a special Providence in the history of this ancient Church and people: a Providence, whose wondrous ways we hope yet more clearly to unfold, when we come to tell how amidst persecutions almost unequalled, this bush of the wilderness burned, yet was not consumed—and how, also, through the liberation of Italy in our day, slips from this venerable tree are now being planted over the length and breadth of that most interesting land. D. K. GUTHRIE.

SEEDS.

THE seeds of all the noblest plants
Take longest time to grow:
The acorns lie for many weeks
Before their first leaves show.

And children who have sown them come
And look about their bed,
And say, because they lie so long,
"Our acorns must be dead."

But when they sow their mustard-seed,
They need not wait for long:
In but a week, like rank young weed,
It grows up green and strong.

Dear faithless heart, among the seeds
A lesson thou canst find,
For growth's great laws are just the same
In them as in the mind.

Thine acorns, sown so long ago,
And watched so long with tears,
Still to fair spreading oaks shall grow,
In spite of all thy fears.

Still wait in faith, for nought is dead
Of all that thou hast sown:
Be not a child who roots up seeds
To *see* that they have grown.

S. R. Powers.

OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS; OR, METHODS TO DO GOOD.

BY THE EDITOR.

V.—CHRISTIAN DECISION.

Invading armies always endeavour to leave their ships riding in a safe and sheltered anchorage. In the event of their enterprise proving unsuccessful, they thus secure the means of retreat; and to provide for such an emergency is regarded as a good stroke of generalship. Wellington fought Waterloo with the Forest of Soigné at his back; and the fleet which carried our soldiers to fight the Russians before Sebastopol waited the issue in the Bay of Balaclava.

The brave old Romans, whom Cæsar led, invaded our country after a different fashion. The first thing they did on disembarking, was to burn their ships; doing so in sight of thousands who were bravely mustering on the heights of England, to defend their homes, their wives and little ones, their freedom and native land. Not leaving the enemy to cut off their retreat, they cut it off themselves. Their own hands put the torch to the fleet which had brought them to Britain, and, in the event of failure, would have carried them back to Italy. With the glare of that brave conflagration on their eagles, banners, and serried ranks, we cannot wonder that, with such sons to fight her battles, Rome rose from a petty town to be mistress of the world. Both her destiny and their determination were to be plainly seen in the blaze of their burning ships. Bringing to the enterprise such an indomitable spirit and such decision of character, unless the stars of heaven fought against them as against Sisera, how could they fail to conquer?

Such is the resoluteness of mind and purpose the Christian's work requires; nor without some good measure of that, as well as of the grace and spirit of God, can it be brought to a successful issue. On engaging in our Father's business—entering on the trials and triumphs of the Christian life, we also are, so to speak, to burn our ships, nor so much as think of retreat. Abandoning for ever any idea of returning to sin, we are to leave no way open but that which, though beset with trials and swarming with foes, leads straight on to heaven—God's language to us being that He held by the Red Sea when he said to Moses, "Why criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward!"

Decision of character and promptitude of action, qualities so important on board ship in a storm, in the manœuvring of troops in battle, are indispensable to the Christian life—both to our getting through the "strait gate," and our getting on in the "narrow way." How often, for example, does it happen that to hesitate even for one moment between resisting and yielding to temptation is to fall? The battle is lost in that moment of vacillation. In such cases, our safety lies in coming to an immediate decision; in promptly resolving to dally with the tempter not an instant, to flee if we can, and if we cannot flee to fight—so resisting the devil that if we cannot flee from him, he shall flee from us, and leave us, as when he spread out his wings and, vanquished at all points, relieved our Lord of his hateful presence, in possession of the field. That we may be conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved us, our Lord calls for the highest decision of character, warning us against even a recreant thought. No man, he says, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God; and his apostles use expressions that almost warrant us to say that he opposes our return to the world and sin in a way to recall another grand and very remarkable incident in the history of ancient Rome.

Disheartened by the extraordinary dangers and difficulties of their enterprise, one of her armies lost courage, and resolved on a retreat. The general reasoned with his soldiers. Expostulating with them, he appealed to their love of country, to their honour, and to their oaths. By all that could revive a fainting heart he sought to animate their courage and shake their resolution. Much they trusted, they admired, they loved him, but his appeals were all in vain. They were not to be moved; and carried away, as by a panic, they faced round to retreat. At that juncture they were forcing a mountain pass; and had just cleared a gorge where the road, between stupendous rocks on one side and a foaming river on the other, was but a footpath,—broad enough for the step of a single man. As a last resort, he laid himself down there, saying, "If you will retreat, it is over this body you go, trampling me to death beneath your feet." No foot advanced. The flight was arrested. His soldiers could face the foe; but not mangle beneath their feet one who loved them, and had often

led their ranks to victory—sharing like a common soldier all the hardships of the campaign, and ever foremost in the fight. The sight was one to inspire them with decision. Hesitating no longer to advance, they wheeled round to resume their march; deeming it better to meet sufferings and endure even death itself than trample under foot their devoted and patriot leader. Their hearts recoiled from such an outrage. But for such as have named the name of Christ not to depart from iniquity, for such as have enlisted under his banner to go back to the world, for such as have renounced sin to return to its pleasures, involves a greater crime. A more touching spectacle bars our return. Jesus, as it were, lays himself down on our path: nor can any become backsliders, and return to the practice and pleasures of sin without treading him under their feet. These, Paul's very words, call up a spectacle from which every lover of Jesus should recoil with horror: "If he," says that apostle, "who despised Moses' law died without mercy, of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath *trodden under foot* the Son of God?"

Decision of character in maintaining our Christian profession, adhering to its principles, and performing its duties, is of such value in our Lord's eyes, that He regards those as his enemies who vacillate between good and evil—hesitating which to choose; him or the world. "He," says Jesus, "who is not with me is against me;" and elsewhere, preferring open enemies to doubtful friends, he speaks to the same effect—"I would that thou wert either cold or hot; so then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

It is not difficult to sympathise with our Lord in this matter. Seeing how a good cause may suffer worse things than opposition, and have to encounter greater dangers than any that come from declared and open enemies, we understand his feelings. If God temper the storm and restrain the remainder of wrath, there are worse things than persecution and opposition. When shepherds, to improve the pastures of the hills and cover them with sweet young grass, set the heather on fire, they choose for that purpose not a calm, but a breezy day. Fanned by the wind, and catching fresh fuel as it advances, the flame which under a serene sky might have smouldered and died out, is blown into a blaze; and borne on from height to height in rolling fiery billows, ere long it wraps the mountains in clouds of smoke and broad sheets of flame. Not less favourable to the progress and final triumph of God's cause has been the opposition it had to sustain.

For example, look at the reformation of religion in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It was kindled into vehemence by the opposition that was made to it; and, advancing against Popery and its institutions with the rapidity and ravages of burning flames, it speedily spread over almost the whole continent of Europe. To correct some errors of the Popish system, to lop off one excrescence here and another there, was the utmost which Luther at the outset contemplated. Permitted to do that, the German monk would probably have resumed his cowl, and returned to his monastery, to waste his life amid its quiet cloisters, and at length expire, in what his Church called "the odour of sanctity." It was not so. We have to bless God that it was not so; and that Rome was left in judicial blindness to resist all reform. The monk must be crushed! Resolved on this, she launched her thunders at his head, and sought to quench the truth he spake in the blood of its dauntless advocate. This roused all the man in the monk. The opposition Luther met with drove him onward from one bold step to another. The more closely he examined Popery, the more rotten the whole system seemed; the discovery of its errors kept pace with the discussion; and, like a man borne on the bosom of a rapid and powerful stream, it was not long till Luther found himself far in advance of the point from which he started,—far a-head of the petty ends on which he was originally bent. The man who sought at first but to lop off some rotten branches, is ere long, to the astonishment of a world whom his blows have wakened from centuries of slumber, seen boldly standing before the tree itself—burying his axe deep in its sides, and making all Europe ring with the stout blows he delivered on its roots.

So, though intended for evil, the Lord has often turned opposition into good. Indeed, in observing how little Christ's cause has sometimes suffered from its avowed enemies, and how often the very means they employed to hinder have helped it on, I have thought of the eagle, which rises slowly amid the calm of serene and sunny skies; but, spreading its wings to the storm and turning even adverse winds to advantage, soars aloft in tempests that strike other birds with dismay, darken the face of heaven, and roar through the troubled air. God so makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and restrains the remainder of wrath, that the almost uniform experience of his Church and people has been that of Israel in the land of Egypt,—"the more they were afflicted, the more they multiplied and grew." The worst enemies of a cause are false friends. Give me the opposition that, acting like the wind, blows zeal into a brisk and burning flame, rather than that cold, callous, selfish indifference, which our forefathers denounced as "damnable neutrality." The only effect which they who hesitate, vacillate, show no decision of character, have on a good cause, is to injure it more than the opposition of its enemies. Though they do nothing against Christ, doing nothing for him, standing apart, and taking no side in the battle, they cool the zeal, and discourage the ardour of its friends. Such men Jesus regards as foes; saying, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad."

On decision of character, man's best and eternal interests depend. Our position nearly corresponds to that of Israel on Carmel, when Elijah, standing by the mountain altar, addressed the people, saying, "How long halt ye between two opinions; if the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him!" Christ with a cross, but heaven behind him; and Satan with the world glittering in his hand, but hell flaming at his back, stand before us, rival candidates. Each solicits our hands and our heart; and, though Satan would persuade us to the contrary, we must de-

cide between them; the one or other we must serve. In the vain hope of making much of both worlds, unwilling to perish, but yet unwilling to part from sin, many postpone their decision, and attempt to compromise the matter by offering these rivals a divided allegiance. Futile and fatal attempt! Man can divide his time between them, appearing in church on Sabbath and following pleasure on other days in the haunts of vice; and even so divide his money, although I fancy it never was done, as to contribute a sum as great to churches, charities, and religious schemes, as what he wastes on selfish and guilty pleasures. Let him trim the scales so well that the balance shall stand even, and the one form a perfect counterpoise to the other, he cannot divide his heart as he can his time, wealth, influence. To divide a heart is to destroy it; and to those who engage in the vain attempt our Lord has the old answer, "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Judas tried it; so also did Simon Magus; and so did Demas; and the result in their case was not certainly such as to encourage others to repeat the experiment.

By such attempts Christ is more offended and his cause injured than by sceptics and scoffers, the profane and vicious, his open and avowed enemies. "I would," he says, "that thou wert either cold or hot; and because thou art neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Nor is the reason far to seek. One traitor within is more to be dreaded than twenty foes without a city. One cold, selfish, narrow-minded, illiberal adherent, by damping the zeal of others, and setting a bad example, does a good cause more injury than almost any number of fierce opponents. Lowering the standard of morals, of benevolence, and piety, they who render to Christ a divided allegiance, inflict the deepest wounds on religion; and so far as they are concerned, she has reason to say, Save me from my friends, and I will manage my enemies. If people are to love the world, let them wear her livery, and not assume the garb of followers of Christ. Let those who fight Satan's battles fight them under Satan's banners; nor, wounding Jesus by their conformity to the world, their self-indulgence, and their vices, give him occasion, in reply to the question, What are these wounds on thy hands and feet? to complain, "These are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."

Many flatter themselves that, though they are not saints, they cannot be justly regarded as great sinners. They may not be lovers of Christ or liberal supporters of his cause, but they cannot be said to walk in the way of the wicked, still less to sit in the chair of the scorner. Believe them, they have done nothing against Christ. Now suppose that were true, it purchases no exemption from the curse, "Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." The question remains, What have they done for Christ and his cause? This their plea, that they have done nothing against him, what better is it than the servant's, who, on his Lord's return, went and digged in the ground; and from the hole drew out a napkin; and from the napkin that he carefully unrolled, drew out a piece of money—which, the exact sum he had received from his master, he returned saying, Lo, there, thou hast that is thine! This man had not betrayed his trust by wasting his master's money; he had neither appropriated it to his own use, nor squandered it on his vices. Yet, what was the master's judgment on this case,—the case of one, who, it might be affirmed had done nothing against him. "Thou wicked and slothful servant," says his lord, "thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him . . . and cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth!"

With faith in Christ, we have an anchor to ride out the wildest storm; blood to wash away the darkest sins; a ground of confidence that will stand unshaken both in the hour of death and on the day of judgment. But, alas! for those whose religion is merely negative; whose hope lies in not having been great sinners like others—like the undisguised enemies of piety, of religion, and Christ. Alas for the day when they stand arraigned at the bar of judgment! See how the balance yonder turns not so much on the evil that men have done as on the good that they have not done. Fixing his eyes more in pity than in anger on the astonished sinner, the Judge says, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; . . . depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" So perish the hopes of lukewarm, cold-hearted professors! Dealing with those who are not for him, as with those who are against him, the Son of God spues them out of his mouth.

Decision of character is indispensable for that choosing of God for our portion, of Jesus for our Saviour, of holiness for our life, and of heaven for our home, without which no man can be saved. These, like other objects, may be objects of our admiration, of our approval, and even of our desires, without becoming our choice. An old heathen said, "I see and approve the better, and yet follow the worse;" and how many who call themselves Christians could say the same? Here, good wishes, and even longing desires, are not enough. For example: I fancy that the drunkard does not live who, when he looks at his ragged children, and wretched wife, and the sad wreck of character and happiness he has brought on himself, and contrasts these with the prosperous, happy home of some temperate neighbour, does not approve of temperance, and wish with feelings of bitter remorse that he also were a sober man. Poor drunkard! His judgment, heart, and conscience are on the side of sobriety; yet a sober life, though his wish, is not his choice. His wish is to cast away the damning cup, but his choice is to drink it; and so, with eyes more open to the consequences than the

fluttering bird which, fascinated by the serpent's gaze, walks right into its jaws, under the spell of this accursed vice he carries the cup to his lips; and repenting only to repeat the debauch, plunges deeper and deeper into ruin.

Nor are the blessings of salvation to be obtained, or progress made in the way of grace, by mere wishes or desires, or even resolutions. It is hard getting to heaven with such corruption as there is within us, and such temptations as lie without us; nor will anything short of the grace of God and strong decision of mind be sufficient to overcome the torrent and tide of evil. Our godly ancestors, many of them at least, when they engaged to be the Lord's, perhaps before going to their first communion, wrote out a solemn covenant, whereby, choosing whom they would serve and accepting of Jesus as their Saviour, they gave themselves over to God; undertaking through Divine help, at whatever pain or hazard, to depart from all iniquity and follow the Lord wholly. And in these marriage contracts between the Lamb and his bride, the Saviour and the sinner, as they might be called, there is a warmth of feeling, a tenderness of heart, an energy and decision which one cannot read without applying to the pious men of that olden time these words of Holy Writ: "There were giants in those days." Yet in our days as well as theirs, salvation is unattainable without, though not perhaps such a formal, an equally decided choice of Christ; such a preference of him over his rivals—sin, the world, and the flesh—as constrains the believing and happy soul to address him thus: Whom have I in heaven but thee? there is none in all the earth whom I desire besides thee,—dying for me on thy bloody tree, waiting for me with long-suffering patience, winning me with such love, caressing me with such kindness, loading me with such favours, blessing me with such peace, and crowning me with such honours, Thou art the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely. Thou hast given thyself for me, can I do less than give myself to thee? Command, and I obey; lead, I follow—laying down my sins and taking up my cross to follow!

It is of the utmost consequence for men to know if they have ever come to such a decision. Happy those who have made Christ their choice; in whose life there was a day when with eyes divinely opened to behold all the graces and glory of his character, they held to Jesus the language of yon noble woman who bids farewell to home, farewell to friends, farewell to country, farewell to her own weeping sister, and says, as turning to Naomi she throws her arms around her, "Entreat me not to leave thee—for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God shall be my God."

Decision of character is indispensable to that promptitude and energy both of prayer and action which man's perilous circumstances imperatively require. The condition of an awakened and alarmed sinner resembles that of the shedder of blood to whom the cities of refuge in the land of Israel offered protection from the sword of the avenger. Patent roads led to these; and how were they travelled by him who, throwing fearful glances over his shoulder, descried the form of the avenger, saw the gleam of the naked sword, and by-and-bye, as the other gained on him, heard the panting of his breath and the tread of his foot? Many a lovely flower grew by the road-side, but none did he pause to gather; many a friend was met, but none did he pause to salute; the hill is steep, but he stoutly breasts it; the road is rough, but he presses its flints beneath his bleeding feet; nor draws breath, nor pauses, nor hesitates, till, approaching the blessed boundary, he gathers up his remaining strength into one great effort, and leaps across the line, to fall on the ground fainting, but saved. Did men thus toil, endure, run, fly for life—with this life in jeopardy? Then what should be their decision of character, what their promptitude of action, what their strong, earnest crying of prayer, who, having Christ to seek, pardon to obtain, souls to be saved, eternal life to win, have a far greater work to do—the time allotted them to do it in often very short, and always very uncertain? In earning their daily bread, in promoting the welfare of their families, in fulfilling the duties of their worldly station, men have, no doubt, other interests to attend to than those which belong to their souls and salvation. But in these last, which may specially be called their Father's business, their highest and most precious interests are at stake. To these, therefore, let them address themselves with the energy and decision of one who, charged with an important commission from his master, replied, on being invited to refresh himself, "I will not eat till I have told mine errand!"

So spake Eliezer of Damascus, Abraham's steward, when, seeking a bride for his master's son, he arrived at the tents of Laban, browned by the sun, covered with the dust, weary and worn with the toils of the journey. For long days his seat had been the camel's back; his only couch the dewy ground; his food, in dried corn or fruits, the barest sustenance of nature. Now, his journey is happily accomplished. A smoking board, tempting his senses, stands invitingly before him; and as this hungry man turns a greedy eye on the banquet, how many plausible reasons can he find for preferring the indulgence of his own appetite to the discharge of his master's business! Exhausted nature pled for a period for refreshment and repose; and these would require but a brief delay. What possible damage could Isaac's interests suffer by that? Nay, the business might prosper better for it; he himself being abler to tell his errand, and Laban, after pledging his guest in cups of generous wine, more inclined perhaps to lend a gracious ear to his proposals. Besides, it was hardly good breeding to decline this hospitable offer. What the one gracefully offered, the other should gratefully accept. Might not his refusal give offence to Laban? and since "he who believeth shall not make haste," might not the very piety of the good man regard such hurry as indicating a want of faith in Providence. Besides, it was contrary to the polished manners of the East to plunge at once into the heart of business. The highest examples might be pled against such indecorous haste. For did not the angels—one being God him-

self in human form,—who announced to Abraham the doom of Sodom, partake of his hospitality, and eat beneath the oak of Mamre, before entering on the awful business which brought them from the skies. Besides, no rival was there soliciting Rebekah's hand. Heaven seemed to have granted the good man's prayer—the maiden had met him at the well; she had shown him kindness; she had received his presents; and everything promising a happy conclusion, his business seemed one, if ever there was one, which could not suffer from a brief delay. Such reasons Eliezer might have urged for deferring his mission to his meal. Yet from all these, plausible as they appeared, this decided, resolute, singularly devoted servant, turned aside his ear, to say, as he stood by the untouched banquet, "I will not eat till I have told mine errand"—involving the happiness of my master, the preservation of a chosen race, the fulfilment of God's gracious purpose and glorious promises, my business brooks no delay; who can tell what a day or an hour may bring forth?

Would God that men with equal firmness and promptitude repelled the less plausible arguments with which Satan plies them through the lusts of the flesh, the pleasures of the world, and the pride of life? He persuades them to suspend their choice, and not at once embrace the offer of salvation and give themselves to Christ. But why should sinners who hang over perdition be persuaded to delay that?—or why should God's people postpone any good work they are called to by duty to their divine master, to other men, or themselves? We ought never to let a good resolution go to sleep; nor postpone till to-morrow what we can do to-day. Good in respect of earthly things, such decision is all-important in matters that concern either our own or others' souls. Let men make Eliezer their pattern. He stands by Laban's table loaded with tempting viands, as firm in purpose and prompt in action as if the success of his mission was suspended on his own indomitable energy; while, as if nothing whatever depended on himself, but all on God, he raises his eyes to heaven, crying, "Oh, Lord God of my master Abraham, give me good speed this day!" And God did it. He touched the maiden's heart; to her brother's question, "Wilt thou go with this man?" this her frank and ready answer, "I will go." The steward's prayer was answered; and so also will be ours, whatever we seek, be it mercy to pardon, or grace to help, if we seek under the pressure of these weighty words, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, nor device, in the grave, whither thou goest."

DAYS OF GRACE.

BY A BUSINESS MAN.

I HAD just turned round the corner of Old Jewry when our district missionary, Mr. Smith, almost ran against me. Mr. Smith is a good man whom we—that is, a few friends and myself—have engaged to visit the poor in the district in which our offices are situated. We thought it was only our duty to remember the poor of a locality where we earn our daily bread, and something more.

"Oh, I am glad to meet you," said he. "I have just been at your office to ask you to give me ten shillings."

"What for?" I asked.

"Well, I don't know whether I should tell you," he answered, with a smile. "Just give me the money and I shall tell you afterwards. It is urgently required."

What could I do?

"Well, here it is," I said. "And now tell me the secret."

"It is for William Hurt, then," was the answer."

"What? for that rascal!" cried I. "If I had known that——"

"He is dying," interrupted Mr. Smith, "and his poor wife and children are starving."

Of course, that settled the matter. I was disgusted with Hurt, but I felt that my anger could not follow him to the grave. Death is often a peacemaker where life is nothing but war. Hunt had from his boyhood been a clerk in my office, and a clever, active, pushing fellow he was. But he took to drinking and gambling, and married an actress from a penny theatre, and everything went wrong with him. It is a long story how I tried by every means in my power to keep him afloat, but it was impossible to repair the old holes as quickly as he bored new ones. Moreover, he turned insolent and neglectful, and even dishonest, till at length I felt compelled to give him into custody. After his release I again tried to give him a lift, as he seemed repentant, and I was successful in obtaining a pretty good situation for him, in which he behaved well for a short time. But he soon fell into his bad habits again, and his last state became even worse than his first, so that I withdrew my countenance from him in disgust, being determined not to waste one farthing more upon such a hopeless profligate.

"Is he dying?" I said, in a repentant tone. The whole of the poor wretch's story stood at once before my recollection. A shudder thrilled through me at the thought of what the end must be of such a life; and that end now so near! He had been well educated; he had, in his youth, been a regular attendant at the house of God; he knew his Bible as well as I knew it. Admonitions, warnings, entreaties to keep himself aloof from the paths of evil had not been wanting. The Spirit of God had not ceased repeatedly to knock at the door of his heart, but he had stubbornly resisted. And now the measure was full, and he was summoned to appear before his Maker and Judge to give an account of his stewardship!

"Is he in a condition to be spoken to?" I asked the missionary.

"He is, and I believe he is now accessible to good words—at least, he asked me to lend him a Bible, and he thanked me in a voice of emotion for my short address and prayer."

"I will go with you and see him," I said.

As we crossed Gresham Street, we were passed by a young lady who kindly nodded to Mr. Smith.

"Who is she?" I asked.

"She is one of my missionary agents," answered Mr. Smith, with a smile.

"Indeed!" said I, in a tone of surprise. "So you keep a staff of agents on your own account?"

"I do," was the answer; "they are of both sexes, you know. You, too, are one of them, and I have you on duty just now, you observe."

"Oh, I see," replied I.

"Ah," he continued, "she is a real angel of consolation; she is gifted with a rare talent for finding out distress where it is screened behind a respectable appearance, and for filling an empty lamp with oil without soiling its glossy outside. I daresay you have heard of that carpenter who fell from the roof of a house in Basinghall Street, and died instantaneously, a few months since; well, many heard of it, but it was soon forgotten, and we least of all thought of the wife and three children whom the man left behind. But Miss Rogers betook herself the next morning to the poor widow's house to remind her that she had a Husband still of whom death could not bereave her. She soon found out all about the woman's circumstances, and that all her sources of subsistence were on a sudden stopped; and seeing that she was an honest, respectable person, who kept her household in good order, Miss Rogers secretly collected subscriptions till she was able to put her in a little shop, where she now earns a livelihood for herself and her little ones; and nobody knows anything about it,—nor should I, had not the good woman herself made me her confidant."

While thus talking, we reached the quarter in which Hurt lived. A dark, wooden staircase in a dirty court led us to a back room on the second floor. If misery and destitution had taken up their abode anywhere it was here. Shabby remains of former affluence strangely contrasted with the most loathsome effects of poverty, neglect, and filth. A walnut bookcase, which must once have been an elegant piece of furniture, was placed against the dirty whitewashed wall; two of its four nicely-carved pillars were broken, and its much damaged shelves bore a broken soap-box, a bundle of false hair, a piece of a comb, a wine-bottle with a bit of candle stuck in it, a cracked wine-glass, a stuffed bird, a broken flute, &c. Chairs there were not, but I saw two wooden forms, one of which was occupied by two half-naked little children, who were playing with a dead fish and a pitcher of water. Four other children were at the Ragged School, which Mr. Smith had succeeded in getting them to attend regularly. A frame of a bedstead, covered with straw and rags, stood in a corner opposite the fire-place. I could scarcely recognise the pale, emaciated, unshaven face, or realise that it was that of a man who was once one of the handsomest persons I ever knew. Reclining on the edge of his bed was a tall, slender woman, whose regular features betokened past beauty. Her dress was a perfect illustration of the parable of the old garment patched up with pieces of new cloth. Still there was something in her attitude and movements which betrayed the former actress. She was the image of suffering and destitution. It was evident that it was from weakness that she had taken her place on the bed, as she was scarcely able to keep herself standing. After having risen when we entered, she again dropped down, almost fainting from the exertion.

Hurt covered his face with his hands when he saw me, and burst into tears.

"I will just leave you alone for a minute," whispered Mr. Smith into my ear, "as I am going to buy some refreshment for the woman and the children."

I took the wooden form which was unoccupied, and seated myself by the bedside.

"Don't be afraid of me," I said to the invalid; "I am not come to upbraid, but to comfort you."

"Oh, Mr. ——," he answered, casting a look upon me which I shall never forget—I cannot tell whether it was more indicative of remorse or of surprise—"I am unworthy of so much kindness. Can you forgive me all the evil I have done to you?"

I tendered him my hand, which he pressed spasmodically.

"With all my heart," said I. "But my forgiveness is a small matter, my friend. I am myself a sinner, and what is all the evil you have done to me, in comparison with what God in his mercy has forgiven me? The person to whom you have done the greatest evil is yourself. Are you aware of the condition you are in at present?"

"I am," was the answer. "I am a dying man. There is no hope for me, neither for my body, nor—nor—for my soul!" he added, in a voice choking with tears.

"There is for your soul!" said I, in a decisive tone. "As long as it is the day of grace, there is in Jesus an open door to escape, even for the chief of sinners."

"Day of grace," he repeated, mournfully. "You don't know, sir, how recklessly during my life I have played with that word. Do you remember how, when I was a lad, you one day ordered me to cash a three months' bill at the bank of Messrs —— and Co.? I made the remark that it was three days over the date on which the bill was due, and you seemed pleased with that observation. You then explained to me what days of grace are, and that after the expiration of them, there is no possibility of further delaying in payment. 'Now, Willie,' you then said to me, 'mind the days of grace which God has allowed you, and be sure to have the money when your life's bill is due.' This saying of yours made a deep impression upon me at the time, and I began to be thoughtful about the concerns of my soul. But pride and self-complacency took possession of my heart, and brought me into bad company; and after that, when my conscience rebuked me, and you remonstrated with me, I would often in a jesting mood say to myself, 'Ah well, the days of grace which the Lord allows are more than three; plenty of time before my bill becomes due!' But oh, it is due now, and the

days of grace are at an end, and what have I to pay with?"

At this moment Mr. Smith re-entered, and placed the contents of a basket, which a boy brought in, upon the table. There was everything a hungry stomach could crave,—a jug with steaming soup, and a loaf, and half a pound of butter, and a plate of cold meat, and half a pint of port for the sick man, and oranges, and some sugar, and two woollen jackets for the naked children, and a box with soap, and a towel. I wondered how he could have got it all for ten shillings, and thought such a lucrative business was worth speculating in; so I again dropped something into his hand and whispered a few words about coal and a bed and a blanket. While he was away on this errand it was a luxury to see how the soup and a considerable portion of the other eatables disappeared under the hands of the woman and her two little children. Meanwhile, I took the cracked wine-glass from the shelf of the book-case and pressed an orange into it, and having mixed a little sugar with it, I gave it to the sick man. The whole scene was like a showery day after a long summer drought.

"William," I said, "the days of grace are not yet at an end. Suppose there is only one day to run, there is yet time to get the amount of your bill."

"Oh, it is too late, now," he sighed; "I have wasted my time."

"No, it is not," I answered. "Still it is the day of grace."

"My debt is so great! my sins are so great!" groaned he, covering his face with his hands.

"Not too great to be paid even this moment," I replied. "If you had to pay your debt in silver and gold, I should, with you, despair to collect such an enormous amount in one day. But you know the Apostle says, 'We are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.' That fountain opened for all sin and uncleanness is inexhaustible, dear friend, and accessible at every moment. As long as it is the day of grace, that fountain stands in the midst of the world's market-place, flowing on and on without stopping, and whosoever is athirst, let him take the water of life freely."

These words seemed to have a calming influence upon his mind. At least his nervous emotion abated, and he appeared more accessible to quiet reasoning.

"You do not know, sir," he said to me in a calm voice, "how impossible it is, at the end of a life such as I have led, to believe that there is still a way to escape its due reward."

"Impossible!" I exclaimed. "Is there anything impossible with God? Look at the thief on the cross. I know your life has not been what it ought, but his was not better at any rate. Yet, at the very last moment he was saved. Only one minute remained for him before he died to turn his face prayerfully to Jesus, and the whole list of his sins, long and black as it was, was swept away by one word of the all-merciful Saviour."

"True," answered he, "and I have often thought in these days of agony and despair of that wonderful story, trying to draw a ray of light from it, to comfort my soul in its utter darkness; but every effort has been paralysed by the thought that, great sinner as that thief was, yet he was but a child in wickedness compared with me, for he never knew the Gospel and the power of grace until he beheld the Saviour on the cross. But I have from my youth been trained in the knowledge of Christ; I even at one time pledged myself to his service, but I fell away and delivered myself up unto the service of the devil, rejecting so great a salvation, crucifying Christ again, and counting his blood an unholy thing. And now that the evil master whom I served as long as I had the power, abandons me, and leaves me in the hands of the tormentors, I wish to escape and avail myself of that grace which I once so recklessly insulted and rejected; but I feel that it would be a fresh insult to be impudent enough to apply under such circumstances and after such antecedents. No, sir, there is no hope for me. My days of grace have expired for ever!"

He buried his face in the rags that constituted his pillow and for a while continued to weep like a child. Alas! I could not help feeling that there was too much truth in what he had been saying. Looking at him only in the light of justice, what could be more righteous than his condemnation! He was like a tree which had wasted all its sap and strength in producing only leaves to please itself with, and poisonous fruits which had been obnoxious to everybody; and now, after having spoiled its strength, when it is about to wither away in the best of its days—what garden can it be transplanted to? But I could not allow justice alone to speak here. I could have allowed it had I found him a hardened sinner, trying to establish his own righteousness. But I found him bathed in tears, accusing himself, broken-hearted and at the brink of despair under the remorse of his conscience. This, at any rate, is not a work of his late master, I thought. This is a work of grace in his heart. The day has not yet drawn to its close. No, no, Jesus will not allow it to close before his Spirit accomplish the work He has commenced!

"William," I said, when he had resumed his former calmness, "I wish I could say that you are over-colouring your sad condition; but, alas! I must remind you that what you have been saying just now was said by me years ago when I spoke to you of the fearful consequences which your irregular life would necessarily lead to."

"Oh! I know, I know," said he. "You foretold me all I am experiencing now. You pointed to my deathbed and you asked me what would be left to console me with if I continued in that way? But I thought, the day of grace is long and I shall manage to be in good time yet."

"Do you remember," I asked, "how I once said to you, 'William, do not play with truth. It is like a steel spring: if once bent beyond its power it never acts again as it did before; it becomes lame and powerless to your mind, and even the most striking and consoling text of Scripture will lose its taste and flavour?'"

"Oh! I do remember it," replied he, "and it *was* so true. I know all the texts of the Gospel which speak of Christ's love towards sinners; but they are

Drawn by C. J. Pinwell. Engraved by J. Swain.

"MISS ROGERS BETOOK HERSELF THE NEXT MORNING TO THE POOR WIDOW'S HOUSE."

nothing to me, they have lost their meaning, they leave me comfortless. I knew them all by heart from my childhood, and during my wicked life they would rise thousands of times to my memory, even in the very moments when I was indulging my sinful passions; but I threw them away fretfully, laughed them down, or drowned them in drink. But now they come again to revenge themselves upon me, marshalling themselves in a file before my wearied mind day and night, looking at me, as it were, with cold, stern faces, as if saying, 'God judge between thee and us!'"

A shudder passed through my frame at these words. I looked upward to God and sighed, "Thou canst make them smile upon him again."

At this moment Mr. Smith re-entered, whispering into my ear that the articles he had bought were to be sent within an hour.

"Here lies a dying sinner without hope," I said to him. I then told him the topic of our conversation.

"Just so," he said, with a stern face; "these are the bitter fruits of sin. This man's sins are too great to be forgiven."

I started, and looked Mr. Smith in the face, to ascertain whether he was really in earnest. Even Hurt cast a look of surprise at him.

"Mr. Smith," said I, in a tone of deep disapproval, "do you know what you are saying?"

"I do," was the answer. "Scripture says, 'God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth, and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and He reserveth wrath for his enemies.'"

"I know that text of Nahum," said I; "but in the next verse he says, 'The Lord is slow to anger.'"

"True," replied Mr. Smith, gravely; "but he adds, 'He will not at all acquit the wicked.' Here is a man who has spent all his life in wickedness. How then can he be acquitted? I have read nowhere in the Bible of such a great sinner being pardoned."

"Oh, misery!" said Hurt, burying his face in his rags.

I looked at Mr. Smith surprised and inquiringly.

"No, I don't recollect that I ever read of such a great sinner being pardoned," repeated Mr. Smith, taking no notice of my look.

"Take Peter, for instance, who denied the Lord three times with an oath," I said, sharply.

"Ah, that's quite a different case," replied Mr. Smith; "his was only a moment's weakness; here is a man who has denied the Lord all his life long. Of such sinners being pardoned there is no instance in the Bible, as far as I recollect."

"Well, then, *I* know one," cried Hurt, in a triumphant tone. "Take Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, who made his son pass through the fire and wrought much wickedness in the sight of the Lord to provoke Him to anger, and shed much innocent blood till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to the other. Yet when he prayed to the Lord in his prison, he was pardoned, and restored to his throne in mercy. Now, I am a great sinner, I know, but I cannot see how there could be a greater sinner than he."

"Ah, but mind, that was in the day of the law," observed Mr. Smith, dogmatically; "and that was a time of great mercy, as it seems."

"Well, in what day are we *now?*" asked Hurt, quickly.

"Why, I don't know," replied Mr. Smith, drily. "What day do *you* think we are in?"

"We are in the day of grace!—yes, in the day of grace!" cried Hurt, passionately.

While saying so, in the fervour of his agitation, he raised himself up in his bed, and looked Mr. Smith in the face with eyes glistening like live coals. Then, overpowered by his weakness, he fell back on his pillow quite exhausted.

There was a pause. I now understood Mr. Smith's purpose.

"Well then," said he, clasping the dying man's hand in his, "if God pardoned a Manasseh in the day of the law, what will He not do with you in the day of grace!"

A FACE IN A DREAM.

She came but for a little while,
Yet with a wondrous gleam!
She left within my soul her smile—
The Darling of my Dream!

O face too clear for sorrow or tear;
Too real for masks that seem!
I seek, but shall not find you Here,
You Darling of my Dream!

I wonder, do you wait for me
Beside the glad Life-Stream,
Or under the Leaf of Healing Tree—
You Darling of my Dream?

O sometimes lift your veil of night,
And let one thrilling beam
Fill all my life, for days, with light—
You Darling of my Dream!

G. M.

FIRST WORDS IN CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL IN 1866.

BY THE DEAN.

"I must be about my Father's business."—*Luke* ii. 49.

In dealing with this, the leading thought of our blessed Lord's childhood, I shall not enter upon the peculiar circumstances which brought out his utterance of it, but shall dwell on the words themselves, as carrying instruction to us at this present time.

We have passed the barrier, and the door of the year that is gone has closed behind us. Our thoughts are now not turned backward, as last Sunday, but forward, into the new space which has now opened before us. We are no longer gathered on the stern, tracking the wake which the vessel has left in the waters, but have passed into the bows, and are with anxious eyes scanning the distant horizon.

And as in the endings of things there is a charm, so also in the beginnings. An event gains in interest, as by being the last, so also by being the first of its kind. But the charm is not altogether the same, nor does the interest belong to the same class. That which is last is, so to speak, sealed up and safe. It has no continuance, and is therefore neither food for hope, nor material of disappointment. But a beginning necessarily implies a continuance, and the recollection of it becomes joyous or mournful, according as that continuance fulfilled or fell short of the hope excited. So that we do not cherish the beginnings as we do the endings of things in this world, because they are too often broken off mournfully, and are unpleasing to think upon. The bright morning, clouded over at noon, and forgotten in the tempest before night; the healthy and joyous childhood, paling before disease and infirmity as years go on; the fresh and promising spirit damped and chilled by the heartless world: these are of too common occurrence to need any calling to your remembrance. And in speaking of the beginnings of things, let us all through bear this in mind, that we are handling frail and fading flowers, and treating of matters on the permanence of which there is no dependence. Let us so try to tend the flower that, though it may drop, the seed may remain: so to build the fabric which may be overthrown, as to be mindful of the city which hath foundations, even our permanent and everlasting home.

Well then, my brethren, we are busy with the thoughts for the opening year, and are making each our beginning of its plans and interests. How ought those beginnings to be made? Can we gather from Christian thoughts and examples any sound maxims whereby such beginnings may be regulated?

To answer this question, let us look at the great example set before us in our text. We know that our blessed Lord had a mission to fulfil on earth, and we are therefore not surprised to find Him eager to be engaged in his Father's business. We do not wonder when we see Him, at twelve years old, with boyish ardour, anticipate his career of teaching. We are perhaps more surprised when we see Him, after such an outburst of youthful earnestness, go down to Nazareth and become, for eighteen more years, subject to his earthly parents. But, in truth, both these belonged to Him as our example: both, as true and very man. In the one, He was for entering on the fulness of his mission from the Father; in the other, He chastened his will as man, and waited the ripening of those human powers which He had taken on Himself, and also the fulness of the time appointed by the Father. I think we can see several wise lessons presented to us for our beginnings, in that beginning, in those earliest recorded words of his.

First, then, in our beginnings for this year, and in all our beginnings whatever, let us take heed that they be of that which is our Father's business. And this is a very wide term, bearing a thousand different meanings for different persons, and sometimes even for the same person. It is a term very much misunderstood, and especially misunderstood by persons who talk about and profess religion. Such persons often speak as if the business which God had set every man were to save his own soul, and nothing else; and so, while they enjoin in a man self-denial, they are, after all, teaching him the purest and most refined selfishness. No, my brethren: God did not send each of you into the world merely to save your own souls when you leave the world, but to glorify Him by your lives while you are in the world. And these words again take many meanings for many men. Our lives are very different. Some work with their heads, some with their hands; some not at all, but must serve God by patient endurance,—in weakness,—in darkness,—in decay of vital power. And it is somewhat curious to trace how men, in assigning their religious duties, will generally manage to leave out of the account just that very range of circumstances in which those duties really lie. Thy Father's business is to be done not only—not principally—on the Sunday, and with thy Bible open before thee: not only, nor principally, when thou speakest in a serious tone, and in long, unaccustomed words: not only, nor principally, when thou removest thy thoughts from this world to another: to think so, is to yield to the devil's temptation, who is contented if he can only get men to leave their common lives out of their religion, and so to serve him in reality, while their service of God withers up into mere confessions of faith, and forms of worship, and observance of days. No: thy Father's business is behind that counter, where thou standest from week's end to week's end: it is when thou measurest and when thou weighest, when thou describest thy goods, when thou givest thy greetings of the day, when thou talkest of the news of the day. And again, mistake not. No need of long words and solemn looks in order to do thy Father's business. Leave solemn

times to Him, and take thou care of ordinary ones. There is not one of thy customers, whom He will not, in his own time, bring into the wilderness, and there plead with him face to face. He can do this better than thou canst. Besides, solemn looks and solemn words are not to be dragged gratuitously into every-day matters. If we take them in vain, we shall soon find that we use them in vain. A bell always tolling either is unheeded, or is a nuisance. Be courteous ever, be cheerful: or if thy spirits be not good, at least be natural. Even the sad look of a sorrowful man, is better than the made-up gravity of a sanctimonious man. Thy Father's business this year will also lie at that family board where thou presidest or where thou sittest as one of the household. If thou survivest the year, at least 700 of its hours will be spent at meal-times. What an opportunity for those that rule, what an opportunity for those that obey, in the family! In order to make an impression, time is wanted. Will there be any length of opportunity during the year equal to this, for impressing our social characters on one another? Great and striking occasions of example or of admonition may be compared to the storms which sweep the earth and the sky,—the revolutions which change the face of nature; and it is not to these that she owes the opening leaf, and the swelling bud, and the warbling of her birds, and the wealth of her fields,—but to the gradual dews and to the gentle showers, to the daily punctual sun, and the repose of her nightly darkness. Even so will it be with the example and the words which will really do good, which will really advance our Father's business. Not premeditated, not studied in the utterance: not known as examples, nor recognised as admonitions when occurring, but gently sinking into the mind, and lodging in the memory. The parent's thoughtful, cheerful kindness, showing the thorough knowledge, and at the same time the loving pretermission of the child's infirmity; the happy tact which can divert rising temper, or taking it at its tide, carry it forward into zeal for good; the open, unreserved heart, knowing no secret jealousies, even where disagreeing, all seen through, and all understood; the uniform kindly respect for things sacred, coupled with just enough of sportive familiarity to render them not disliked, but loved by those about thee; the wise and humble holding of the balance between reckless doubt and boastful certainty, which may keep the objects of faith where they ought to be with us, who are to prove all things and hold fast that which is good; in these things, and in such as these, lies our Father's business this year, for us, who have to preside in our families—parents, masters, mistresses, those to whom God has given the place and the power to influence from above. And for you, the rest, who hold subordinate places, there is at the family board your Father's business likewise. He went down to Nazareth and was subject unto them; He, with all that noble ambition swelling in his bosom; He, who had had that wonderful taste of his coming office on the very pavement and under the very arches which were another day to echo his heavenly tones; and for not one year, but eighteen:—all his boyhood, all his rising youth, all his early manhood. Such was his subjection. Shall yours be less? Will you, with all your ignorance, all your proneness to fall or to stray, refuse the humbler place, which He, the divine and sinless one, cheerfully accepted? Blessed as is the influence of a Christian father, mother, master, mistress, I half doubt whether it is more blessed than that of an obedient, wise, cheerful Christian subordinate in the family. And for this, as well as that other, to be at its best, there is no need for premeditation, none for studied utterance. Let the young spirits flow at their will, subject to no checks but those of modesty and family affection; where the heart of the household is kindly, the life blood in the members will be kindly likewise. And then, what blessings may result from the gentle returns of parental love—from glad concurrence; from unreserved loving discussion of points of difference; the crude freshness of the half-formed opinion of the young correcting the baneful tendency to frigid torpor which sets in upon the mind of age; the unchastened zeal of youth reminding the wiser that there is a better thing than wisdom: the ever-realizing objective belief of childhood infusing life and vigour into the more reasoning and less assured faith of riper years. In the Christian household, there is not a place nor a time which witnesses more unconscious progress made in their Father's business, than the family table and the daily meal: in the un-Christian household, or the mere nominally Christian table, there is no place or time where that work is more thwarted and hindered.

But we must be drawing to a close, with much left unsaid respecting the forms which our Father's business takes for different classes among us: in order that we may state a few lessons which seem to be given us in this utterance of our Blessed Lord, as to the ways in which our beginnings ought to be made. For whatever our hands findeth to do, there are certain ways of taking it in hand which are certain to lead to failure and disappointment, and certain others by which, though one may perhaps not succeed, we shall certainly gain what will eventually prove more than equivalent to the most signal success.

First then, begin whatever thou takest in hand earnestly, with all thy intention. Begin rather from the heart than from the head. Infinitely more mischief has been done, both to the Church and to individuals, from over-caution than from over-zeal. The great defects of Churches—of our own Church for example—have been owing to men hesitating to begin a decided course of action through timidity. Caution is a good balance-wheel, but a very bad mainspring. Had it not been for cautious and timid men, our Church would not have been so far behind her duties to our increasing and overwhelming population; all sorts of difficulties were thrown in the way of building churches and establishing districts, and the result is what we see and lament. And even so it is too often with individual men. There is some course of action which our Master has clearly pointed out; some business of our Father's which we know we are bound to undertake. Conscience speaks out plainly concerning it,

and the heart and affections echo the voice of the conscience. But then come in those miserable second thoughts, which commonly revolve round self, as our first and third thoughts do round God and duty: What will men think? What shall I lose by such a course? Is it prudent? Am I exactly the person to begin it? And so conviction gets put out of sight and locked away, and zeal cools down, and the conscience protests in vain, and the world and the devil gain the day. Remember ever as a general rule, my brethren, that the heart is a safer guide than the head, love than calculation, penitence than pride, Christ's word than our own logic.

Again: whatever we begin, this year or at any time, let us begin honestly, in the face of realities, and with a single purpose. No artificial motives, no reserved purposes, no self-deceiving subterfuges, will stand wear in life. Like mere paper constitutions for countries, they will not work—they will fail the moment there is a strain upon them. Our Father's business, like the world's business, requires men of business to carry it on; not the visionary, not the speculator, is the man who succeeds in the market, or builds up solid prosperity; and so it is here likewise: the books must be punctually kept, and stock regularly taken, and an account must ever be ready to be rendered of every venture. And so begin with thy Father's business likewise: let thy belief be not mere words, but things and persons; prate not about doctrines of which thy life knows nothing; press not upon others as certainties things of which thou hast secret misgivings; but begin, and go on, honestly—with no more ardour apparent than there is inward fire to sustain; with no disingenuous suppression of that which burneth for utterance within thee.

Again, though from the heart, though with ardour, begin advisedly and discreetly. And here is no contradiction to what was before said. True zeal is not the wild crackling of thorns, but the steady flame of the wisely fed lamp. The mischief is, that because there is a zeal which is not according to knowledge, those whom the world knows as safe men are allowed to assume that there is no such thing as zeal with knowledge. Be both, in our beginnings, united, going hand in hand.

And it is also necessary to say, and to explain it when said, Begin all beginnings with prayer: to say it, because we are ever apt to forget whence our true strength comes:—to explain it when said, because there is hardly any injunction more liable to be misinterpreted. Formal prayer, the prayer of words on bended knees, is a necessary part of the Christian life, an ever recurring and never to be intermitted duty. But there are many beginnings of our actions and courses of action to which such kind of prayer would be unsuitable; nay, which it would tend to crush and annihilate in the very bud. And so the common course is, to preach and enjoin loudly the duty of beginning all things with prayer, and then conveniently to cast aside nine-tenths of the occurrences of real life as being unsuitable to be made subjects of prayer, and so the devil gets his way again. Let us try to be wiser—let us look at things as we find them, and at God as He has revealed Himself to us. What is He to us? Our reconciled Father, in whose presence we live and move as members of Christ. Though there must be set prayers at set times, yet the true prayer without ceasing is the consciousness of his blessed presence and the deference ever made to his holy will; and the true beginning everything with prayer is the undertaking of nothing as separate from Him, but of everything as members of his family, and heirs of his inheritance through Christ. Thus, my brethren, may we be found, this year and ever, about our Father's business; thus may we, each in his place, however humble, glorify Him on earth, and finish the work which He hath given us to do.

THE BOY MARTYR OF ROME.

A Roman lady sat, with her distaff in her hand, near the opening of the street leading to her noble and stately home. She was alone. Behind her was the hall, upon the walls of which were inscribed on entablatures of marble the stories of Roman days gone by. There was the tale in deep mosaic work of Romulus and Remus, of Horatius Cocles, and that young Mucius who, in the presence of Porsenna, thrust his hand into the burning coal; and there was the great Camillus striking the balance with his iron sword against the power of Brennus and the Gauls. Such were the pictures exposed to the clear atmosphere of Italy. In the midst of the marble hall which rose around the lady of whom we have spoken, one of those delicious fountains of water for which the Roman houses were famed, sprang with gladness towards the open sky above it, and fell with cool delicious sweetness upon the basin which encircled it. But amidst all these luxuries, the lady remained upon her couch near the doorway, continuing her work upon the distaff. Not that she was indifferent to the beauty of the atrium behind her, or to the refreshing sound of the splashing water upon a burning day. But her eyes were steadily fixed upon her work, and her attention was evidently attracted to something in the street. She waited,—the footstep drew near, it was that of a Roman boy. The youth reached the ostia of the atrium; he was a fine and manly boy, aged sixteen, although in our country he would have been reckoned younger. He stood before his mother; his olive-coloured legs were bare, his long dark Italian hair fell over his shoulders, his face was swarthy with the colour of a southern clime, and his figure clothed with the dress of a Roman lad. He had a satchel round his breast and shoulder, upon which hung the books with which he had left his school.

Well did that lady know the footstep of the school-

boy: she had been waiting long and anxiously for his return.

"Pancratius, where have you been? you are late from school; but more than that, you look sad and disheartened."

The boy stood before his mother, and dropped upon his knee. The next moment he flung himself upon her breast. And, as the tears trickled down upon her bosom, she said,—

"Oh! my child, have you dishonoured the name of Jesus? Have you given up, for any temptation, the profession of your religion?"

"My mother! oh, my mother! No; it was on account of that profession that I shed the tears which some boys in this city would not shed, and it is for that only that I am weeping upon your breast."

But still he hung upon his mother's shoulder.

"Tell me, Pancratius, tell me; there is something the matter: what is it? Have you given up your faith?"

"Oh! my mother, no. Hear the story. They have long suspected me at school of being a Christian: but by your direction, and by the advice of other Christians, I have never confessed my faith, though I have longed to do it. At the school there is a youth named Fulvius, older than I am by two years. He has always been my rival in school-work (but that does not matter), and, more than that, he hates me for my influence over the other boys, and, above all, because he secretly believes that I am a Christian. Yesterday he showed his hatred for me, his suspicion of me. I was prepared. To-day we were all in the yard, leaving the school, satchel on back, slate on shoulder. Fulvius met me in the yard. He came up to me as if in friendship. A little fellow, Caius, was holding my hand; he had loved me since he entered the school. Fulvius looked at the boy, and struck him on the breast. I raised my arm to protect the child, and Fulvius struck me in the face. All the boys drew near. They had not left the yard. There was an impression among them that a fight was going to begin. Very few stood by me, and the child was threatened by Fulvius and his party. 'You are a Christian—a vile, abject Christian,' cried the youth, coming forward towards me; and he struck me again. My mother, I doubled my fist, and I directed it at the face of the heathen youth; but, as I did so, I remembered Him who stood blindfolded before his accusers, stricken on the face, but answering not again. I withdrew my hand, and they called me a coward. But, oh! my mother, I am not a coward. I will bear everything for the name and for the sake of Jesus, but I am not a coward. Do you believe me?"

"I do, my beloved child, I do. I never can—I never will believe Pancratius to be a coward. No! my noble boy. Your father died a martyr for the cause of Christ, and I well believe that you will do so rather than yield the faith to which you have pledged yourself, or sully the glorious banner under which you have begun to march."

The boy remained silent upon his mother's bosom. Very beautiful was that boy's figure as he rested there.

"They called me coward; but I am not a coward," were the words which still echoed in whispers round the chamber.

It was night, a lovely Roman night, such as Italy and Sicily only know,—soft, warm, gently illumined by the tender lustre of the moon. "Go to rest, my boy," said Lucina, "you are weary and vexed with some matter of which you have not told me. But I am satisfied. Go and rest."

The boy rose, and went to his chamber. He knelt in prayer to God, and confessed the sins of the bygone day. The noble boy then lay down on his couch, and as he did so murmured to himself, "I am not a coward." He slept—lulled by the sound of the delicious plash of the fountain, and under the exquisitely soft lustre of the Roman moon.

The lady did not sleep so calmly. "Why did he so anxiously ask that question to-day? Could it be that he had in any way given up his Christian profession?" These were the thoughts that occupied her mind.

So they two slept—slept under the guardianship of the King of martyrs and the Lover of immortal souls.

Morning came. Lucina had not yet risen from her sleepless couch. The boy was gone—gone back to school—gone to bear greater suffering than the blow of Fulvius—more trouble than the shout of those who once were his earnest friends, but now his bitter foes. He returned, to go on with his daily work in school under the chill shadow of indifferentism and lack of notice from all around him. The suppressed laugh, the glance of the eye, scarce lifted over the page or slate, at the youth, as he took his place and pursued his work, were the trials of the young Christian that day.

But while Pancratius patiently suffered at school, the lady thought anxiously at home, "Why did my child weep last evening upon my breast? I scarce ever knew him shed a tear; so brave! so patient! Oh, my Lord and my God! has that child given up his faith in Thee? Has he cast a shadow upon his confession by wilful sin?"

As Pancratius left school that afternoon the cry of "There goes the coward!" added to his sadness. When he came to his mother, the same words were on his lips, though not uttered now, "My mother, I am not a coward." His calm face rather perplexed than settled the lady's mind.

On that evening, as the youth was standing near her, his dark Italian hair shading his intelligent brow, a distant sound was heard in the street. The lady did not move; in fact, scarcely seemed to notice it. Pancratius started; his slate fell to his side, his finger was on his lip. Lucina did not remark the movement of her boy, for she still worked on.

"My mother! did you hear that?"

"I heard a sound," said the lady, gently; "but were the evening not so still, the sky so cloudless, I should have thought it was thunder."

Pancratius leant close to her ear, and whispered the words—the old words, "My mother, I am no coward."

The very sound of this sentence had become like rhythm in his mother's ear. She smiled, but did not answer: when again the sound arose in the distance, but evidently nearer.

"Did you hear that then, my mother?"

The lady looked up this time. "It is singular, Pancratius," said she. "It is not thunder, certainly, and it does come nearer,—it may be wind."

"It is not wind, my mother; hark, listen, it comes nearer still!"

And it did.

There was the sound of a multitude approaching; there was the grating of heavy wheels upon the gravel; there was the shout of men who strove to gain the mastery—and the multitude came on.

The foremost object of this procession came in view—a cart, whose sides were covered by planks and boards piled up; another, and another. It was evident that the excitement amongst the people was great.

"What is it, Pancratius?"

The boy's eyes were fixed upon the back of the foremost cart or waggon. He pointed, but he did not speak. Underneath the lowest plank could be seen, extended, working and moving with energy, if not with fury, the furred claws of a beast of prey. The boy did not move: when again the thunder-sound rose on high. A little boy, clinging to his mother's arm, crying in terror, asked what it meant.

"Hist, Caius, hist! 'Tis the great Numidian lions who have come to kill the Christians;" and the little child trembled.

"Mother, I am not a Christian, am I?" said he.

"No, no, Caius! Hark! the lions roar again!"

And through the streets, and out to the distant hills, and up Aventine, and towards the calm, quiet, bright sky of Italy, rose the sound of the deep eternal roar of the now hungry beast of prey.

"And why—why have they been brought?" said a woman passing near at that moment.

A young man walking by her side answered, in a tone audible enough for the lady to hear, "Did you not know that one hundred and thirty Christians, now working in the mines, are by the order of the Emperor to be devoured by lions three days hence in the Flavian amphitheatre before the people of Rome? They are to be torn to pieces; and well do they deserve it, and far worse tortures still, if they could be invented, for they have insulted the gods, and strove to bring down a curse upon our glorious city. But, thanks to the gods, they will be torn by the lions, and suffer the torments they deserve. Those are the lions just brought from Numidia, and they are to be kept foodless and hungry until the day of the slaughter. Hark how grand and deep that roar is, as the waggons depart in the distance!"

And the man had told his tale—told it into the ear of the woman to whom he spoke—told it to the Roman lady, who listened to every word he said—told it (though unneeded) to the boy, who stood by his mother's side, with his eyes eagerly looking after the departing multitude. At length he looked up, and fixing his dark eye upon his mother's face, while he held closely her arm in his hand, he said again—

"My mother, oh, I am not a coward!"

The lady, when she lay down to rest that night, had many thoughts. She knew well what her child meant. "No coward." No; that she knew. But she anticipated more. She prayed—deeply, earnestly, patiently. "Lord and God, Jesus the King of martyrs!—my child—my only child is Thine, and only Thine." Silent were the next few minutes, and deep the "Amen" with which she then concluded her prayer. She lay down, but she slept not.

In another chamber, within sound of the plash of the fountain in the atrium, lay another occupant of that Roman home. His arm was lying thrown over his forehead, his dark hair outspread over his pillow, the sweet yellow light of the southern moon shining on his Italian face, his dark lashes fringing his sleeping eye. Pancratius had sunk into sleep, the thought of the lions and the martyrs in his mind, and the name of Jesus lingering on his now quiet lip.

It was night when the boy arose. The lady still slept. Pancratius went into the street. It was bright moonlight.

His white dress girt with its belt, his head uncovered, his sandalled feet upon the pavement of the great city, he was seen and noticed by no one. He went alone.

Sebastian the Prefect lived by himself. He was young; twenty-two years only had passed over his head; but he was brave, gallant, and devoted to his great work. It was to his house that Pancratius directed his steps. He knocked at the closed door.

"My master sleeps," was the answer.

"I must speak to him. Tell him that Pancratius would speak with him."

The old man grumbled, but he went, and he returned. The boy entered the room of Sebastian the Prefect; a lamp stood upon the table and shed its light upon his open countenance, and on the paper on which he was writing. He looked up at the opening of the door.

"Pancratius!" said he; "what now?"

The boy stood a moment before the Prefect.

"Sebastian," said he, "I want an order to go down to the mines where the Christians are at work."

"You!" said Sebastian. "No, Pancratius, not so hastily; you cannot have the order now."

"Sebastian," said the boy, "I must. You know what I mean. Nay, nay, do not refuse me."

"But consider; it is death to go there. You will be numbered amongst the condemned."

"Oh, Sebastian," said the youth, falling upon his knee, "let me go; they are thirsty, and friendless, and weary. Did not He say, 'I was thirsty and ye gave me drink?' And why may not I go and gain that precious promise?"

The young man looked with astonishment at the glowing face of the boy—his eye so full of the fire of enthusiasm, his whole breast heaving with eager longing.

"Wonderful!" said Sebastian to himself, "what has not the grace of God done for you!"

The Prefect drew out his waxen tablets, and wrote

the order. Pancratius pressed his hand to his grateful lips. He stood one moment, with his eyes fixed upon his friend. "One pang," cried he, "one crushing weight of the cross, and then—life and joy for evermore." He threw himself on the bosom of Sebastian, and was gone.

The moon was still shining in clear silver beauty over the buildings and streets of Rome. Pancratius went swiftly on. The pits to which he was directing his steps were a little way outside the city. He reached the gate. The pass of Sebastian was enough, and he found no difficulty. He came to the mouth of the dark and dreary scene of suffering and captivity. Two soldiers guarded the entrance.

"What is your will?" asked they.

"I would go down into the mine, where the Christians are."

He held closely to him the little basket in which he had provided fruit and food for the martyrs. The men laughed.

"A precious berth of it you would find down there, young man; and fool, indeed, you must be to wish to go. But you cannot—no one is allowed to enter the pit."

"I hold a pass from Sebastian the Prefect," said he; "that will be sufficient." And he showed the order.

The two guards looked at it in amazement, and then in equal amazement on Pancratius.

"Young man," said they, "you do not know what you are going down to in those mines. Be wise, and go home."

"Here is the order of the Prefect," said the youth. "I must go."

The two soldiers again looked at the boy. They saw by the fringe on his dress that he was of more than ordinary birth.

"You will go?" said they.

"Yes," was the answer.

"Then here is the way," and they opened the trap-door which led down into the dungeon (for we can call it nothing else), and Pancratius was ready. A rope-ladder was all the means he had for descent. Below was utter darkness, while above was the sweet light of the moon. But Pancratius was determined. He placed his feet firmly upon the first step of the ladder, and he began to descend. He soon found that he had reached the end of the ladder. Below was an awful depth and darkness—but his mind was made up. He dropped from the last step, and he fell into the deep mud of the pit. As soon as he had recovered himself, he looked round—if look he could. He heard sounds in the distance, like the noise of an axe upon the rock; and presently he saw the slight, faint glimmering of a lamp, though far away. The sound of the axe was enough for the youth. He approached the spot. No words can describe the horrible condition of this filthy abode. It seemed as if all the ingenuity of Satan had been exercised to shake the constancy of the elect, and to torture those whose souls were anticipating the glory of the saints in light. Satan and their bitter heathen foes knew full well how firmly their feet were planted on the Rock of Ages. The sounds and scene around him had no effect upon the young Roman, except to make him lift up his heart in earnest prayer to God—praying that he might so live as to be a worthy companion of these His suffering people. The blows of the axe directed him towards a spot where the figure of an old man could be seen applying his strokes to the side of the cavern. The eyes of the youth had at length become accustomed to the dim light. The labourer was bowed down, not only by age, but by heavy chains which clanked upon his limbs. He paused as if exhausted. Pancratius heard him say in a low voice—

"'Take up thy cross and follow me.' Yes, my Lord, here I am; I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest."

"Can I help you with that axe," said the youth, "and share in your toil, for which my young limbs are more suited than yours?"

"Young man," said the aged pilgrim, "you are kind, very kind; but you know not what you say. I am a Nazarene, a follower of Jesus of Nazareth. It would be torture and death to you were you found aiding or sharing my labour."

"Good father," said the boy, as he fell on his knees before the aged prisoner, in whom he now recognised the old chief minister of the Roman Church—Quintus his name—"Good father, I too am a Christian. Bless me, and own me as belonging to the little flock. I am Pancratius, the child of the Lady Lucina, and of him who fell beneath the axe for the name of Jesus—Caius the martyr. It is long since I was baptised, although my mother has ever bid me not press forward the fact of my profession, but rather leave it to the moment when my Lord should see fit to require my confession."

"His almighty grace be praised!" cried the old man, striving to join and lift up his chained hands in prayer and praise. "And you then also, child of a noble father, are numbered amongst the followers of the Lamb. May He strengthen and bless you."

Pancratius rose. He took from his basket some bunches of grapes, and placing them against the parched lips of the old man, gave him that refreshment which he so much needed.

"God bless you!" said he. "They are refreshing indeed."

Pancratius seized the axe and went on with the old man's work.

"Stay, stay!" cried he; "let me go on. It matters not what befalls this worn-out frame, which He made, and which shall be given to his work and glory; but your young limbs may yet serve Him in his vineyard, for you may still be the means of bringing in more sheep to his fold. And, hark! he comes—the overlooker of the Christians in these pits. I hear the lash, and the flash of the torches is lighting up the dim distance. Oh! go, go, happy boy; return to your mother, and leave me to bear what my Lord will lay upon me. They come quickly nearer: go and leave me."

"Never!" said Pancratius—"never! Here I will stay by you, come what will."

"But," said the old man, "you said but now what was right and true, that till you were called, in these days of struggle and sorrow in the Church, you should wait your appointed work."

"I will not leave you," said the other, resolutely.

And scarcely had he said it when the sound of voices broke close upon their ears, and the glare of the torches burst suddenly upon them from behind the next point of the rocky wall.

"And who is this?" shouted the infuriated voice of the leader of the band. "Who is this, who dares to take the axe from the vile Nazarene? Bring him to me."

Pancratius was seized and brought before the captain.

"A Roman boy!" shouted the captain on seeing him; "and by his dress and appearance noble also. Who and what are you?—who dared to admit you here?"

The men had now eagerly gathered round the youth, while the aged Christian leant his head upon the rock and prayed.

"I am a Roman," said Pancratius, standing forward; "my name Pancratius; my father was Caius the soldier and the martyr, and—*I am a Christian.*"

If a thunderbolt had fallen at his feet, the jailer could not have started back with more profound astonishment.

"Insolent boy! and you dare to proclaim that fact openly and defiantly to me! Still your position compels consideration. How came you here? By what authority or power?"

"By that of the Prefect, Sebastian," said he, producing his pass.

The captain examined it in extreme surprise. "Young man," said he, "be advised. I would not harm you. I remember the father you speak of well, and bravely did he fight in the wars of the Emperor. Give up this accursed sect: I can promise you the pardon of the Emperor, and advancement in his army. Your young limbs were never moulded to be torn in pieces by the Numidian lion, nor devoted to the cause of the accursed Nazarene. Be persuaded, and yield."

"Never," said Pancratius; "never, if He will give me grace to suffer and to die." And the eye and countenance of the boy glowed with youthful fire and determination. There was a deep stillness throughout the cave, save where the sounds of the instruments of toil broke it. The face and eyes of the captain worked with fury.

"The lash! prepare the lash!" cried he, "and bare the shoulders of yon presumptuous youth."

Pancratius was calm: he lifted his eyes, and his lips moved in prayer. The old man's eyes were on him. The men unfastened the collar of his dress, and his youthful shoulders lay bare and uncovered before the uplifted lash.

"Yield!" cried the angry captain. "Yield to reason, or the lash will immediately descend."

The boy did not move, and the whip fell upon his shoulder. The result was the rising of a blue mark upon his back. Pancratius turned pale: he shuddered. It was the effect of exquisite pain.

There was another cry of "Yield!"

"Never!" said the youth; "never! Eternity is too long,—the mansions prepared are too happy"

And again the lash descended. The bruise burst open under the second application of the lash. The blood streamed down, and fell upon his white dress. At the second blow he was calm, unmoved, and quiet. Again and again the lash descended upon the youth, until the dress of the noble Roman was saturated with blood. But he uttered no cry or word. His mind was on the sufferings of Jesus; his stay was the Cross.

"Enough!" said the captain of the guard. "Send him up to the entrance. He must go to the Emperor. He is nobly born, and he must be judged by the highest of all judges."

They replaced his dress upon the bleeding shoulders of Pancratius. There was a sign of pain caused by the pressure of the dress upon his wounded body. As he turned to go under the guidance of the soldiers, he again bent his knee before the aged Christian.

"May He bless you, my child," said he; and almost before the words had died away, the young Roman was carried off.

They reached the opening to the cavern, by the help of the ladder of ropes. When they reached it, the moon was still shining, but the morning had broken over the east so brightly, that her radiance had become quite faint. The boy and his captors stood outside the opening of the pit. He was now pale with loss of blood, and exhausted with pain. A youth was standing near. It was Fulvius.

"Are you here?" said his enemy.

"Yes," said Pancratius. "Fulvius, place your hand in mine."

"Never," was the answer.

The boy still held out his own chained ones, and said, "I go to my death, to my glorious, happy death; and there, by the grace of God, I will show that I am no coward, Fulvius. But let us not part as enemies: freely I forgive you all the ill you have done to me, and, oh! forgive me wherein I have ever injured you. Unbind these hands but for a moment, that I may bid farewell to this youth," said Pancratius, turning to the soldier.

"Unbind him not," cried the other, growing pale; "he only wishes to strike me; I know him of old."

The soldier laughed, and the young martyr was led away.

Fulvius watched him, scowling. "Go, thou fool! no longer shalt thou have power to taunt me. Not even thy high birth shall save thee. I knew thee long ago, and discovered that thou wert a detested Christian." And the youth laughed aloud, and followed at some distance the receding party.

Marks of blood, which fell from the still bleeding figure of Pancratius, spotted the way. With his hands bound before him, and urged on by the brutal taunts and insults of his companions, he kept his thoughts fixed upon his suffering Lord—his patience, his meekness, and the acts of his Passion; while his eyes were fastened on the still rising dawn of the glorious Roman morning—type to the martyr of the

gradual rising of that morning which has no night. Happy boy! The world with all its objects was fast breaking up and passing away from him—mother, home, earthly rank and titles, all receding, like the shadows of night from the buildings of the imperial city, and the boundless, unfathomed calm of heaven alone lying before him. Pain and sorrow, the lion, the amphitheatre, all were as nothing. "Oh death, where is thy sting? oh grave, where is thy victory?"

They led him before the Emperor.

He was already awake. He was angry and vexed; nay, more than that, indignant that the accursed sect should disturb his rest, and cause him anxiety even on his midnight throne. More than a hundred were to be thrown to the lions in two days, and that day would be a high day and a holiday at Rome. But the Emperor was disturbed about the new sect, lest they might unsettle the peace of his empire. It was when his mind was in this state that Pancratius was brought before him.

He sat uneasy and restless on his couch. His large unwieldy form, his bloated face, told at once his history. With an anxious mind he met the disturbers of his short and hurried sleep. But he was ready; Pancratius stood before him. The statement was simple, the charge clear. The bound boy was a Christian. By his dress he was nobly born; by his appearance he evidently was possessed of all the intelligence which a Roman youth should possess. The brief introduction told the Emperor that another Christian was now added to the hated, if not dreaded sect. But the Emperor was arrested by the appearance and condition of the youth. After his first violence he strove to retain him as a member of his own bodyguard.

"The son of a noble Roman," said he, "having yourself the appearance of a young noble, why give yourself up to the accursed sect? why throw yourself to the lions? You shall be taken into the most honourable corps in Rome, and near my own person. Child of a noble Roman, give up your folly, and receive the offer of the Emperor."

"Never," said Pancratius, "never, sire. As emperor I honour you, as my father did. But never can I accept your offer. Never can I renounce my profession."

The youth stood boldly forward. His manner showed the bearing of one worthy of his country and race. The scene was terrible, but short. The Emperor was enraged beyond control, and Pancratius was consigned to the pit in which the Christians were confined. He did not see his mother nor his home. He was going to One who was more than brother, or sister, or mother, and to a home "not built with hands, eternal in the heavens."

And the lady sat alone. No distaff was worked by her hands. The fountain murmured close to her. The brilliant entablatures shone on the walls. But she sat alone. It was not that she waited for her child. She had heard, she knew where he was. Her face was pale, her hands were folded, but in prayer; not only prayer—in gratitude and thanksgiving. She knew that she was alone, yet not alone, for God was with her—He who had taken to Himself by the most glorious of all pathways her husband, and was now about to conduct over the same pathway her own, her one beloved child. His chamber was silent, his couch was desolate, his voice sounded no more in his home, or round the fountain's side. But she was calm—at rest. No more would she hear that dear voice, no more see the well-formed figure of the Roman boy whom she called her child, her only child, coming down the street, or crossing her threshold. Yet there was a world, a home, where they would meet, and where the mother would see the martyr's crown and palm-branch borne by her one and only child before the throne of Jesus the King of saints, and God the Lord of All.

It was a glorious Roman morning; the sun had risen with all its lustre and power; and Rome was early awake and active. It was a great and special Roman holiday; the streets which led to the Flavian amphitheatre were thronged with advancing multitudes; more than a hundred Christians were to be devoured by the lions on that day.

A woman in the midst of the vast crowd was fainting under the pressure of the great multitude. She held by her hand her little boy. But even their Italian blood could not endure the terrible heat and pressure; the child cried out with pain; a tall soldier raised him on his shoulder.

"We have come to see the Christians die," said she; "but the child cannot get through the crowd."

"Oh, mother, it is hot, so dreadful!" cried the child.

But he was nevertheless carried on, and they reached the gates of the theatre. It was crowded, but with some difficulty they gained a place.

The interior was laid out with sand, clean and pure. The enormous multitude rose tier on tier in sight of the new-comers; there was but one place vacant—that left for the Emperor and his company.

"Oh, mother, look! see what is coming! music, music, mother!"

And there was music.

"What is it?" said the child.

"It is the Emperor coming," said the soldier; "he is close by."

And the Emperor came with his long train of horses, which to the eye of the child appeared beautiful.

He took his place on the throne of the amphitheatre. Loud was the cry as he entered the circus; but the multitude who had gathered there were eager for the coming spectacle—the death of the Christians.

There was a roar, as of lions or wild beasts. The child trembled. "What is that?" cried he.

"It is the lions, it is the lions," was the answer. "The lions who are to kill the Christians."

"Oh! mother, mother—it is the lions! I will never be a Christian; never, never!" and the child hid his face on his mother's shoulder. They had reached the highest step of the stair.

Again the multitude in the street opened, again a wide space was made. "Mother, mother, what is this? Oh, listen!" Through the vast, unnumbered multitude, through the long ways of Rome, through

the lane now opened by the vast multitude, came the Christians. "Oh! hark, mother—hark, it is music." It was a sweet song, which rose upon the soft Italian air. Higher and higher, softer and softer it rose; so sweet and pure that even the amphitheatre was more quiet, and scarcely one of the multitude drew breath. The long line came on. In front was an old man, who leant upon the arm of a little girl. She may have been twelve years old. He had numbered more than threescore years and ten, if you might judge by his long grey hair, and his wrinkled face. Behind these two came the long train; two by two, "young men and maidens, old men and children." "But see, see!—they have flowers on their heads," said the little child. And they had. As they came they sang hymns so beautiful that the deep silent air of the street gave clear tone to their voice, and the very amphitheatre echoed the accents. "Hark, oh mother! hark, what music! Is it the Christians?" But before the answer was given, the procession had passed on to the sand.

The iron bars of the cages were lifted up. The wild beasts were hungry, and they waited for their food. The fresh golden gravel of the amphitheatre was disturbed by the tread of men, women, and children.

"How many are there?" said the woman.

"One hundred and thirty," answered the soldier.

"But I counted more—one hundred and thirty-one," said she.

"There were one hundred and thirty in the pits for to-day's holiday,—that I know, for I was on guard many an hour. You are wrong."

"Nay, I am not," said she; "there is one more."

But the Christians were already on the sand. The lions had fastened their claws in hunger round the bars of their cages, while round the pole raised in the centre the band of Christians gathered.

Beautiful, most beautiful, did their hymn of praise and glory rise amid the deep silence. Every eye was lifted up towards the clear blue sky, which to them appeared as the pavement of the glorious home to which they were so soon going.

And then the lions roared with greater fury. And then the iron bars were lifted up. And then, on "young men and maidens, old men and children," burst the beasts of the Numidian desert. One tremendous roar, one sweet rising of the hymn of praise, one more breathless moment from the vast multitude, and then the cages were broken, and the birds were free.

But there were but one hundred and thirty there. For the last of that procession, he who made up the one hundred and thirty-one, was stopped at the gate. It was Pancratius.

He was stopped by a soldier sent directly from the Emperor.

"Not go in, and not be admitted to the arena where the martyr gains his crown, and wins his palm! Oh let me, let me go!"

But it was in vain. All entered, all went forward to win their reward of everlasting glory, except the boy, who was compelled to stay outside. Down his cheeks ran the tears of real sorrow.

"And may I not go with them?" cried he. "Oh let me, let me go!"

"The Emperor forbids it," was the answer.

And at that moment a message from the Emperor reached the youth. It was to the old effect. The Emperor would place so bold, so fine a youth, born of such parentage, next his own person; he should be a member of his body-guard; he should be, ere long, Prefect. It would be folly to die with the accursed Christians.

The youth stayed at the gate.

"Let me go," said he; "I have a place, if of his infinite mercy He will give it me, by the King of kings. I cannot, will not, linger here. Oh let me go!"

His words were carried to the Emperor, and the doom of Pancratius was pronounced.

"Carry the boy to death, and instantly."

Pancratius stood as yet at the gate, anxious, eager, but doubting. Crowds were round him, crowds were close to him, many eyes were fixed upon him, and if not all, it was because so many eyes were fastened upon the calm and motionless bodies of the martyrs. Pancratius stood calmly, but now full of hope. The last chance of earth had been offered, the great certainty of eternity had been gained.

As he stood at the gate a voice, full of scorn and bitterness, said in his ear—

"You fool, you coward, you more than brute, now at least you will die, and I shall be here to see you die. May every curse be on you!"

"Fulvius!" said the boy; "and even now! But oh, Fulvius, I am no coward!"

His antagonist had slunk away, and Pancratius still stood alone.

But again there was some one near the martyr boy. A hand was laid gently on his shoulder. Pancratius started. There was a look of distress in his face, as if he was vexed at interruption, and longed for his martyr's crown. But as he turned, his eye fell upon Sebastian. The look of the Prefect, full of love as it was,—full, oh! how full, of unuttered affection—nevertheless reminded the boy of a former conversation with him, the point of which was that even martyrdom must be met calmly and humbly, not eagerly. The boy's eye fell upon the sand of the amphitheatre, humbled by the look of Sebastian.

Again he turned, for another hand touched his shoulder. It was his mother.

"My child, my boy! my own, my noble boy! I only came to see you go to heaven. Go quickly on to yonder home of blessed martyrdom. I will pray—will try to follow you; and I will be standing here at this gate at the moment when you go. Go! yes, and be joined for ever and for ever with the glorious company who are safe—safe to all eternity. Go, my child, they wait for you. Look at me at the last moment on earth! and may the King of martyrs receive you presently."

There was no more time. The boy was summoned, and the lash had been already applied to his shoulder—and he went. He stood alone. The eyes of thirty-five thousand people gazed upon him, the eyes of the now infuriated Emperor—all eyes were

upon him! Around him lay the now empty cages of those immortal beings who, like the freed eagle, had already ascended to, and gazed at, the sun—the "Sun of Righteousness." There Pancratius stood—his hands were joined, his eyes uplifted to the pavement of the Home above. One more cage was opened. A single tiger sprang on to the golden gravel of the arena of the Flavian amphitheatre—one tiger and one boy.

Every eye was fixed—every bosom breathless. The tiger wandered over the sand, and gradually approached the boy, but seemed not to see him. Pancratius sang, though alone, his song of praise. Now the beast of the jungle discovered him: it drew closer and closer to him, in narrowing, still more narrowing circles. Pancratius did not "look down, but up." He was calm and still. Another moment, and the tiger had sprung upon the bosom of the boy. One claw was fastened instantaneously into his shoulder; the other claw was under the other arm; the hind legs drawn upon the young martyr's body; the teeth were fastened in his neck.

There was one look over the body of the beast of prey, and that was fixed upon his mother. Her look met his. He fell upon the now bloody sand.

Yes! that cage was also empty, and that bird was free.

And above, far away beyond the clear bright blue of the Roman sky—far away beyond sun, and moon, and stars, a hymn, a glorious hymn, had been long singing, long raised to the glory of the Lamb. But to-day that hymn grew louder and louder, for "young men and maidens, old men and children," the aged minister of the early Roman Church, and Pancratius, her young martyr, had gone to swell the everlasting hymn of joy and gratitude, and to deepen by their presence the song of angels, who "rejoice" over every soul which is brought to the presence of Jesus, to reign with Him for ever and ever.

EDWARD MONRO.

THE CASTING OF JONAH INTO THE SEA.

IN all that is recorded of the Prophet Jonah, nothing appears to us so exalted as the combination of godly meekness and godly boldness with which he faces and accepts the tremendous punishment of his transgression. And it is questionable whether a crew of his own highly-favoured countrymen would have enacted a worthier part towards him than that which was adopted and carried out with so much propriety and dignity by the heathen sailors. Truly Jonah had even more good reason than Paul to use the language, "The barbarian people showed me no small kindness;" while they, on the other hand, as they were about to consign him to a doom which turned out to be a period of "three days and three nights in the whale's belly," might not unjustly say of the Prophet what the Centurion said of Jonah's Antitype when about to be committed for three days and three nights to the heart of the earth—"Surely this was a righteous man."

Altogether, there is in this scene, on all hands, an amount of deference and veneration rendered to justice,—to severe but pure and perfect righteousness,—that cannot fail to render it very impressive to every right-minded reader of the passage. There is a calm, judicial dignity exhibited by all the parties which speaks well for their character and bearing in a crisis so fitted to alarm and to unman them. And it forms a striking proof of the fact that it is righteousness alone that will bear men through the most fiery trials. Amiability, kindliness, capability of gentler and refined emotion, may grace and adorn the man; but it is righteousness, the love of truth and justice, which forms the foundation and the solid pillars of his character. In the hour of peace, and of gentle, undisturbed serenity, the amiable may be more acceptable than the sternly just. Nevertheless, while it is true that "scarcely for a righteous man would one die, peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die," yet in critical hours of destiny it is righteousness that towers aloft above the storm, and,—somewhat even like unto God himself,—is "mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea."

I.

The righteous procedure of the sailors in consulting with Jonah himself concerning the steps that were now rendered necessary, is the first thing that strikes us. Something must be done—and they put the matter to the Prophet. "Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous." The storm ceaseth not; the ship can hold out no longer; the cause of the storm has been revealed; for God hath disclosed it by the lot, and Jonah confessed it from his own conscience. And now that the cause is known, what shall be done for removing it? Evidently something must be done, if they are not all prepared to perish together. And they consult Jonah himself.

It says much for them that they do. He had been something more, and something worse, than a thorn in their side. And they might have been expected, as heathen men, to have had little scruple in taking brief-handed measures, and making short work with the troublesome stranger. For a perfect stranger he was to them. No ties of friendship, or acquaintance, or kin, or country could he plead; and the subject of a strange but strong God, bringing down his God's wrath on them—verily, they had little to thank him for! And why make any difficulty in getting rid of him?

God has imbued his creatures on earth with a natural and profound horror of shedding one another's blood. Nor is this confined to those who are in possession of the Scriptures, those holy writings

in which God said—at the very constitution of the world and of society, on re-arranging that constitution after it had been obliterated by the flood—"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." It is a feeling that has gone down all time with all the families of Noah, and that, whether the covenant with Noah,—whether the Scripture, or that special command in it,—has gone down to them or not. However much hardening through indulgence in sin may sear the conscience, and go far, apparently, to obliterate this horror at the guilt of murder, it is more proper to say that such searing and hardening rather overpowers than obliterates it. For it abideth still, and it affords one of a multitude of harmonies between the religion of the natural conscience of man and the religion of the revealed will of God. For,—whatever may be said by some who would seem to seek a character for good feeling higher than God himself,—as it is apart from and prior to the Bible, or any precept there, that man instinctively abhors the sin of murder; so, it was prior to any particular dispensation—any Mosaic economy, for instance, or Jewish theocracy,—and as applied to all lands and all times, that God, in starting the world anew in the ark-saved family of the patriarch, gave forth the unrepealed command, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Nor should it be forgotten, as sufficient for ever to silence the advocates for the abolition of capital punishment, that God has not only given an unrepealed command which He might have been pleased to rest on his own authority and will alone, but he has condescended to give the ground and reason of it; and so long as both the command remains unrepealed and the reason remains a fact, so long is the proposed abolition of capital punishment a daring insult against the Most High. God hath given us the reason why the shedding of man's blood must be avenged by the murderer's death—"for in the image of God made He man." And until this truth becomes untrue, that is, until man cease to be a free, intelligent, responsible being,—fallen, indeed, and in a vast multitude of cases, alas! unrenewed, yet still responsible, intelligent, and free,—capital punishment, both by God's commanding will and by God's assigned reason, is the murderer's doom. And nature and reason sanction the sentence.

It was nature and reason, working in this very direction, that induced these sailors to pause ere they rid themselves of the source of their danger by casting their fellow-man to the waves.

But there was something more than this, doubtless, at the bottom of their judicious and righteous deliberation. They might be irritated by the rebellious subject of a strange God bringing all the anger of his God upon them in this fashion; but, behold, how great this new and strange God is! Evidently he is a strong God. May he not be the true God?—the one living and true God? Let them therefore pause and weigh well their doings, while evidently the Prophet's God is near.

For have they ever found such a God among their own gods? Have they ever found a God who sitteth above the floods, and ruleth in the raging of the sea, and telleth by lot with whom he is displeased, and followeth up his displeasure with quick and quickening tempest? Is it not a new experience to them? That this great God is near unto them, his marvellous works are emphatically declaring. They feel this. They will stand in awe and sin not. They will do nothing rashly to provoke his anger against themselves. They will rather consult his Prophet.

For, disobedient though he may be, Jonah, they perceive, is His prophet, and His servant still. Revering his God, they respect *him*. They feel that it is a solemn thing to have to do with anything that this God marks as his own—marks as his own even by his displeasure. Hence they pause. "With the well-advised there is wisdom."

For these reasons, then, the mariners put the matter to Jonah himself. If something painful has to be done, they will at least consult with himself. If possible, they will secure his own concurrence. It may be they may receive his own directions.

This generous and handsome style of procedure, how fitted was it to touch a chord in the Prophet's heart, and to make him bitterly regret bringing danger and risk of death on men who could deal so nobly with him! Stimulated to rival the righteous and dignified procedure of those on whom he had brought such impending ruin, and who,—in the very crisis of it, when they have discovered the instrument of that ruin and now have him in their power,—so forbearingly and respectfully abstain from retaliation, revenge, hatred, or haste; under the humbling and rectifying influence on his own mind which this fair and honourable treatment exerts, Jonah feels more inclined than before to emulate their rectitude and do them justice, as they are so disposed to do justice to him.

II.

Jonah's magnanimous proposal in reply next engages our attention. "And he said unto them, Take me up and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you."

Could anything be more noble, upright, honourable? There is, first, a renewed acknowledgment—frank, free, and full—of his own obnoxiousness to the Divine anger, and of himself as the source and occasion of the present danger: "For I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you." There is, secondly, an unreserved surrender or appointment of himself to death, as the means of solving the appalling difficulty, and stilling the raging of the deep: "Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea." And there is, thirdly, what may be valued as coming from a prophet of that God "which made the sea and the dry land"—there is a prediction that the expedient will be efficacious: "So shall the sea be calm unto you."

In small compass, how complete is Jonah's reply! It meets the case; it meets all the case. Yet it has all the brevity of a sentence of judgment delivered from the bench.

And so, indeed, it is. Under God, and at the mouth of God, Jonah becomes judge in his own case;

and he judges even in his own case with all the relentless righteousness which the sternest judge in any case could exhibit. No half measure, no compromise, no delay, no alternative; the one clear, immediate, complete, irrevocable, final doom: "Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea."

Now, try and conceive of the height of true moral grandeur to which Jonah at this moment rises. He is clearly and consciously facing Eternity; and, oh! how very far is he from doing so in the revolting blasphemy of one who can take the infinitely awful movement as one would take a leap on chance and in the dark! No: he "fears God." He has been a regular, habitual fearer of God; and he truly fears God still. He has offended the Most High of late. He has fled from him. He has seen, for some time, little of the light of his countenance. He has tasted little that the Lord is gracious. Nay, rather, the Lord's wrath has waxed hot against him; his hand hath pressed him sore. At this very moment he hath terrible experience of the power wherewith his Almighty God can prosecute an offence against his honour, and bring the offender to punishment. "Deep calleth unto deep, and at the noise of God's waterspouts all his billows go over him," while he flees in disobedience "from the land of Jordan." And yet he will "remember the Lord from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar." And he will take no crooked way of dealing with God, or evading his hand and justice. The storm is to him the voice of God, more awful than in the garden and in the cool of the day, crying, "Jonah, where art thou?"—more terrible than the still small voice on Horeb after the strong wind, after the earthquake, after the fire, "What doest thou here, Elijah?"—"What doest thou here, Jonah?" Yet Jonah quails not: he denies not his own guilt. He denies not the Lord's righteousness.

When he entered the ship,—his conscience tumultuating with guilt, his heart throbbing with the hurry of his flight,—worn out with agitation and excitement, and going down like a hunted and harassed one to find rest in "the sides of the ship," how wide the contrast between the storm in his soul and the placid sea on which the happy bark, unconscious of its burden, set sail! Now the sea storms and is tempestuous: but the contrast is as great; for, as the result of repentance and returning duty, Jonah's soul is as placid, meek, and mild as a weaned child—as calmly strong in righteousness as a man rising above all impending evils.

Are you thus upright before the Lord? Are you truly penitent for all sin, for the sin that doth more easily beset you, for the sin which God may be pursuing with his displeasure? Do you own the justice of all his dealings with you? Do you indeed yield the victory to God, according to that oracle, "Yea, let God be true and every man a liar, as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged?" You can do so only through the intervention of the great atonement and your faith therein. Never can you face all righteousness till you flee to the cross of Jesus. There, He, by whom all things were made, both in heaven and in earth, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, suffered under the hand of divine justice, and satisfied divine justice. That cross is the only school where an immortal, responsible man can face all righteous questions, and solve them, and accept the true solution. Have you been there and settled all your own case with the Judge of the quick and of the dead; settled it on the terms that are so honourable to the character of God, and that must now and ultimately be so remedial to yours? Have you fled for refuge to the hope set before you in the Gospel? Have you the anchor of the soul within the veil, designed and fitted to enable you to ride out the storm? In one word, have you peace with God on the righteous footing of an imputed righteousness, and a perfect reconciliation by sacrifice? Then see that you evermore face what is righteous, and turn to no crooked way, no evasion, no subterfuge, no refuge of lies, no path of compromise or of deceit. Walk humbly, yet walk boldly and firmly, with God. Though He slay you, still trust in Him. Your chiefest trials are designed to teach you this. Your agony of conflict with infirmities is designed to teach you this. The apparent contradiction between providences very sore and promises most sweet is designed to teach you and train you to this. Though the fig-tree shall not blossom, though there be no fruit in the vine, though the labour of the olive fail; though your house be not so with God; though heart and flesh faint and fail; though God himself slay you with his sore displeasure; still it is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that his own Son died for sinners and rejoices to save them, that he that believeth in Him shall never die, nor from such an one shall the covenant of God's peace or the promise of God's presence and protection be removed, world without end. Therefore, in any circumstances, never fear but that the path of duty, though it seem to be the path of anguish, of agony, of darkness, or of death, is yet the way of life, light, and comfort; and however to flesh and blood it may be hard, hold to the motto which men of the world may have devised and may admire, but which men of God alone can rightly go through with, "Let justice be done, though the heavens rush to ruin."

"It is the Lord: let Him do with me as seemeth good in his sight." It is the Lord: the same who hath counted me faithful and put me into the office of his Prophet; the same to whom I have been unfaithful, from whom I have fled, from whom I have deserved so ill. "Righteous art thou, O Lord, yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments." Yea, let me ask from thee faith and courage and strength to bear them. It is the Lord: the Judge of all the earth, and "He will do that which is right." It is the Lord: and if his hand is strong to smite, 'tis also strong to save. Let Him do with me as seemeth good in his sight. Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. "Take me up and cast me forth into the sea."

III.

This emulation of generous and righteous and extremely handsome action between Jonah and the mariners goes forward yet another stage. The

mariners admirably meet the Prophet again. If he responded splendidly to their righteous and dignified deliberation in consulting with himself, or rather in leaving the matter in his own hands, they reciprocate no less beautifully to the meek and subdued spirit of the Prophet when he prescribes his own death as the only means of appeasing the sea.

Touched with kindliest feelings of humanity, and touched with admiration of the mingled solemnity and righteous boldness with which the Prophet can propose the sacrifice of his own life to their safety, the men evidently resolve that only in the last and direst extremity shall they act as he has indicated to them; and that extremity, they rule, has not yet come. Till then they will make every effort. "Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not, for the sea wrought and was tempestuous against them."

It was well that it was in their heart. The Lord denied them their desire, but it was well that it was in their heart. It showed their humanity, their solemn fear of shedding innocent blood, their profiting under that fear of God which Providence had been inspiring into their minds; it gave Jonah the opportunity of being still more satisfied that the proposal he had made was the only one that could meet the case; and it brought more clearly to light the solemn fact that God was indeed pursuing this matter to his own appointed issue, and would allow no effort, however well meant, to baffle his purpose. God had righteously destined the Prophet to be cast into the sea—yea, we may say, to suffer death for his offence in fleeing from his duty. For however God interposed at a later stage, and miraculously saved the Prophet's life, it was nevertheless so much an interposition of miraculous goodness and miraculous power, that the preservation of his life was more a resurrection than an escape. For this certainly is one clear inference we may draw from the analogy suggested by our Lord, "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Surely it was a resurrection-life that Jonah afterwards possessed as well as the Son of Man. Surely Jonah, like the Son of Man, was appointed unto death. With death then, we say, had God resolved to punish Jonah's sin. And the strength of the Divine purpose is more terribly brought to light when every effort to save Jonah's life comes to nought. "The men rowed hard to bring it to the land, but they could not."

No, they could not. For the counsel of the Lord, it shall stand; and He will do all his pleasure. And the Lord executeth righteous judgment.

Young man! bear this in mind. You may go certain lengths aside from the ways of wisdom, integrity, temperance, truth; and to some extent, and in a certain sense, your friends may interpose and bring you off. Hearts beating somewhat towards you like God's heart—"How shall I give thee up, O Ephraim!"—may be at your service, even in your evil plight. Prayers and intercessions, counsels and rebukes, and kindliest efforts of righteousness and love, may take your feet out of the net, and place you in a somewhat even path again, giving you a fresh start and a new chance for better things. But beware. Embrace it if it is so. Embrace it *now*, and improve it. Thank God for it, and improve it. Cast yourself on Him—his grace, his word, his Christ, his Spirit, his providence, his fatherly love and righteous will. "As for me, I will serve the Lord." "Depart from me ye evil doers, for I purpose to keep the commandments of God." And let this be vigorous; in lively fear before the Lord; in humble penitence and firm faith of that mercy which is in the heavens; and let it be daily, dutifully, faithfully, manfully followed up.

For, turning aside again, or going certain other lengths, may land you, ere you are aware, in a position from which no one will bring you off. However many more true friends you may have than you deserve, and with whatever zeal and love they lay all oars in the water in your service, it may utterly baffle them to bring you off. For there are laws physical, social, moral, from the effects and influence of which no one can bring you off. Remember that word of the Spirit: "Every man shall bear his own burden." To your own master in the long run you must stand or fall. Bless God that He is able to make you stand. But also, when finally provoked, He is able to seal your doom. And if you so provoke Him, then—as to the interposition and efforts of friends—"the men rowed hard to bring it to the land, but they could not."

IV.

The admirable bearing of all parties in this drama becomes, if possible, still more engaging.

It becomes manifest that Jonah's doom is inevitable, that Jonah's hour is come. "The sea wrought and was tempestuous." And its "tempest," and its "working," and its demand were—for *him*. Doubtless while the men had betaken themselves to pains, Jonah had secretly been engaged in prayer. But the pains taken by them are useless, for still "the sea works and is tempestuous." And to the prayers of the Prophet every thundering billow, as "the sea works and is tempestuous," gives him back his stern and ominous answer, as if saying for God, as God himself said to Moses, "Speak to me no more of this matter, for thou honouredst me not."

So Jonah's hour is come.

It is a solemn moment. Apart even from some of its most appalling circumstances, it is a solemn moment. The funeral of the *dead* at sea is solemn. Though the waters around and the heavens above be all serene, it is a trying hour when the remains of the much-loved friend, or of the mere acquaintance, or even of a very stranger, have to be committed to the deep. And hardened indeed must that heart be that can pass unmoved through the hour when, with mournful funeral service, and from the hands of comrades or of crew, the sea receives another to "the dead that are in her." But when we try in imagination to stand on the reeling deck beside this man of God, offending yet honourable and honoured, and see alike the firm resignation, combining meekness and moral majesty, with which the Prophet faces the

waves roaring for him as the lion ravening for the prey, and the mournful admiration and regret with which these heathen men look upon their guest,—revealing that high appreciation of his character which, even though known to them only in connection with his offence against God and his occasion of extreme distress to them, they have irresistibly been drawn to entertain,—we are overpowered with the impression that high above the floods sitteth an unseen One who is carrying out a righteous award, and who, while He hath said, "Touch not mine anointed and do my prophets no harm," would appear to have said so, not merely to procure them protection when they are right, but because He will himself, and with His own hand, expressly and severely chastise them when they err. One feels inclined to accept silence as the best expositor of the consummation of this deed, inevitable though deeply undesired. Another such funeral service truly neither the sea nor the dry land ever witnessed until this day. For here are men, not accustomed to call on Jehovah's name, and from whom little, in a sense, could be expected, going through with a duty the most agonising that can ever fall to a creature's hand in a spirit of godly deliberation and, one almost feels constrained to think, a spirit of truly gracious prayerfulness—and following it up with sacrificing and vowing to the Lord, as if they now gave themselves as wholly to his grace as they have given his offending servant to his justice. "Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee. So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows."

Thus did these men. They awoke to know the living and the true God. They prayed to Him. They appealed to Him. The storm, they clearly saw, was in his hand: a reason for it, they saw, was in his heart. And that reason they saw as clearly as they saw the storm. His hand, they saw, was almighty. His heart, they saw, was righteous. In brief time, they learned not a little of the living and the true God. They fel this anger. They even became executioners of his wrath. They emphatically justify their deed as being constrained to become executioners of the wrath of the living God. It is a solemn initiation into the knowledge of his name.

And now their guest, their passenger, is gone. The sea has closed over him; and the sea has "ceased from her raging." Yes, if they doubted that a Living One was moving the storm by the power of his hand and according to the purpose of his heart, they can now, at least, doubt no more. The sudden appeasing of the tempest tells its own tale. They fear God in the calm "exceedingly"—more than in the tempest. And now, under no stress of weather, under no strain of terror, they vow, not an extorted, mercenary vow, but a free and voluntary dedication of themselves to the Lord. One would fain say these men were converted to the God of Israel. One would fain hope they lived and died in his fear and in his favour.

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It is a calm. The clouds have parted. The waves are hushed. The heavens are beautiful and blue. Onward the strange vessel flits, beating her quiet tack, unconscious of her matchless story, but her crew aware that a prophet of the Lord has been among them!

And thus died Jonah. To them, at least, thus died Jonah; the death of a criminal pursued by justice; yet the death of a repentant and righteous man, triumphing in death, and over death; committing himself in singular meekness and faith, acknowledging the justice of his doom, and relying on the pardon and protection of his God, committing his body to the sea and his soul to the God whom he feared, the God of heaven, and of the sea, and of the dry land. Thus died Jonah.

So the story reads. And—save for the inspiring Spirit of God continuing his revelations—so the story would end. To all this the mariners could bear witness; and here their witness-bearing, *their* story would end. And in this there is a precious lesson, a great general fact.

In God's people and his prophets, their offence and their chastisement may be capable of being reported, the knowledge of them common property: for, their offence and their chastisement may be upon the surface, and upon the surface there may be nothing more. But the story may not end thus. There may be deliverance, forgiveness, marvels of grace and prayer and love and joy and communion with God, beneath the surface or behind the scenes. Beneath the surface and behind the scenes, there may be such salvation as the world shall never know.

Thus died Jonah;—so these mariners, on reaching land, and rehearsing the story, would say as they brought the marvellous narrative to a close. Literally, beneath the surface, God carried on the marvellous story more marvellously still; bringing in his own unique, peculiar work of—life in the midst of death; his ever glorious work of justice satisfied by being executed, and grace reigning through righteousness unto life from the dead. "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah."

Oh, fear the Lord at *all* times. There is no want to them that fear Him. Accept no deliverance at the expense of righteousness or truth or duty. There is a better deliverance for you. On, therefore; on, rather; fronting the righteousness, facing your duty, trusting your God. Is anything too hard for Him? and is not his faithfulness in the very heavens? Not his dark dispensations, but his clear and ever bright word of covenant grace and truth, is the ground and warrant of your faith. And, therefore, though He slay you, you may trust in Him still.

In his hand, a raging storm, relentless, waiting for you! On his face, a frown of deep displeasure for your offence! Could your case well be worse? Thus much upon the surface. Thus, to sense and reason.

But to faith—what? Beneath the surface, while

He held the storm in his left hand, with his right hand "the Lord HAD prepared a deliverance." And behind the frown, in the depths of the Lord's heart — what? Protecting, redeeming, life-giving love.

Oh love the Lord, all ye his saints, for the Lord preserveth the faithful. Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord. For Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other.

HUGH MARTIN.

A CHURCHYARD IN SPRING.

THE purple fells against the sky shut out the misty East,
Where winds the stream beneath the hill, the stately oxen feast;
The bashful flowers are peeping out into the glittering air,
The tender grass is shooting fast for baby hands to tear.

Yet while the rapture of the Spring bids all the Earth rejoice,
The Autumn leaves that linger still, whisper with solemn voice;
The path, on which the sunlight falls, hath felt the mourner's tread.
Around, beneath, where'er we turn, repose the silent dead.

Here by a little infant's head the daffodil is growing,
Over her mother's grave, hard by, the soft west wind is blowing.
I do not grudge the birds their song, the lambs their gambols wild,
But can they fill a home again, or bring us back a child?

No: for they sleep the blessed sleep, which only He can break,
Who, when He comes, shall all his joy with his elect partake.
The Winter then will quite be past, the world shall have its Spring,
When in the Easter of her life the Risen Church shall sing.

Oh, who, that knows what Christ hath been, or thinks what Christ can be,
Would dare to summon back his dead, this Earth once more to see!
Rich as we were, when human love we daily learned to prize,
The love of God is sweeter still, the Saviour never dies.

And if for us our blessed hoard of holy joy is grown,
If Faith can sometimes rise to say—With God I'm not alone;
If loss to us, who lose, is gain, when to our Lord we cling,
If in the night our wondering lips with sudden joy can sing,—

For those who stand before his face, and see his glory there,
And walk in white, and on their brow the name of Jesus wear;
How can we mourn, who we ourselves desire on Christ to gaze?
How shall we mingle sighs of ours with their exulting praise?

Leave them with Him, who loves us all with tender love and true,
Trust them with Him, who did for them what you could never do.
Their death is died, their tears are shed, empty their cup of pain;
No trouble now can vex their heart, no sin their garments stain.

Soon, soon, to us our Lord will send; but first our work be done,
Our battle fought, our victory sure, our course in patience run.
Others will then be mourning us, as we are mourning now,
And while they put us in our shroud, a crown will press our brow!

Be cheerful, for the time is short. Watch, for the night is long.
To finish well the given task our Lord will make us strong.
This be the thought to nerve our hearts, till in our home we stand—
"I wish to be a pilgrim, bound for Emmanuel's land."

A. W. THOROLD.

THE ARK OF NOAH.

A VISION OF THE PAST.

Once upon a night I dreamt, and in my dream it was to me as if a man with a sublime, heavenly expression on his countenance, approached me and said :—

"Follow me, and I will show you things that have happened, that you may know the wisdom of God, and the folly of man, and the power of grace."

And I rose in my dream and followed him, and he took me by the hand and conveyed me through the air with the speed of light, till we alighted at a beautiful spot, surrounded by high mountains. And I saw a vast forest of gigantic cypress trees, at the entrance to which a large area was cut out, where a great number of people were engaged in building a ship. A crowd of curious onlookers was assembled, men and women, and children. Some of the men were giants of a monstrous size, and of such ferocious appearance, that I was frightened at them. They often shook their huge fists in a threatening way at the builders, and roared scornfully at them with such powerful voices, that it was as if the forest echoed with peals of thunder. And the other onlookers also laughed and mocked, and made themselves merry at the expense of the industrious labourers, who peacefully continued building the immense vessel, that seemed to grow under their busy hands.

While I was looking at this scene with amazement, my guide said to me :

"My name is Chizoniël. I am the angel of the visions which God shows to men to teach them wisdom. The venerable, grey-headed man whom you see superintending the work is Noah, the beloved servant of God. Near him you will notice two noble-looking young men, who assist him in his arduous task. They are his two eldest sons, Shem and Japhet. Another young man, whose face bears a strong expression of sensuality, you will observe sitting on the trunk of a fallen tree, axe in hand, but wasting his time in merry gossip with the gay people that mock at his father's work. He is Noah's youngest son, Ham. The weather, you observe, is most beautiful. The sky is as clear as crystal, and the sun shines with uninterrupted brightness upon the luxuriant landscape. At a short distance a little rivulet purls along and winds like a silvery serpent through the verdure of the meadows. It is the Ormon, a tributary to the Pison ; for we are in the charming land of Havilah. Now let us approach the crowd, and listen to what they are saying. Do not be afraid, for we are both of us invisible to them, nor are they able to hear anything of what we are saying to each other."

Accordingly, we approached the crowd so closely that I could distinctly understand every word they said. I saw one of the giants take up a trunk of a tree, which he brandished aloft over his head as if it were but a cane, and I heard him shout to his companions, the other giants :

"Up, ye men ! take each of you a tree, and within a minute we shall have ground those fools and their toy to dust."

There was an appalling rush, and a band of giants, with uplifted trees, prepared to attack the ship and its builders. A panic paralysed the poor labourers, who dropped their tools and cried for mercy. But Noah stepped forward, and, stretching out his hand over them, cried, "Do not be afraid ! This is God's work, and no man can destroy it !" And at the same time I saw an angel, who was invisible to all the people, stretch out his hand over the giants, and they were smitten with terror and confusion, so that they threw away their trees, and ran trembling with fear.

"Christian," said Chizoniël to me, "do not marvel at this. It is nearly one hundred and twenty years since Noah began his work, and during that period the giants have times innumerable tried to destroy him and it ; but God has always protected him, because he continued believing that God's word and work should stand for ever, though strong bulls of Bashan encompassed him about like bees. You have seen the angel who came to his assistance. Noah never saw him, but he believed in the Invisible One ; and through that faith, as you have seen, he was stronger than all his adversaries, formidable giants though they be. It is a true saying of the Spirit, 'The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.'"

"May I believe the same with reference to myself ?" I asked. "I am not a man like Noah."

Chizoniël smiled.

"Christian," he said, in a gentle tone, "how can you ask such a question ? It has pleased God to make you a member of the chosen blood-bought Church of his only begotten Son ! Are we not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to you who are the heirs of salvation ? You are a member of the Divine royal family. We are your loving and faithful servants, to the glory of the sovereign grace of Him who made us and begat you."

I covered my face with my hands. I could not fathom it. I adored in silence.

Meanwhile, the labourers resumed their work.

"Who are those people who assist Noah in his work ?" I asked.

"They are a Cainite tribe," was the answer, "who were driven from their homes by the giants, and would have been destroyed by them, had not Noah taken them into his service, and thus protected them. They serve him for their own safety's sake. They all look upon him as a fool, but since he gives them their daily support, they abide near him for the sake of the meat that perisheth. Not one of them believes that they are engaged in building the only means of salvation from the wrath which is to come—that they are

preparing the only means of safety from the coming judgment."

"Poor blind fools!" I said. "What horror will strike them by-and-bye, when they discover that they have helped to save others while they themselves perish!"

"There have always been such fools in the world," replied Chizoniël. "The number is great of those who, the more they assist in building up the Church of Christ, accelerate the more the day of their own condemnation."

The giants having now left the place for a time, the scene assumed a much less riotous aspect. It is true the crowd continued mocking and scoffing, but this was all. Some of the tribe of Jubal took harps, and cymbals, and flutes, and played merry tunes, to which the bystanders danced gay and licentious dances. Ham, Noah's youngest son, joined them, but at such a distance, as to be out of his father's sight. It made a strange impression upon me to hear the merry noise of the dancers blending with the strokes of the workmen's hammers, each of which sounded like a thunder-peal of condemnation on the light-minded and reckless throng.

It now seemed to be the hour for the labourers to take their noon-day meal and to rest themselves. During this pause, Noah stepped forward and addressed the noisy crowd.

"How long will you harden your hearts against the Spirit of God?" he cried. "One hundred and twenty years have been given to you to repent, but ye will not. Only a few months now remain, and then the wrath of the Almighty will be poured down upon you from heaven. The waters shall cover the earth, and you shall all perish, with your wives and children, because your wickedness is as high as the mountains and your iniquity is as deep as the sea. You see this ship? As truly as God liveth she will soon be floating over your heads, unless you repent and turn back from your evil ways, and come to God, who is plenteous in mercy, and has no pleasure in your death. I beseech you, for your souls' sakes, do consider. Still it is time. It is not too late yet. Oh! humble yourselves in the dust at the feet of God, if perchance He may repent Himself of the evil that He is about to bring upon you."

There were some amongst the crowd upon whom these words seemed to make an impression; but it was at once drowned in the roar of laughter that rose from the rest of the multitude. Noah thereupon retired. As he did so, stones and pieces of wood were flung at him, some of which nearly struck his head. The people then took to eating and drinking and making merry.

"How is it possible," I said, "that they can cast such grave, well-intentioned warnings to the wind? And this, too, in the sight of the very ship which is erected as a testimony against them and as a witness of the truth of what they are hearing?"

"Such is your opinion, because you *believe* in the word of the prophet Noah," answered Chizoniël; but they do *not* believe it; and so that same ship which you look upon as a silent witness of God's truth is to them the most foolish and ridiculous object ever seen in the world. But let us hear what they themselves have to say about it; and I am sure that after having heard their reasonings you will not wonder that they laugh at every word which Noah speaks to them. Do you see a little group of middle-aged and old men sitting on the trunk of a hewn tree at a distance? They appear to be more accessible to calm quiet intercourse than the gay tempestuous crowd. We will change our appearance, and approach them in the form of artisans, as if we were two of the ship-builders."

In a moment my guide and myself were transformed into carpenters, hammer and saw in hand. In this disguise we took our place beside the elderly people, who were chattering together about Noah and his big ship. Our appearance evidently attracted no notice, as the builders, in their leisure time, often used to mix with the people round about.

"Certainly," cried a grey-headed man, whose name was Hubal, "it *is* a madman's work to build such an enormous ship in the middle of a forest! How is he to launch it? If it were a little boat, such as the one I have swimming in the Ormon over there, it might be carried on people's shoulders to the river-side. But where is the water broad and deep enough to keep such a monstrous vessel afloat?"

"Ah, but mind you," said a middle-aged man of the name of Cholem, "Noah expects the water to come to the ship, don't you see? He tells us that the whole of this land, and the forest, and the mountains yonder, shall be covered with water. So he might have built the ship on the top of the highest mountain quite as well. He thinks she will be sure to get afloat, no matter where he builds her."

Hubal laughed uproariously.

"And where in the world is all that water to come from?" he cried. "I have crossed the country in all directions several times in my life, and I am pretty sure I have seen all the rivers there are under heaven—viz., the Pison and the Gihon, the Phrath and the Hiddekel. But even supposing those streams could be rolled back and gathered into one basin, I am assured that our giants would be able to wade through it as easily as you can wade through the Ormon."

"Does he know nothing of the ocean?" I asked my guide.

"He does not," was the answer. "He never saw it. This land is surrounded on all sides by vast boundless deserts, covered with sand, thistles, and thorns, which no man can cross. These people know nothing of what there is beyond the limits of the little piece of land which they inhabit. This is their world, and old Hubal, you see, is a man rich in knowledge and experience. He is to these people what you would call in your country a professor of natural philosophy, a scientific man. He has crossed 'the world' in all directions, and knows exactly how much water there is, and what the water is capable of doing. You understand that Noah, who is two hundred years younger than this man, must in his eyes be an arrogant fool, because he ventures to maintain that all the water which Hubal saw is but a drop compared with the flood that is to come. Thus you see that the strife between infidel science

and faith is as old as the world itself. But let us continue listening. You shall hear more yet of that kind."

"Ah, but remember, Father Hubal," said a man in the prime of life, of the name of Baal-jared, "the prophet tells us that the water is to pour down in streams from heaven."

"Nonsense!" cried Hubal. "Look up to the sky. Is it not bright, and clear, and pure as silver? Can you discern even so much as a spot of the size of my hand? Where, then, are those terrible streams to come from? Can there come floods out of nothing? or do you expect the fiery sun to turn some day into a fountain of water? You might quite as well expect the source of the Pison to throw up jets of fire. I am nearly eight hundred years old, but old as I am I never yet saw the sky different from what it is now, and I never witnessed even so much as one drop of water falling down from heaven. And what never happened in the course of nature during eight hundred years, my children, will never happen at all, be sure of that."

"How is that?" I asked my guide. "Did he never see rain?"

"He did not," was the answer. "Rain is quite an unknown phenomenon to these people. You have read in the record of the creation that 'the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth,' but that 'there went up a mist from the earth, which watered the whole face of the ground This state of things was not altered till the flood came."

"So these people never saw a rainbow either?" I said. "I now understand how the rainbow could be a token of the covenant which the Lord made with Noah after the flood. Noah then saw that brilliant bow for the first time in his life!"

"Just so," said Chizoniël. "But you will perceive now that these people must think they have quite reasonable grounds for their disbelief in Noah's assertions. They never saw an ocean, nor did they ever see a drop of rain. Those things were perfectly unknown from the days of Adam till this time, a period of at least sixteen hundred years. How then, they ask, can there possibly come such a terrible flood as will be sufficient to lift up this huge ship? You see they apparently have nature, experience, and common sense on their side. Must it not seem to be a madman's work, under such circumstances, to build such a vessel in a forest!"

"Indeed," said I, "it must look very odd to them. I should almost feel inclined to ask, Are they to be blamed? It seems rather unjust to require of them to believe one man, when creation itself appears to stand up as a witness against him."

"But," replied Chizoniël, "there is another witness who stands up in his favour; and they are to be blamed because of their shutting their ears to his voice. That witness's name is *Conscience*, and his testimony is stronger than that of creation. Just let us enter into a conversation with them, and you will see how unfairly they deal with that witness's testimony."

"Father Hubal," said Chizoniël, "you are a man of great experience and knowledge, and you have seen the works of creation. Now creation is a grand work, but you know it is not of itself, but is created by God, who made heaven and earth. Well, Noah tells us that we have all grossly sinned against our Creator, and that to punish us for our wickedness He will bring a flood over us. We know that God is almighty, and can easily cover our land with water, though we do not know *how* He can do it. Now, if it is true that we really have sinned against that great and mighty God, is it not reasonable for us to consider? If Noah told us that God intended to destroy us without there being any cause whatever for it, I think we should be justified in calling him a fool. But he tells us that there *is* a cause, and he points at our manifold iniquities and at God's long-suffering in bearing with them; and he tells us also that at length God's patience is exhausted; and that He has resolved to destroy us, unless we repent. May there not be truth in that? And is it not quite possible that God should take some extraordinary means to sweep away from this earth a generation which He is angry at?"

"Sins! iniquities!" answered Hubal scornfully. "What are they?"

"I will tell you," replied Chizoniël. "For instance, you killed many a man who never did you any harm, because you desired his wife."

"Ay!" cried the assembly, merrily, "there is truth in that, old fox!"

"Well," cried Hubal, "what about that?"

"Why," answered Chizoniël, "Noah tells us that, when Cain had killed his brother Abel, the Lord said to him: 'The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the earth.'"

"Ah!" answered Hubal, sneeringly; "Noah tells so many things. He is a fool!"

"Still, he never killed a man," quoth Chizoniël.

"He is a madman."

"Yet he never took another man's wife or property."

"True, true," cried the other members of the company.

"But you all of you have other men's wives," cried Hubal, angrily; "and so has every mighty man of renown amongst us. Is there any one here who has not slain a man to his wounding and a young man to his hurt? Only Noah has not; but that is exactly why I call him a fool, because he behaves like a coward, and opposes the generally-adopted manners and customs of society. He thinks he is wiser and better than the whole of us. But his folly has at length come to light. Only look at that ship between the trees! Ha! ha!"

"Still," interposed Cholem, "it must be acknowledged that it is a clever piece of workmanship, after all. I am quite amazed how he could manage to get it put together. We never saw such a thing before, and I am quite sure that we could not make it in a thousand years, wise and mighty men as we are."

"Ay," said Chizoniël, "and it appears to me that a man who can do a work like that cannot be such a very great fool."

"He says his God has taught him how to do it," quoth Baal-jared.

"Well, I am quite sure that must be the case," said Chizoniël, "for this is no common human work. And how often have not the giants tried to destroy it, but they never could? An invisible hand evidently always held them back."

"Of course," cried Hubal; "he is in alliance with some mighty spirit, no doubt. But so are we. The sun, moon, and stars—the whole host of heaven which we adore, stand by us in the grand battle against the god of Noah."

"And which of the two do you think is the better?" asked Chizoniël; "*your* gods, who teach you to kill and rob one another, or the god of Noah, who teaches him to do good to everybody, to protect the widow and the orphan, and to succour the oppressed?"

"Well, I do not know," answered Hubal, doggedly. "I am perfectly content with my gods; they never put a straw in my way, but leave me at liberty to do just what I please."

"I believe they do," said Chizoniël, "because they have no power to prevent you. They are no gods at all. They are dead gods. This ought to be quite clear to you. They have not even so much power as to prevent Noah from building his ship. And, when Noah's God one day brings the flood over you, they will not be able to prevent that either. I think it is high time for you to consider, for it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of such a God as Noah's!"

Here the whole company rose in a rage, and drawing their swords they filled the air with roars and shouts of "Kill him! kill him! Who is he? He is a traitor!" But before they could pounce upon us we had disappeared before their eyes, and resumed our place near the ark.

"Christian," said Chizoniël to me, "you must now have observed that the fault of these people is not only in their heads but also in their hearts. If Noah were a murderer and adulterer, as they are, they would not call him a fool; but as he is a good and just man, they hate him. It is true that the building of this ship must look like folly to them, but if they had not seared their consciences they would acknowledge that this apparent folly has reasonable grounds. Had any sense of the good, the true, and the divine been left in them, they would not merely look at the forest, and the rivers, and the dry sky, but they would also give attention to the fact that a man, whom they cannot help acknowledging to be better than they are, and whose admirable work proves him to be anything but a madman, has most seriously warned them against the consequences of their wickedness; and they would perceive that such a man would not, for upwards of a hundred and twenty years, submit to the toil, the vexations, and the persecutions connected with such a stupendous work, if he had no reliable grounds for the fearful expectation which urges him to persevere amid all these sufferings. They do not even give themselves the trouble of examining these grounds, because they instinctively perceive that such an examination would lay bare their own wickedness and condemn them. Having expelled God's Spirit from their heart, moral integrity and spiritual wisdom have no more any authority to them. Infidelity, in whatever form it may present itself, is always the sequence of moral decay. The moment people refuse to feel God's work in their hearts, they also cease to see God's work in history, and all that is left to them to see is the sky, the forest, the sun, the moon, and the stars. And the moment a man refuses to listen to God's voice within, he also begins to stop his ears to that voice coming to him by the mouth of a servant of God. Such a servant then becomes a fool or a fanatic in his sight, and he will soon finish by declaring the whole Divine revelation to be a fable or an imposture. And certainly God's words and works, if looked at without faith, cannot but appear to be foolish and absurd, because they stand in connection with moral principles, which infidelity does not admit, and with future facts which nature cannot foresee. It stands to reason that a man who denies the guilt of sin cannot but sneer at a ship which points to a future flood that is to punish the sinners. In the same way the cross of Christ cannot but be a folly in the sight of those of your fellow-beings who deny that they are guilty of any crime. They are quite right if their premises are true. But that these are false they cannot see, not because their understanding is darkened, but because their heart is blind."

While Chizoniël was speaking in this way I saw in my dream that the ark was finished, and that with the assistance of invisible ministering angels the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven were led into it according to God's commandment. And when Noah and his wife, and Shem and Japhet had got in, I saw Ham standing at a distance, doubting whether he would go in or not. The crowd round about mocked and scoffed uproariously, so that the air reverberated with their roars of laughter. A band of gay girls took Ham in their midst, dancing with him, and telling him not to be such a fool as to leave this beautiful place, the flowers, the trees, the sunshine and the pleasures of life, to shut himself up in that close, dark box, with the elephant, the donkey, and the pig for his companions. And I saw Ham, now struggling against them, now yielding, now taking a few steps towards the ark, now allowing himself to be pulled back, till his father's voice, sounding from the ark, reached his ear, entreating him to make haste lest he should perish with the multitude. Then, disconnecting himself with a jerk from the arms of the girls, he fled to the ark, which he no sooner had entered, than an invisible hand shut its entrance, so that no man could open it again. A roar of laughter rose from the crowd, and at once hundreds of hands carried straw and wood to the ark to set fire to it. And already the flames were rising, when on a sudden heaven was covered with darkness. Terrible thunder-peals roared through the air; streams of water poured down, which in a moment quenched the fire. A general terror seized the crowd, which dispersed in utter confusion. Gradually the ship rose on the increasing flood. I heard the tempest rage and the waters of the deep gush up with fearful noise, and the weeping of the women and children, and the roaring of the beasts of the field, when on a sudden I awoke. And lo! it was a dream.

D. D

HEROES AND MARTYRS OF THE REFORMATION IN ITALY.

BY W. L. ALEXANDER, D.D.

I.

At a time when the attention of the civilised world is deeply fixed on the Italian peninsula, when all free nations are waiting to hail the social and political regeneration of its nationalities, and when Christian people in all lands are hoping and praying that the new order of things may be so arranged as to secure the interests of society there on the only solid, safe, and abiding basis of national freedom,—the free circulation of God's Word and the free preaching of the Gospel; it may not be uninteresting or unprofitable to look back to a time when Italy seemed about to take a place among the free nations of Europe by casting off the yoke of Rome; and when for a season the fruits which the Gospel, faithfully and freely preached, has produced in all the world were seen in hopeful richness and beauty there also. The season, in truth, was short, like a gleam of sunshine breaking forth in a dark and cloudy day; but just as such a gleam may discover to the eye of the observer many hidden spots of beauty or of grandeur, so during the brief period in which the principles of the Reformation struggled for ascendancy among the Italian people, not a few noble characters were brought to light and many scenes of heroic fortitude, devotion, and piety were exhibited, which it is alike interesting and profitable to contemplate, and which at any rate ought not to be forgotten.

The history of the Reformation in Italy has occupied more than one able pen, and all that diligent research and faithful narrative can do to set forth its course and character has been done.* Following in the footsteps of those who have worthily surveyed this field, and availing ourselves of their materials, without aiming to emulate their endeavour, we propose in a series of papers to make our readers acquainted with the history and working of some of those noble men and women whom God raised up to testify for his truth around the very centre of papal domination, not a few of whom had to maintain their opinions in the face of fiery persecutions, and some of whom were counted worthy to seal their testimony with their blood.

As preparatory to this, it may be not without its use nor uninteresting that we should present a brief survey of the general state of the Papacy in relation to free thought in Italy at the era of the Reformation.

It is impossible to study the Papal system without being impressed with the conviction that it is a master-piece of policy for the end at which it aims—the subjection of the soul of man to the despotism of a hierarchy. The skilful adaptation of its provisions and methods to the prevailing tendencies of human nature, the adroit subordination to its service of all the motives that most powerfully govern the heart of man, its mingling of the sacred with the secular so as to bring the solemnity of the sacred and the interest of the secular to bear on one common end, and its perfect organisation, whereby all its agents are made to work in harmony and in obedience to a single will, conspire to render it the most perfect engine of spiritual rule the world has ever seen. But it is not given to any human institution to be absolutely perfect, either for good or for bad ends; and when its design is evil it often happens that its very completeness at once provokes and facilitates assaults which tend to its injury. So it proved with the Papacy. It had not long existed in its full development as it came from the hands of Gregory VII. and Innocent III., when its very perfection as an engine of spiritual domination induced courses which stirred up hostility against it in various quarters.

Uncontrolled power leads not only to tyranny and extortion, but is apt to foster the reckless indulgence of all the baser passions of our nature. Men, who find they can trample with impunity on the liberties of their fellow-men, are not slow in finding their way to a contempt for all restraint, and become a law to themselves, though, it may be, the mere slaves of evil lusts, and led captive by the devil at his pleasure. Especially does this result emerge in systems that foster indolence, and afford peculiar opportunities for sensual indulgence.

The history of the Papacy during the three centuries which preceded the Reformation supplies a continuous and startling illustration of these remarks. In almost every European nation the rapacity and tyranny of the Papal See had made themselves painfully felt, and had excited in the bosom of prince and of peasant a feeling of indignation, which, if it did not break out into open revolt, was not, on that account, the less bitter and deep. The extent to which the Popes laid Europe under contribution to supply the means of their personal luxury or the aggrandisement in temporal rule and power of the papal throne, almost exceeds belief. Nor were they careful to cover over their rapacity by any hypocritical pretence, or to soothe the objects of it by any prudent policy. In the directest and most imperious terms, and without the slightest regard to national rights or popular prejudices, they issued their demands and levied their exactions. They drew wealth and power to Rome also by appointing Italian ecclesiastics to the richest benefices in other countries; and so regardless were they of appearances that, of those thus appointed, some were mere children whom, in the face even of their own canons and in some cases of the determined protests of the ecclesiastical authorities of the place, (as in the case of Grosteste, when he received the mandate of Innocent IV., to induct an Italian boy into a

* The principal works on the Italian Reformation are Gerdes' "Specimen Italiæ Reformatæ," 4to., Leyd., 1765; and M'Crie's "History of the Progress and Suppression of the Reformation in Italy," 8vo., Edin., 1827. Much may also be gathered from Ranke's "History of the Popes," and from such works as "Bayle's Dictionary," the "Vitæ Theologorum Exterorum" of Melchior Adams, and Schelhorn's "Amœnitatis Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ." "The Life and Times of Aonio Paleario," by M. Young, 2 vols., 8vo., Lond., 1860, will be found also full of valuable information, drawn, in many cases, from unpublished sources.

vacancy in the diocese of London) they insisted upon being duly and formally installed ; that, though it was impossible for them to do, or pretend to do the duties of the post, they might be at least entitled to draw the revenues accruing from it. Nor was the private character of the clergy in general such as to command respect, or counteract the bad effect on the minds of the people which the tyranny and extortion of the papal rule had produced. For the most part they were illiterate, ignorant and indolent ; in many cases sensual and vicious in their habits ; and in some very monsters of depravity and pollution. In this respect the Italian ecclesiastics seem to have had a bad pre-eminence. There is still extant a letter from Æneas Sylvius, who afterwards became Pope, under the title of Pius II., written to his father, in which he describes his own vicious life in terms of the grossest indecency, and in a tone of most disgusting levity, adding that he does not care to conceal his vicious habits, because he sees no man who is not as bad as himself. John Francis Picus, Lord of Mirandola, in an oration to Leo X., delivered in 1517, in which he earnestly entreated that pontiff to bestir himself to heal the diseases of the Church, says : "With the greater part of the chiefs of our religion, by whose example the ignorant commonalty should be regulated and formed, there is either no worship of God, or at any rate, very little ; no method and order of good living, no shame, no modesty ; justice has given way either to hatred or to favour ; piety has almost wholly degenerated into superstition ; and men of all ranks sin so openly that frequently virtue in good men is held to be a vice, and vices receive the honour due to virtue, by those who have come to regard their unheard-of petulance and long impunity as fences and walls of protection for their crimes."* It would be easy to fill pages with similar testimonies from the writings of men who were themselves attached to the Romish Church. But it is unnecessary. The sad fact is sufficiently known. The corruption which had invaded the Church in every part of Christendom displayed its greatest virulence around the centre, and reached its culminating point in the lives of such men as Popes Sixtus IV., Innocent VIII., and Alexander VI., and those by whom they were immediately surrounded.

The effect on the character of the people of such an example on the part of their religious guides, may be easily imagined. Religion and morality might almost be said to be banished from Rome and the larger cities of Italy. "Rome," writes Cardinal Bembo, who knew it well, "is a fœtid pool, full of the wickedest scoundrels in the whole world." Luther used to express his thankfulness that he had been induced to visit Rome ; for had he not seen and heard for himself, he would never have believed the extent to which the Pope and his cardinals had corrupted the Church, and so would not have been led to assume the bold position as a Reformer to which he was thus driven. Among the more cultivated classes, practical and, in many cases, openly avowed atheism prevailed. "If you are in search of atheists," writes an author of the time, "you will not find so many anywhere as in Rome." "In the house of the Duke of Parma," writes another, "atheism is much affected (*in deliciis habetur*)." Melanchthon's retort on an Italian theologian is well known :—"You Italians," said he, "are ready to contend that God or Christ is in the Eucharist whom you do not believe to be in heaven." Luther repeatedly tells a story of two persons who at the table of Leo. X. fell into a debate as to the immortality of the soul. Their arguments being expended they agreed to refer the decision to the Pope ; who, on being appealed to, replied, "Though you who have maintained the affirmative have adduced good arguments and reasons for your opinion, I rather give in to your opponent, for your view makes one melancholy, whilst his is favourable to jollity."* Where such undiluted epicureanism reigned in the most influential quarters, we need not wonder that unbelief and all ungodliness characterised the masses. We can believe that the satirist hardly exceeded the truth when he wrote :—

> Vivere qui sancte vultis, discedite Roma ;
> Omnia hic ecce licent, non licet esse probus.

But whilst the people were only too ready to take encouragement from the conduct of their spiritual guides to rush into all irreligion and iniquity, they were not by this led to regard with any esteem those whose example they followed, or to treat with respect the system to which they belonged. The very opposite effect, as was natural, followed ; the men who had done despite to the sacred office with which they were invested became themselves objects of contempt ; and this was extended from them to the rites they administered, the doctrines their Church professed, and the entire system to which they belonged. Nor was this confined to mere secret feeling or private conversation ; it broke out in manifold forms of open and avowed attack. Angry denunciations, bitter satire, stinging sarcasms, ridiculous stories,† and comical songs, combined with the skill of the caricaturist to give expression to, and at the same time to increase and exacerbate the feeling of contempt and indignation with which the conduct of the clergy had inspired the masses. One has only to glance over such a collection as the Poggiana, the work of one who, as he himself tells us, had lived fifty years at the Court of Rome, and under several pontiffs, to see with what gusto every story that could place the clergy, regular and secular, in a ridiculous or hateful light, or bring contempt on their institutions and rites, was received and circulated in Italy. The effect of all this in sapping the foundations of popular respect for the papal system, and preparing the way for a revolt against the papal authority, should circumstances occur to call it forth, is too obvious to require to be pointed out.

The revival of letters struck a heavy blow at the influence of the ecclesiastical power in Italy. In an

* J. Fr. Mirandola, De reformandis moribus oratio. P. 3

* Tischreden, vol. iii., p. 239 of Förstemann and Bindseil's edition ; Vorrede zu Melanchthon's Verantwortung auf der Colnischen unter Clerisey Schrift ; Comment. in Genes. cap. 20.

† Many of these stories are too gross to be repeated now, but of those which are simply ridiculous not a few are still in circulation, and it is somewhat amusing to find how in successive generations they have been fastened on individuals who were certainly entirely innocent of the deeds or words narrated, but whose peculiar eccentricities presented points on which the unscrupulous story-teller found he could make the old story stick.

evil hour for herself the Church had espoused the cause of ignorance. For several generations her tendency had been decidedly retrogressive in respect of culture and liberal learning. During the fourteenth century everything betokens a degeneracy on the part of her clergy in literary tastes and pursuits as compared with the clergy of two or three centuries before; their Latin more barbarous, their taste more corrupt, their matter more inane, their whole style both of thought and expression more puerile and mean. The complaint which Trithemius, Abbot of Spanheim, utters over the degeneracy of his own monks, might have found an echo in every monastery in Christendom, and in none more so than in those of Italy. "The study of Scripture our priests repudiate; erudition they neglect; in place of books of Scripture they breed and train dogs and birds. . . . They are blind leaders of the blind, who, instead of teaching the people righteousness, rather seduce them."* The gross ignorance and illiteracy of some of the clergy almost passes belief. Luther's story of the monks who resolved to keep their old "Mumpsimus" in preference to the new "Sumpsimus" is well known.† Luther asserts that "the greater part of the clergy, especially the occupants of the cloisters, were very unlearned blockheads, some of whom could hardly read,"‡ and of those who could read he says that they, for the most part, contented themselves with babbling the words of the service without understanding them, alleging in defence that "the Holy Ghost understood them, and the devil was scared by them."§

Of himself he records that he was twenty years old before he had seen a Bible, or knew that there were any more of the Gospels or Epistles than are contained in the Postils. The Poggiana are full of ridiculous stories of the ignorance of the clergy; and every one acquainted with the writings of Erasmus knows how with him and the rest of the Humanists this was matter of constant and poignant ridicule. In Italy this, like all the other discreditable characteristics of the Romish Church, manifested itself in an exaggerated form. Ignorance there was assured the dignity of an institution. The "Fratres Ignorantiæ" made it their boast that they knew nothing, and would learn nothing.

The Church having thus gone over to the side of ignorance, there naturally emerged a state of hostility more or less pronounced between her adherents and those for whom culture and literature presented attractions. Indeed, from the very dawn of modern literature in Italy, a decided anti-papal spirit manifests itself in the writings of its cultivators.‖ Dante, Petrarcha, Boccaccio, Ariosto, to say nothing of less famous names, have, each after his own fashion, indicated unmistakeably the antagonism which they felt to exist between their tendencies and pursuits, and the spirit, practices and influence of the hierarchy. The language they sometimes employ in denouncing both individuals and classes passes the bounds of moderation. With Petrarcha Rome is constantly "Babilonia;" and both in his poetry and his epistles he inveighs against it and its rulers in the strongest terms. In one sonnet (91) he speaks of having "escaped for his life from impious Babylon, whence all modesty is fled and all good is gone, hospice of evil, mother of errors;" in another (106) he describes her as filled to bursting with the wrath of God and all kinds of vices, having Bacchus and Venus for her deities; and in another (107) he denounces her as "the school of errors, temple of heresy, forge of deceit, dire prison, where the good dies, the evil is fostered and engendered, hell of the living, against which it will be a great wonder if Christ do not come forth in wrath."* If these should be thought the exaggerated utterances of a poet under the excitement of the muse, we have only to turn to his epistles, where, writing to friends, he gives expression to his sincere convictions, to find many statements in which, with fuller details of the evils complained of, he uses language even stronger than that we have quoted.† Dante, a higher and purer spirit than Petrarcha, uses language not less severe in reference to the corruption which reigned in the Church. Take the following two passages from different parts of his great poem. Addressing the Popes, some of whom he represents himself as finding in hell enduring the most frightful torments he says:—

> "Trampling the good and raising up the bad,
> Your avarice overwhelms the world in woe.
> To you St. John referred, O shepherds vile,
> When she who sits on many waters, had
> Been seen with kings her person to defile.
> Your gods ye make of silver and of gold;
> And wherein differ from idolators,
> Save that their God is one, yours manifold?
> Ah! Constantine! what evils caused to flow,
> Not thy conversion, but those fair domains,
> Thou on the first rich father didst bestow."‡

Again, speaking of Florence, he exclaims:—

> "Thy city . . . . . the accurst,
> Floren produced and issued; whence have strayed
> The sheep and lambs away from the right track,
> Since of the Shepherd a Wolf hath made.
> For this the Gospel now is laid aside,
> The Fathers too; and the Decretals sought
> Alone, as by the margins is descried.
> To them both Pope and Cardinals are given;
> Nor turn they e'er to Nazareth a thought,
> Where spread his wings the Messenger from heaven.
> But soon the Vatican and parts of Rome
> Most cherished in the pious memory,
> Where Peter's faithful converts found a tomb,
> Shall from the foul adulteress be free."§

Many more such passages might be culled from Dante, whose severe and lofty spirit could ill brook the levities and corruptions which characterised the court and clergy of Rome in his day, and whose intensely religious feeling led him into sympathy with doctrines which, at a later period, would have been signalised as "Protestant;" such, for instance, as the sole supremacy of Scripture as the final rule of faith and duty; the denial of the validity of priestly absolution;

* Gieseler, Eccles. Hist. v. 8. † Tischreden, ii. 265.
‡ Ibid., pp. 235, 229. § Ibid., p. 291.
‖ Rossetti Sullo Spirito Antipapale che produsse la Riforma. Lond. 1832.

* Le Rime di Petrarcha, ed. Soave. Milan, 1805, vol. i., pp. 93, 121. See also Son. 105.
† For these we refer to the copious extracts given by Rossetti, p. 8, ff.
‡ Inferno, cant. 19; Wright's translation.
§ Paradiso, cant. 9.

the repudiation of prayer for the dead ; the upholding of Christ as the rock on which the Church is built, and the sole foundation on which all must rest ; and the assertion that the temporal authority is not to be derived from or dependent on the spiritual.* One feels grateful to hear from amidst the gloom of the 16th century a grand voice like that of Dante, proclaiming, in support of the doctrine of the soul's immortality, such words as these :—"It is certified to us by the most true doctrine of Christ which is the way, the truth, the life ; the way, because by it, without impediment, we advance to the felicity of that immortality ; the truth, because it suffers no error ; the light, because it illuminates us in the darkness of mundane ignorance."† When we consider the giant grasp which Dante laid upon the opening intelligence of Italy, we can easily believe that the bold utterances to which we have referred were not without a powerful effect in preparing for a revolt against the supremacy of the Romish see.

Mere antagonism, however, to evil is not always in itself positive good ; and, unhappily, irreligion so predominated throughout Italian society, that rebellion against priestly domination assumed to a large extent the form of an entire renunciation of Christianity. The consequence was, that when the ancient classics came to be generally read by men of culture, it was not their poetry and philosophy merely that took hold of the minds of such, but their morality and their religion also. Hence, with the revival of letters, came into Italy a resuscitation of the ancient heathenism. Men, like Marsilio Ficino, Pietro Pomponazzo, Angelo Poliziano, Pietro Aretino, and others, if they believed anything, believed after the fashion of Plato and Aristotle, and not after that of the Apostles. In the court of the Medici at Florence, Plato and not Paul reigned as the supreme authority in religion ; and it is not without reason believed that even under the papal tiara beliefs that were more heathen than Christian found a nest. Things must have been tending very far in this direction when it could be currently reported of a Pope, that he had said, "How much this fable about Christ has profited us, all men know." In good society at Rome it was thought necessary to the character of a gentleman and man of fashion to avow opinions contrary to those taught by the dogmas of the Church.‡ Luther, who, while a monk, believed in transubstantiation, and thought it his duty to go honestly through the whole service of the mass, was petrified with horror, when performing this office at Rome, to find a priest at his elbow making a mock of it, and telling him to make haste and get done with it. Even Erasmus tells us he was confounded by the blasphemies he heard on every side, and the open advocacy of heathen opinions, especially the non-immortality of the soul. § On this subject, as we have already seen, Leo X. could jest scoffingly at his own table, and so far had the belief in this fundamental doctrine of religion become unpopular that, in 1513, it was thought necessary at the Lateran Council formally to affirm anew the doctrine of the soul's immortality.*

We have been the more particular in describing this state of society in Italy, because whilst it shows how the minds of the people were loosened from that reverence for the Papacy which would have entirely excluded the Reformation from Italy, there was wanting that basis of religious earnestness which in other lands furnished a permanent foundation on which the new spiritual life could erect its structure. Whilst, therefore, it is true that in Italy, as elsewhere, successive generations had been little by little dropping in the powder which might have blown up the superincumbent mass of papal domination,† there were other influences at work which mingled with it such ingredients as prevented it, when the match was applied, from producing more than a very partial and interrupted explosion. In other lands (to borrow the quaint words of a recent writer) "if the fire ran over the country with wonderful rapidity, it was because the trees were all dry."‡ But in Italy, unfortunately, the trees, though sufficiently withered, were rotten and damp, so that the fire could not run, and was soon extinguished.

But whilst the shadows predominate in the picture which Italy presents to us at the beginning of the 16th century, let it not be supposed that nothing but darkness reigned. From time to time earnest spirits had arisen who not only lifted up their voice against prevailing corruption, but were faithful witnesses for "the truth as it is in Jesus." There can be no doubt that the doctrines of the Waldenses had extensively spread in various places of Italy, and that many who did not dare openly to profess these doctrines nevertheless held and valued them. The fiery eloquence and religious fervour of such a man as Savonarola, though he cannot be justly regarded as aiming at any such reformation of the Church as Luther and his confederates effected, could not fail to awaken in men's minds a sense of the reality of religion, and the necessity of being in earnest about it, as well as to lead them above the sphere of ritualism and superstition in order to find what would meet their spiritual wants. Certain it is that even at Rome itself there were men who held and taught truths usually distinctive of Protestantism. An association was even formed, including a number of men of high position in the Church, which, under the name of "The Oratory of Divine Love," sought to counteract the unhallowed tendency of the tone of society under Leo X. This association met for the worship of God, for preaching, and for spiritual exercises ; and from it proceeded an influence which greatly prepared the way for the progress of evangelical truth among the more cultivated classes. After quoting some passages from the writings of some of the members of this association, Ranke, who was the first to call attention

* These sentiments pervade the Divina Commedia (compare, e. g. Inf. c. 2 : c. 27 ; Purg. c. 4 : c. 10 ; Parad. c. 24 : c. 29) ; but they may be found formally stated, and in some cases argued on, in the Convito (see Tratt. 2, c. 9 ; 4, c. 4), and his Latin treatise, De Monarchia, book 3.

† Convito, 2, 9, sub fin.

‡ Ant. Bandino, quoted by Ranke, Hist. of the Popes, i. 56, Bohn's edition.

§ Burigny, Vie d'Erasme, i. 139.

* Caranza, Summa Consiliorum, p. 665. † Rosetti, p. ii.

‡ Blunt, Reformation in England, p. 1.

Drawn by Edward Hughes. Engraved by J. Swain.

"Entering a shop one day the Rector's wife
Saw one, with a fair child who held her hand,
Bring in her work and meekly waiting stand."

to the fact of its existence, says justly,* "It would be difficult to announce the Lutheran doctrine in language more orthodox." It was from this society also that the first translation of the Scriptures into Italian from the original text, that of Bruccioli, proceeded;† and there is every reason to believe that translations of some of the writings of Luther and Melanchthon were issued, sometimes under fictitious names, by members of this association, and widely circulated over Italy.

Such was the general condition of society, in relation to religion, in the Italian peninsula at the dawn of the Reformation. With much that seemed to invite and favour the introduction of a new state of things favourable to Christian liberty and evangelical piety, there was more that was hostile to such a movement, and threatened it, if made, with opposition and disaster. Subsequent events showed that it was even so. The Reformation spread much farther in Italy than many suppose. But it was met everywhere with the violent hostility of the dominant powers, whilst it found but little response in the bosoms of the masses, sunk as they were in superstition or infidelity, and enslaved by sensual lusts and habits; and at length the light that had been kindled was trampled out or quenched in blood, and Erebus and Night once more resumed their reign.

COTTAGE POEMS.

BY A CURATE.

II.—MIRIAM.

"Miriam—the miller's daughter—to my cost,
I knew her well! My darling boy she crost
In his first love: she did not draw him on—
I can't say that—but still she jilted John.
She might have known his looks: I cannot say
That he said much: he had his father's way,
Had John.
I knew her since she was the height
Of that white lily: she was just as white—
And she was still and stately in her ways,
Her looks were meek although she fed on praise.
I won't be hard, but she drove John away,
Who was so fond of me: and to this day
We've never heard of him. 'Tis sore, but, sir,
He's in God's keeping.
And what came of er?
She ran away, against her father's will,
With a poor portrait-painter, who fell ill
Down at the inn, and hung about the place.
I saw them once together; and his face
Was like a woman's, and his hands were thin,
And little fit he seemed his bread to win.
His speech was soft-like, and his clothes were fine—
Not working clothes like John's. Though he was mine,
Whatever he might wear, my John was twice
The man he was: and yet he was her choice.
It's ten years since I met them in the lane,
And saw the last was seen of them. A pain
Shot through her at the sight of me, I know
And he was speaking to her quick and low.
What have you heard of her?"
"This letter gives
Her story. Where our Rector's daughter lives,
In London, in the East (a fearful place,
Where she has seldom seen a happy face,
Her husband's parish is), are streets on streets,
Where hopeless vice with reckless misery meets—
Our Devilsbye is but a little rill
To the great choking tide those streets that fill
With Sin's black river. They go hand in hand,
Striving to save some souls upon its strand,
With few to help. The doctor at his post
Fights there with fever and a kindred host
Of foul distempers. All the rich have flown,
And left the parish to the poor alone.
With cast-off rags, and offal food it teems,
Until like one vast rubbish-heap it seems.
Cast off and tainted seem the beings there—
Cast off from love and hope and peace and prayer—
Women and men, who like demoniacs seem,
And infants who, in innocence, blaspheme."

"Ah sir! I've heard that men their lives once gave
By thousands for the Saviour's empty grave—
His body suffers there!"
"Aye, it were well
A new crusade against the powers of hell
To preach. To rouse the Queen upon the throne,
The nobles, all the several ranks that own
Our country's wealth and power, to sweep away
Our cities' plague-spots from the face of day.——
But to the story of poor Miriam's life.
Entering a shop one day the Rector's wife
Saw one, with a fair child who held her hand,
Bring in her work and meekly waiting stand.
The figure drooped—the child was drooping too,
With that sad look of early care she knew;
Yet something in them both, (and both looked ill,)
Recalled fresh country faces and the mill;
The leaping, laughing water, lipped with green;
Sweet noises and sweet silences between;
May blossoms; roses; apples on the trees
In the mill gardens;—each and all of these
Rushed through her mind, she knew not how or why.
The obsequious shopman meanwhile standing by.
The master took the work the woman brought,
Examined, grumbled, paid. And she who wrought
Asked, eagerly, if there was nothing more
To take home with her?
'Nothing!'
To the door

* Hist. of the Popes, i., p 103.
† Kitto, Bibl. Cyclop. ii., p. 440, 3rd ed.

She moved, and went. And she who watched her then
Remembered, rose, and called her back again :
But had to hasten after. In the street
Stood Miriam ! heedless every gaze to meet—
Heedless and hopeless ! In her open hand
The scanty payment of her toil she scanned—
And thus the letter runs :—'Despair was here !
Down the sad face there ran a single tear.
I touched her on the shoulder, and she stared,
And knew me not—for this I was prepared ;
And told her who I was, and who I guessed
That she must be. Reluctant she confessed.
"Where do you live ?" I said. She flushed with shame.
"Let me come to you, Miriam !" Her name
Softened her, and she said, "Yes, come to me ;
Thank God ! no worse than poverty you'll see." '—
She went, and found her, where, in cheerless gloom,
Close street and crowded court and stiffling room ;
Each is so like the other, it would be
Relief to find a worse variety.
In a small room she sat, and with her there
Her dying husband. Even the outer air,
Such as it was, denied her. In distress
He seemed to show a gentle selfishness.
His wife and child were toiling in his sight,
His breath enough their breathing lives to blight ;
And yet he would not bear the slightest breath
Of air. It shook his wasted lungs, and death
Was very near. And, gracious Lord of Life !
All was not darkness in that mortal strife.
Out of these hearts a tenderness divine
Rose and was nourished by the strength of thine.
The wasted hands had tried her woman's task,
And fretful lips the kiss of peace would ask ;
And feeble knees were bent, and thanks were given,
For less of earth that left the more of Heaven.

"To Miriam's heart there year by year had come
A deeper yearning for her early home.
'I'll never see it more ; but would,' she said,
'They'd take my little Miriam in my stead.
In the old garden she would grow so bright ;
Here,' and she shuddered, 'there is such a fight
For life. May God forgive me ! I could pray
We all might go together.'
The next day
Her husband died. A letter has been sent
To Miriam's father, and the Rector went
To plead with him this morning."
"May the Lord
Open his heart to take his child restored !
My John, too, may come back. God sends us rain
Of weeping ; then his sun shines out again
To make our hearts grow. This I learned the day
The last of my great trouble passed away.
My man and I were parted three long years :
Serving as nurse, it was the bread of tears
I earned for many a day, up at the farm,
Another's rosy infant on my arm ;
While John, as under-gard'ner at 'the Main,'
Was striving hard to win me back again.
Well I remember, 'twas mid-summer day
He brought me home. The sky was red and grey,
I' the early morning when we took the start,
My man and I, together in the cart.
The rain began to fall—the sweetest rain—
I never saw the living earth again
With the same eyes. As sweet the world may be
To others, it was ne'er as sweet to me.
These fields are green, but those we passed that day
Are greener in my memory than they.
The larks sing merry here, but ne'er before,
Or since, they seemed to sing at God's own door,
For joy of singing ; like a silver cup,
The briony held each big white blossom up ;
The trees held out their leafy hands to catch
The blessing : I held up my face to match,
And shut my eyes. John had an arm, of course,
To spare for me—one served the sober horse ;
And so he held me closely to his side,
And screened me with his coat. A while our ride
Was up and down and over ridge on ridge,
And by the water dancing through the bridge.
At length the sun shone. We were passing through
A planting of young birches, when the blue
Showed all above and in between. The sun
Making the rain-drops glitter every one,
Like the great stone in Lady Mary's ring ;
And the wind shook them, and they seemed to fling
Whole lapfulls upon us who passed below.
They sprinkled John, whose face was in a glow ;
At which I laughed. And John said, 'Wife, you seem
' enjoy a ducking ! '
And it stayed, that gleam
Of sunshine—stayed and brightened more and more ;
It was full shining on this very door
When John first led me in. 'Now, little wife,'
My dear man said, 'this is our home for life.
I've bought it and I've built it stick and stone ;
And more, the ground it stands on is my own.'
'O John !' I answered, 'God has been so good.'
'Ay, wife,' he said ; 'but I have understood
What faith means better since things went so hard.
We must not serve God for a poor reward.
Every good thing is his : but for things good
We need to work and wait ; and if there should
Come ill instead, believe that better still,
Even best of all, is in our Father's will.'"

WATCH-NIGHT.

BY THE EDITOR.

Half-past twelve a.m. 1st of January, 1866.

I HAVE just returned from holding "Watch-night" with a congregation of Wesleyan Methodists. Never having witnessed its services, perhaps ignorant even of the existence of such a custom, many of my readers may be ready to ask, "Watch-night, what is it?" If Churches knew each other better, it might promote their mutual improvement, and also the interests of brotherly kindness and Christian charity. With this view I shall tell my readers something of the very impressive and solemn service, called Watch-night, with which, standing on the line that parts them, the Wesleyans take farewell of the old year and hail the advent of the new.

It is a fact, though by many sound Protestants and Christians who observe them never so much as supposed, that some of our old customs had their origin in Popish, others in older and Pagan times. Let me relate two remarkable examples of this which I saw some years ago when making a tour in the north and north-west of Scotland. In Loch Maree, where, next to Switzerland, the exquisite beauty of the lake, and the magnificent mountains that frame it, raise one's mind from nature up to nature's God, there is an island—one of the many that lie like gems on its bosom—which once boasted a well of healing virtues. Till the Saint whose name it bears took offence at a man who dipped a favourite dog into it to cure him of madness, its waters, so say the people, were a panacea for all the ills our flesh is heir to. On being so profaned, the well, which owed its miraculous virtues to the merits of the Saint, became dry. Partly in consequence of this belief, and partly in consequence of the progress of education, it has now ceased to be resorted to; but a tree which stands by it, proves to what a late period this old popish superstition retained its hold of this Protestant and Presbyterian district. It presents a sight one would expect to meet only in benighted Ireland. I saw the branches that hang over the empty well covered with votive offerings—a relic of Popery among a people who would have been as loth to trust in the merits of a dead saint, as in the demerits of a living sinner.

Such another well, but associated with an older time, stands near by the house of Culloden in Inverness-shire. Its waters at a certain period of the year, like those of the Pool of Siloam at the descent of the angel, were believed to acquire a miraculous virtue. This was on the first Sunday of the month of May. On the morning of that day, hundreds resorted to it, either to drink and be themselves cured, or drawing water, and taking care that not a drop was spilt lest the charm should be broken, to carry it to sick and bed-rid friends. May was a month sacred to the god of the sun; that being the period when Baal's rites were performed by our rude and savage ancestors, long before the introduction of Christianity. Though our country has no sturdier Protestants, or people who have a higher regard for the Sabbath, than the inhabitants of the surrounding district, down to a recent period crowds of them resorted to this old pagan well. I found many votive offerings on a tree which drooped over it—in buttons and copper coins that were stuck in its bark; and worsted threads, bits of cloth and ribbons of all colours that hung fluttering from its boughs. From these wells, whence I drew no water, I drew a lesson of charity. The strong hold which these old popish and even pagan superstitions long continued to maintain over a devout and serious people, taught me to wonder less that churches should retain, on the one hand, forms which, though they have no sanction in Scripture, are of a venerable antiquity; and reject, on the other hand, improvements in the services of public worship, merely because they are innovations on old established customs.

How long, like the remnants of the Hittites, Perizzites, and Canaanites in the land of Israel, heathen customs will survive in a Christian country, has no more remarkable illustration than those supply which, in strong contrast to the Methodist "Watch-night," usher in the year. Little do good Christians, when they take part in these, think that they are engaging in pagan rites. But so it is. For example, on the last night of the year the ancient Druids went forth in solemn procession; the high priest at their head carrying a golden bill-hook or sickle. Reverently approaching the sacred oak, he cut the mistletoe from its gnarled boughs; and this, being brought into the towns and carried to the houses of their chiefs, was distributed among the people. Cut down on the proper night with golden instrument and by priestly hands, this curious parasite became sacred to their god, and acquired the virtues of a potent charm. As such it was hung up in the rafters to preserve their houses from evil, and worn also as an amulet to protect their persons on the field of battle. And now, in the nineteenth century, a thousand years and more after heathenism had disappeared, in a country of bibles, churches, schools, and sabbaths, here we are in the use of the mistletoe that at Christmas and New Year's time garnishes our houses and looks down on happy meetings of gathered families and loving friends, observing an old pagan rite. The term "Yule," and the cry "Hogmanay" with which our boyhood was familiar at New Year's time, and which is of universal usage, at least in Scotland, are both relics of heathenism—it being by this cry that the people were summoned to the sacrifices of their god, and to his festival, which they celebrated with revels and universal conviviality. We might wonder why a period of the year specially calculated to excite solemn and serious thoughts should ever have been set apart for entertainments calculated rather to dissipate than excite such thoughts, and for convivial indulgences which often equalled, perhaps exceeded, in their drunken excesses those of heathenism. But

this accounts for it. Nor is it difficult to explain how these and also other customs survived the pagan worship to which they originally belonged. It is well known that the term Easter is taken from the worship of the old goddess Astarte, or Ashtaroth: it is equally well-known that the robes of the Roman Catholic priesthood, and very many of the forms through which they go, were copied from those of heathen temples; and the door by which these and other corruptions came into the Christian Church, was the well-intended but unwise policy of her early missionaries. They sought to convert the heathen by accommodating the new worship to the seasons and fashions of the old. Impatient, animated by zeal, but in many instances zeal without knowledge, the good men who found it difficult to abolish the pagan rites and forgot that "he who believeth shall not make haste," endeavoured to give them a Christian turn. So, finding it hard to wean the people from their old habit of cutting the mistletoe, they sought to baptize it to Christianity, and to win or please converts by hanging it up in their churches; while they winked at, if they did not encourage the feasting and banqueting, the eating and drinking, the fun and folly, with which the pagans at New Year's time celebrated the festival of their god.

It was not long ere the Church found out her mistake, in acting on expediency rather than on principle. The feasting and merriment which, for the purpose of reconciling them to Christianity, she allowed her converts to continue indulging in at New Year's time, reached a vast height in France, for instance. Strong complaints were made to the Gallic Synods of great excesses being committed on the last night of the old and the first of the new year. It appears that companies of both sexes, dressed in fantastic habits, and called *bachelettes* or *guisarts*, ran about the streets, and entered even the churches, disturbing the devotion of the worshippers. Crying, "Au gui menez, Tire-lire-Mainte du blanc et point du bis," they demanded both money and wassail. This will recall to Scotchmen (I know not if to Englishmen also) the name of *guizards*, given to those who in our early days went about painted and masked, singing songs, and also their cry, "Give us your white bread and none of your grey?" The Bishop of Angres, who says that the cries of the *guisarts* were derived from the ancient Druids, makes grievous complaints of the licentiousness of the people at New Year's time. To such an extent indeed was their bacchanalianism carried in his day, that the French Government had to step forward and repress it by the strong arm of the law.

This history teaches us, as do many things else, that there is no reformation so good in its ultimate results as what our fathers called a "root and branch" one. To win over the heathen, by removing impediments which interpose between them and Christianity, some missionaries in our day have lent a sort of sanction to polygamy, and permitted their converts to continue practices that properly belong to idolatry. And when we see good men even now persuading themselves that such measures are lawful, need we wonder that in earlier and less enlightened times the apostles of Northern Europe endeavoured to compromise matters by engrafting the new religion on some portions of the old? Compromises in worldly affairs which involve no question of truth and principle, cannot be too much commended. In moral and religious matters, they cannot be too strongly condemned. Let the Churches beware of establishing any such truce between truth and falsehood. Many of these are separated on what might be called points rather than principles; on matters of remote and doubtful inference rather than of plain and direct revelation. But though I therefore think that union among Protestant denominations is not only exceedingly desirable, but much more attainable than many suppose, yet no schemes toward it, toward the conversion of the heathen, or toward reconciling worldly men to religion, to Christ and his cross, should be entertained that involve the smallest compromise either of the doctrines or the morals of our holy faith. This were to sew a piece of new cloth into an old garment, to pour new wine into old bottles.

Though I have traced the peculiar and convivial customs of the new year to paganism, I should be sorry that anyone supposed that I regard otherwise than with favour the kindly greetings and gifts, the family gatherings and innocent convivialities which make the shortest among the happiest days of the year. Happy the homes where songs as well as psalms drown the roaring of the storm, and affection and mirth diffuse such light and warmth within the house as to make us forget the biting cold and darkness without. In foretelling the return of God's banished people, Jeremiah says that "in all their dwellings shall be heard the voice of thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry," and so should our homes be, when, saying with the poet—

I saw the skirts of the departing year,

we hail the advent of its successor. But it is sad to take farewell of the old year without any grateful remembrance of its mercies, and sorrowful thought of its sins; to have the mirth without the thanksgiving; and reckless of the temptations, and trials, and sorrows, and difficulties and deaths the new year may bring, to allow that to run into excess, and our convivialities into debauchery. The time is one for enjoyment; but not certainly more for enjoyment than for suitable reflections on the past, and good resolutions for the future. And it is shocking to see these drowned in the drinking bowl—the voice of conscience lost in riot and uproar!

But without anxious and even prayerful care, the customs of the season were very apt to lead to excess. For instance, in the old times in England, the head of the house assembled his family round a bowl of spiced ale, and, drinking their healths, handed it round to the others,—every one as he lifted the bowl saying in good old Saxon, "Waes hael," or "To your health;" an expression in which we find the origin of the word *wassail*,—the wassail-bowl. A similar custom prevailed, and to some extent still prevails, in Scotland. When the clock struck twelve the members of the family drank to each other's health in the *hot pint*, as it was called; following this up

with dances and mirth and merry-making. Nor was this all; it was succeeded by what proved a much greater temptation to sobriety and virtue. Carrying this bowl, replenished with ale and spices, they sallied forth to visit their neighbours, entering each house with uproarious cheers, and exchanging friendly greetings in drink given and received. A very common result of this *first footing*, as it was called, and of the drink besides friendly greetings which they exchanged with all whom they encountered on the road, was that ere the new year had almost begun, conviviality had run into riot, and brutal drunkenness lay in the gutters, or went staggering along the streets. And, though the habits of this age are a great improvement on former times—not indeed because the whisky bottle has been substituted for the *hot pint*—our towns still present many disgraceful spectacles at New Year's time. In walking the streets of Edinburgh how have I been filled with disgust and sorrow!—thankful, however, that it was not the season when foreigners visited the city, else we must have blushed for our country and its religion as we looked them in the face.

Edinburgh, more perhaps than any other place, used to celebrate the New Year with Saturnalian rites. The principal streets were more thronged between twelve and one o'clock on New Year's Day morning than at mid-day in the full tide of business; and, as if to make up for their usually strict and grave, if not stern, demeanour, the people, like a bow too strongly bent and suddenly unbent, sprung into the opposite extreme. Even women relaxed not a little of their usual modesty; and grave citizens became bacchanalians. So soon as the Tron Church steeple rung out the midnight hour, a tremendous shout rose and rent the air. At that signal the crowd rushed into the wildest excesses; and orgies were begun, with little distinction of sex, age, or rank, that, traceable to the days of paganism, were a disgrace to Christianity. Happily, this pagan institution, as it might be called, has never recovered from a blow it received some fifty or sixty years ago. The city roughs and blackguards of that time combined together to turn the occasion into one of plunder. The least resistance offered them was met by assaults, so violent and bloody that in several instances they resulted in death. Justice had to draw her sword: and the end of the Saturnalia was a spectacle which filled the city with pity, and grief, and horror. Three boys, who had been engaged in the robberies and violences of that night, were brought out to the scaffold, and hanged up in the face of the sun. The stern and terrible lesson was not lost. These three young corpses, turning slowly in the wind, made an indelible impression on the mind of Edinburgh; and as the drunken orgies of the season have ever since then been checked—we cannot say altogether eradicated—the event was one of many which show how God in his providence makes good spring out of evil, and crime find a cure in its own excesses.

Whether it was for the purpose of checking the excesses of this season by a better and more Christian way, that John Wesley established a "Watch-night" at New Year's time, I know not. Probably it was. The revival among the Methodists of this very ancient custom was not due, however, to the new year, or to its excesses. The earliest notice of it in Wesley's Journal is in these terms:—"Friday, *Jan.* 9, 1742. —We had the first watch-night in London. We commonly choose for this solemn service the Friday night nearest the full moon, either before or after, that those of the congregation who live at a distance may have light to their several homes. The service begins at half an hour past eight, and continues till a little after midnight. We have often found a peculiar blessing at these seasons. There is generally a deep awe upon the congregation, perhaps in some measure owing to the silence of the night, particularly in singing the hymn with which we commonly conclude—

> 'Hearken to the solemn voice,
> The awful midnight cry!
> Waiting souls, rejoice, rejoice,
> And feel the Bridegroom nigh.'"

Elsewhere he writes, "About this time I was informed that several persons in Kingswood frequently met together at the school; and when they could spare the time, spent the greater part of the night in prayer and praise and thanksgiving. Some advised me to put an end to this; but upon weighing the thing thoroughly, and comparing it with the practice of the ancient Christians, I could see no cause to forbid it. Rather, I believed it might be made of more general use. So I sent them word, I designed to watch with them on the Friday nearest the full moon, that we might have light thither and back again. I gave public notice of this the Sunday before, and withal, that I intended to preach; desiring they, and they only, would meet me there who could do it without prejudice to their business or families. On Friday abundance of people came. I began preaching between eight and nine, and we continued till a little beyond the noon of night, singing, praying, and praising God. This we have continued to do once a month ever since in Bristol, London, and Newcastle, as well as Kingswood; and exceeding great are the blessings we have found therein: it has generally been an extremely solemn season, when the word of God sunk deep into the heart even of those who till then knew Him not. If it be said, 'This was only owing to the novelty of the thing (the circumstance which still draws such multitudes together at those seasons), or perhaps to the awful silence of the night,' I am not careful to answer in this matter. Be it so: however, the impression then made on many souls has never been effaced. Now, allowing that God did make use either of the novelty or any other indifferent circumstance in order to bring sinners to repentance, yet they are brought. And herein let us rejoice together. Nay, may I not put the case farther yet? If I can probably conjecture that, either by the novelty of this ancient custom, or by any other indifferent circumstance, it is in my power to 'save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins,' am I clear before God if I do it not?—if I do not snatch that brand out of the burning?"

"Sir," says Wesley elsewhere in repelling the attack of a Rev. Mr. Baily of Cork, "you charge me with holding 'midnight assemblies.' Sir, did you never

see the word 'Vigil' in your Common Prayer Book? Do you know what it means? If not, permit me to tell you, that it was customary with the ancient Christians to spend whole nights in prayer; and that these nights were termed *Vigilæ*, or Vigils. Therefore, for spending a part of some nights in this manner, in public and solemn prayer, we have not only the authority of our national Church, but of the universal Church in the earliest ages."

So wrote John Wesley. To those who blamed him for setting his hymns to tunes that, though of great merit, were in many cases associated with profane songs, he had replied, "I see no reason why the devil should have all the good music." No wonder that this same man, like soldiers who dash boldly on a park of artillery to seize it and turn on the enemy their own guns, should conceive and carry out the idea of turning a night of debauchery into one of devotion—at least of such services as would by God's blessing guard people from excess, and teach them to join trembling with their mirth. Wise in his generation as the children of this world in theirs, Wesley did not think it enough simply to denounce the drinking and debauchery of the time. He knew human nature better. He was not ignorant of the principle which Dr. Chalmers illustrates in one of his noblest sermons, this, namely, "the expulsive power of a new affection." So, without attempting to altogether abolish an old custom, he said, By all means celebrate the advent of the New Year, not, however, with the dissipation of pagans, but the devotion of Christians. And in this exercise we resolved to take part, with a congregation of his followers, on the last night of 1865.

We repaired to their chapel a little after ten o'clock. The riot of the streets had already begun; and it was a great relief to escape from them, and find ourselves quietly seated amidst a congregation whose countenances, as became their position, bore a mingled expression of happiness and solemnity. It was pleasant to see so large an assembly on such a night and at such an hour; and to recognise numbers who though, like ourselves, belonging to another than the Wesleyan communion, had gone to unite with their brethren of that Church in the solemn, striking service which I proceed to describe.

The minister appeared in the pulpit punctually at half-past ten, robed in gown and bands—a costume, by the way, not used by the Methodists in England, though their Conference has too much good sense to quarrel with its use in Scotland, or to insist in such minor matters on a rigid and unnatural uniformity. He began the services by reading out a hymn, which the people sang with Methodist spirit to the music of an organ. The full burst of their earnest and ringing voices all but drowned the sound of its pipes, and demonstrated that an organ, whatever objections people may have to instrumental music as an aid to psalm singing, does not always, and need never, supersede or interfere with vocal praise—the song of grateful hearts rising from hallowed lips. They sung:—

"Jesus the Conqueror reigns
In glorious strength arrayed,
His kingdom over all maintains,
And bids the earth be glad.

Ye sons of men, rejoice
In Jesu's mighty love;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice,
To Him who rules above.

Extol his kingly power;
Kiss the exalted Son,
Who died, and lives to die no more,
High on his Father's throne.

Our Advocate with God,
He undertakes our cause,
And spreads thro' all the earth abroad
The victory of his cross.

That bloody banner see,
And in your Captain's sight,
Fight the good fight of faith with me—
My fellow-soldiers, fight!"

After this, Mr. James, the minister, offered up a very impressive prayer, acknowledging the mercies and also the sins of the past year—seeking grateful hearts and pardon through the blood of Christ—in view of the year about to enter, renewing vows and dedications to God, with earnest prayer for grace to do its duties, to meet its trials, to resist its temptations, to bear its burdens, and to be ready for the deaths it might bring. Another hymn was then sung, and the 90th Psalm, beginning with these words: "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations," read,—and read impressively. After the congregation had again sung, the minister, choosing for his subject these words of 1 Samuel vii. 12, "Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," delivered an appropriate address. At its close the congregation sang:—

"How many pass the guilty night
In revellings and frantic mirth!
The creature is their sole delight,
Their happiness the things of earth;
For us suffice the season past;
We choose the better part at last.

We will not close our wakeful eyes,
We will not let our eyelids sleep,
But humbly lift them to the skies
And all a solemn vigil keep:
So many years on sin bestowed,
Can we not watch one night for God?

We can, O Jesus, for thy sake,
Devote our every hour to Thee:
Speak but the word, our souls shall wake,
And sing with cheerful melody;
Thy praise shall our glad tongues employ,
And every heart shall dance for joy.

Oh may we all triumphant rise,
With joy upon our heads return,
And far above those nether skies,
By Thee on eagle's wings upborne,
Thro' all yon radiant circles move,
And gain the highest heaven of love!"

The minister now descended, and resigned the pulpit for half an hour to a local preacher; and I may remark, by the way, that his address, directed chiefly in warning words to young men and women, proved that though a liberal education is of great value to ministers, he may be an effective speaker who has never been at College. A few minutes before twelve o'clock this worthy man brought his remarks to a close. Mr. James

returned to the pulpit; and having addressed the congregation in a few solemn and weighty words, he said that there were now only some two or three minutes of the old year to run, and these he would recommend them to pass in secret communion with God. Then the whole congregation, following his example, bowed the head, and fell on their knees in silent prayer. During these few minutes an awful solemnity filled the house,—a stillness on which the hour, as it struck one beat on the clock, announcing that one year was gone and another begun, broke with startling effect. At Manchester, where I first witnessed this most impressive service, the effect was still greater. There, the clock rung out its full twelve beats; and as they slowly and solemnly succeeded each other, they sounded like the last dying throbs of the expiring year. So soon as the ringing out the old and ringing in the new year had brought us to the end of one, and the beginning of another, stage in life's journey, the whole congregation rose to their feet; and, like men who spring forward anew, on a heavenward race, for a heavenly crown, they burst out into this song:—

"Come, let us anew our journey pursue,
Roll round with the year,
And never stand still till the Master appear.
His adorable will let us gladly fulfil,
And our talents improve,
By the patience of hope, and the labour of love.

Our life is a dream; our time, as a stream,
Glides swiftly away;
And the fugitive moment refuses to stay.
The arrow is flown; the moment is gone;
The millennial year
Rushes on to our view, and eternity's here.

O that each in the day of His coming may say,
"I have fought my way through,
I have finished the work Thou didst give me to do."
O that each from his Lord may receive the glad word,
"Well and faithfully done;
Enter into my joy, and sit down on my throne."

Ere the echoes of the hymn had died away, the minister rose to pronounce the blessing; and, the service closed, we went out into the starry night to hear the sound of revelry and riot—but to see nothing incongruous with our devotions in many of the congregation tarrying at the door to salute their acquaintances with a "Happy New Year!" and much hearty shaking of hands.

The most remarkable and impressive feature of this service was perhaps the depth and solemnity of the silence that filled the house, while the congregation engaged in secret prayer during the last moments of the old, dying year. It reminded me of scenes I had witnessed abroad at one of the most solemn parts of Roman Catholic worship. When the priest, after working the miracle of the mass, turns round to hold aloft at the full stretch of his arms, not in bread and wine a symbol of Christ's body, but, as the people are taught to believe, the very flesh and blood of the Son of God, the effect is quite remarkable. It is exceedingly impressive indeed, if the scene be a vast and noble cathedral, with its lofty pillars, and solemn aisles, and dim religious light, and full to the door with thousands of worshippers. At that moment, as if with one soul, the mighty congregation drop on their knees, and every head is bent adoring to the ground. Standing near by the high altar, with the sea of faces before us, it is wonderful to look out over these thousands,—all motionless as statues, amid silence deep as the grave's. There is no such silence outside, in nature; not on the shore, where in the quietest day wavelets break, and sea-birds scream; nor in the gloom of the forest, where the wind goes whispering among the branches, and withered leaves fall whirling to the ground; nor in the loneliest glen, where the distant baying of a watch-dog, the murmur of a hidden stream, the hum of bee or beetle, relieves the silence. Yonder, with their God held on high before prostrate thousands, no sound whatever—rustle of gown, ruffle of moving foot, lowest whisper—falls on the ear. Each one, penetrated with awe, seems to hold his breath—the scene, the deep stillness such as to remind the spectator of these Scriptures, "There was silence in heaven," "I fell at his feet as dead."

"Watch-night" among the Methodists, outraging neither human reason nor God's Word, as the other does, is, even in its outward aspect, not less impressive. At the solemn midnight hour, and on the eve of another year, the voice of man is stilled; and, amid the deepest silence, the whole living assembly, each as if he were alone, engages in inward prayer. The time, the place, the awful stillness, the vast multitude around, each holding secret communion with God, presents a scene that might sober a bacchanalian, and move the most indifferent to prayer. And now may I not ask, why should not all other Churches, in the Methodists' new-year's night service, take a leaf out of their book, wherever circumstances render it both practicable and convenient? The bigotry of Papists is not worse than, or indeed so inexcusable as, that which maintains we have nothing to learn from others in the ordinances of God's house and worship. It were ludicrous, if it was not sad, to find good Protestants who deny infallibility to the Pope, and yet, resisting all change, seem to regard their fathers or themselves as infallible; and their own old system as so perfect that it is incapable of improvement. What else is that than to say, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we!"

Very seldom have I worshipped with Christians of other denominations, either at home or abroad, with my countrymen or with foreigners—French, Swiss, Germans, or Italians, without seeing something in their churches which I would have been happy to engraft on my own. And this is a feeling, I venture to say, common to all who, while enjoying the privilege of worshipping with other denominations, have sought to see in their services not what they might condemn, but might admire and imitate. It is good to be conservative, but not of defects. In these days of bold attacks, from unexpected quarters, on our most sacred and cherished beliefs, let all on the watchtowers of Zion sound forth, "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." But though it is our duty to keep by the *old roads*, it may not be our duty to keep by the *old ruts*. Between old roads and old ruts,

there is a great and too much forgotten distinction. What is commendable in Churches other than our own, why should we be such bigots as not to copy? Who can afford to dispense with what other good, intelligent, and pious Christians have found to be aids to devotion? The tide runs strong the other way; and we need to crowd all sail on the mast to advance in grace, and at length arrive in heaven.

To the lateness of these Watch-night services, no one can justly object. They occur but once a year; and hours as late are not held a valid objection to balls, to theatres, or even to the occasionally protracted social meetings of such as would frequent neither the one nor the other. Where can we so well take leave of the old year with all its sins to answer for, or enter on the new with all its trials to encounter, as in the House of God? The solemnities of the service are eminently calculated to restrain the excesses of the season. They teach us, what we are prone to forget, amid its festivities to rejoice with trembling. Nor can I doubt were all our congregations, where convenient, to meet after the fashion of the Methodists,—as is done in some Episcopalian churches in London—many of our people would bless God, and say with Wesley, "EXCEEDING GREAT ARE THE BLESSINGS WE HAVE FOUND THEREIN: IT HAS GENERALLY BEEN AN EXTREMELY SOLEMN SEASON WHERE THE WORD OF GOD SANK DEEP INTO THE HEART."

THE BURDEN OF DUMAH.

"He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come."—*Isaiah* xxi. 11, 12.

THE words are so elliptical and so enigmatical that we might naturally look to the context for their explanation.

But there is no context. The words read are themselves a complete whole. "The Burden of Dumah" stands between two other "burdens," forming by itself an entire utterance, an entire chapter of prophecy, utterly alone and isolated as to any connection or any coherence with the rest.

And how little, at first sight, can we make of it!

"The burden of Dumah." What is Dumah?

"He calleth to me." Who calleth?

"The watchman said." Who is the watchman?

It was a custom of ancient times—illustrated for us by the Prophet Ezekiel—to set a watchman on some frontier height of a country threatened with invasion, to give warning of the enemy's approach by sounding a trumpet-note of alarm.

Now it is evident, I think, that in this passage the watchman of Dumah is the Prophet of Israel. Across the ridge of Seir comes the voice of enquiry to him in Jerusalem. God had entrusted to him many burdens, many oracles, concerning surrounding nations. To him therefore, in the prophetic imagery, these nations are represented as turning for information. It is as though they had taken him for their watchman, and now called to him, in the anxieties of a calamitous time, "Watchman, what of the night?" how goes the night? what hour, what watch, are we in? is the dawn near? is the darkness soon to pass? In other words, God has told thee his secrets concerning us: tell us then, what hope is there? is the judgment yet far spent? is the calamity which oppresses us soon to be overpast? The neighbouring nations are to share in the overthrow of Israel under the giant strength of Babylon: then let Israel's Prophet show them how far the tide of distress is to go, and at what point God shall say to it, "No further!"

But the answer is a mere riddle.

"The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night." They could have told that without him! Yes, day and night succeed each other—and that is all that he will say! It is night now: it will be morning: and then after a time it will be night again. Make of my words what ye will! The vision is sealed. God vouchsafes to you no other answer. "If ye will enquire, enquire ye," but there is no response: "return, come"—go back, and come yet again—still there shall be no voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regardeth!

This is not perhaps the common interpretation; but it seems best to express the absolute blank and silence of the prophetic information. Morning cometh, and night cometh: daylight and darkness will have their vicissitudes and their alternations: but when or how—with what relief from trouble, with what access of consolation—this I say not: God has no message for you: enquire if you will—go if ye will, or come if ye will—no Divine utterance shall be given you: humble yourselves only beneath the mighty hand of God, if perhaps He may exalt you in due time.

Now, if this be the spirit of the passage, it will make the first application of it to ourselves somewhat different from that commonly given.

Why has the watchman no better answer for the enquiry from Dumah?

Simply because it comes from a race which has no habitual dealings with God.

Edom, if so it be—or else Arabia—is out of the pale of Israel, a foreigner to the covenants of promise. And if Edom, or if Arabia, wants an answer from God in its hour of anxiety or of distress, it must begin by coming over to God's side, and incorporating itself with the people of his choice and of his adoption.

I. The direct applications of this principle are many and various.

(1) How often, in these times, do we find persons utterly irreligious and worldly, entering into questions concerning God and his truth, concerning Revelation, Inspiration, Miracle, and Prophecy, as though they had a right to all the enlightenment and all the comfort and all the assurance which the saints of God have for their guidance and for their upholding. The cry comes from Dumah, it echoes

across the ridge of Seir, it sounds in the ear of the solitary watchman on the afflicted heights of Zion, "Watchman, what of the night? watchman, what of the night?" Tell me, thou man of God, how stands the matter between faith and scepticism? Give me on the instant, give me in brief compass, give me in terms concise and conclusive, a reason for the hope that is in thee, and for the faith once delivered to the saints! Assure me of the eternal verities brought to earth by One who had seen them and even framed them in heaven—and then send me back—for I am in haste—into the world which I love, or to the sin which I cherish, a firm believer, a hopeful happy Christian, as safe for eternity as tranquil for time!

What saith the answer of God to the demand thus addressed to Him?

"The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come."

To the careless questioner all truth is an enigma. Yes, day comes, and then night again. What of the night? O, it is far spent—the day is at hand! What of the night? O, it is dark and cloudy—the rain falls, and the dew is heavy—the moon has set, and the houses are darkened! What of the night? O, it is running its course: it may be midnight, it may be near the cock-crowing—what is that to thee? thou sleepest—sleep on!

"Ye will enquire?" Enquire ye! Yes, ask all your questions: go, and come again: spend your day in slumber, your night in dancing: and yet put in between times your half-meant half-jesting questions, "What is truth? and evidence what? and what the Bible?" if ye will enquire, enquire ye: but the response must at last be a riddle to him who so questions!

Not in the tone of ridicule—God forbid—and not in the spirit of arrogance, as though the watchman cared not for the miseries of Edom; but rather for the sake of Edom—because such questioning cannot profit—because an answer to such questioning could be only for evil—because it is not well for man that he should combine God and the world, a frivolous life with a calm assurance of salvation—are the words here written, and do we seek so to use them, as if a prepared mind were a first condition of religious knowledge, an earnest resolution after God a necessary prerequisite for the study of his truth and the reception of his salvation.

(2) Scarcely less striking is the bearing of the text upon practical difficulties.

It is not very uncommon for a person by no means earnest (in general) in his desires after God, to find himself so placed at a particular moment as to be in extreme want of guidance and direction. Some decision has to be made, which evidently involves serious consequences; consequences to the success of a life—consequences, incidentally, to the safety of the soul. He wants counsel. If he had lived in the old days, he would have gone to an oracle. As it is, he must do the next best thing: he must somehow or other, if it be possible, ascertain the mind of God. He kneels down: O God, direct me! He opens his Bible: he will see what verse his eye first rests upon: it may give him the clue he looks for! He goes to a Clergyman: "Watchman, what of the night?" how stands my case? direct, guide, rule me!

And what is there wrong in this? Ought not men to seek God in perplexity? Is not that the very use of the ministry, of the Bible, of prayer—to give counsel? How is it then, that I kneel, and get no answer? that I read, and get no direction? that I ask, and obtain no light? How is it, that all I can learn is that which I knew already, "The morning cometh, and also the night?" that my application seems to be flung back to me with the taunting mocking rejoinder, "If ye will enquire, enquire ye"—yea, come, and come again, and it shall be all even as now?

This is because the cry comes not from the holy city, but from the field of Edom: because he who asks, asks just for once, but seeks not habitually God's instruction: because he asks in indolence, asks in superstition, or asks in presumption; cares not to stay in the sanctuary; scarcely even intends, scarcely even professes, to meditate a change of life or a resolution of soul. The best thing for him is, to find that God cannot be trifled with, cannot be taken by halves, cannot send his oracle across the mountains of Seir, to be made merchandise of in the tents of Kedar. He who would ask, "Watchman, what of the night?" must not ask from Dumah, must not call out of Seir, but come himself with his question, and come to stay!

(3) And so is it in a third case, of a more general kind than either of the former.

It is no rare thing to hear the complaint that a man finds no comfort in his religion; that it gives him no support in trial, no comfort in trouble, no strength in temptation, no life in death. He reads every day in his Bible; he prays at night and in the morning: but it is as if the only answer he ever received was that discouraging and daunting one, "The morning cometh, and also the night"—"if ye will enquire, enquire ye"—but it shall be all one as if ye enquired not! Ah! there are many who go through life with this sort of constantly damped and evermore repelled hope. When they pray, it is like speaking in some empty Cathedral, where, from gallery and roof and vacant aisle, there comes back to me just the echo of the voice I uttered, and nothing else or more: it is as if they asked the question, "What of the night?" and the only reply was the vague unmeaning intelligence, "The morning cometh, and also the night—if ye will enquire, enquire ye!"

There is no doubt at all why this is: and would to God it were as easy to remove as to discern the cause! In these cases the prayer comes from Dumah—the cry sounds out of Seir: the religion, such as it is, is a thing loose and external, a thing put on and put off by hours of the day and by days of the week; something which does not enter into the whole being; something which is a mere adjunct and circumstance, a propriety, not a necessity, of the life; not an expression of the heart, and not a characteristic of the man. Therefore its only answer is the rebound and echo of the question. "Watchman, what of the night?" "The morning cometh, and also the night." The

counsel of the prophet can only be, Come out of Dumah, cross the ridge of Seir: "Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob:" yea, come ye to dwell in Jerusalem, and let us walk day by day in the light of the Lord.

II. And now turn to the brighter aspect of the subject, and see how the same question would be received from one of the redeemed and faithful people.

"Watchman, what of the night?"

(1) Let the Christian minister hear himself thus addressed, by one of Christ's humble watchful disciples, in reference to the condition of the Church and the signs of the times.

St. Paul justifies such a use of the figure when he says in his Epistle to the Romans, "The night is far spent." The present state has more in it of night than of day.

Night is the time of slumber. And where is he amongst us, whose soul is quite awake? Where is he, who is always wakeful? never overtaken with weariness in well-doing? never forgetting to watch unto prayer? never flagging in hope, and never fainting in effort?

Night is the time of illusion. It is then that fancies, which daylight would dissipate, hold possession of the morbid imagination and the over-wrought brain. And where is the Christian who in this life is the sport of no illusions? Where is he who does not sometimes mistake phantoms for substances, and the fleeting for the permanent? Where is he who can at all times judge of things important and things trifling quite as Christ judges; quite as he will judge himself when he once reaches heaven?

Night is the time of danger. It is then that bad men wake, and lay snares against the innocent. It is then that deeds, emphatically called of darkness, are done upon this earth under cover of that shaded light which God meant for the repose of his beloved. Even so is time the opportunity of evil; and they who are still in the body—even Christian men—are exposed to ten thousand temptations which the day of a cloudless changeless future will dismiss into nothingness for them for ever.

Time is night: eternity day.

And what of this night? How speeds it? Are we in the first watch of it, or the second? Are we at its cock-crowing, or close upon morning?

St. Paul said, even in his day, This night of time is far spent.

Were the words not true? If true then, are they not true now?

Can the watchman tell us anything of this great, this urgent question? Must he answer us, as he would have to answer the careless enquirer, "The morning cometh, and also the night?" May he not say a little more than that—that which is nothing?

He must not indeed take it upon him to say that we are thus or thus far advanced, in years or even in centuries, towards the great final Advent. We have not so learned Christ, as to count it safe or true to profess to tell of times or seasons which the Father hath put in his own power.

But may we not just say this—that many of the signs of the latter days are upon this age? many of the characteristics of that era of which St. Paul says again that men shall then be "selfish, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof?" and St. Peter, that "there shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?" Do we not see in every new form of scepticism, in every new device of ungodliness, in every new craft and assault of the devil, a symptom—not decisive it may be, yet real and significant—of the approach of that last end of which it is written, "Nevertheless when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?"

We shall not answer only, "The morning cometh, and also the night:" we shall bid, rather, even the wise virgins to arise, and trim their lamps: saying, "The day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."

And we shall add also, in a sense different from that hitherto put upon them, the following words of the text, "If ye will enquire, enquire ye." We shall urge upon the dutiful servant the fitness of that spirit of enquiry, that searching and pondering and comparing of God's Holy Word, that attitude of vigilance and of expectation, which becomes those who are looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God. We shall say, "Return" from every wandering, whether of act or thought, and "come" home, one and all, to the centre of peace and strength, of wisdom, of holiness, and of happiness, to be found only in that Divine life which is hidden for us with Christ in God.

(2.) And so, finally, the question, "What of the night?" will have a seasonable and serviceable application to the individual life.

What means, it may be asked, this "night" of depression? Why is my heart thus heavy? Why go I mourning all the day long, and find no help for me in my God? Why is it, that, seeking Him all the day long, I receive no answer? never know what it is to feel myself safe or at rest, or even making progress towards the haven where God knows I would be? What of this night? Shall it be for ever? Shall there be no rest and no comfort, or none on this side of the grave? What of this night? Has it any explanation, any use, any purpose of love? Can the watchman answer? May he not say, to such a questioner, All is of love—and all shall be well? To humble thee, and to keep thee humble—that He may do thee good at thy latter end—therefore doth God thus deal with thee. Be still, and know that He is God—and He shall exalt thee in due time. Dwell not too much upon frames of soul, which change and vary, recur and pass away: "the morning cometh," with its bright gleam of comfort; "and also the night" again in its season, with a lowering sky and a threatening to-morrow: but, amidst all these, God is the same. He changes not. Commit thy way unto Him—tarry his leisure—and "at evening time"—if not before—"at evening time it shall be light."

Or what means this night of bereavement? Why this heavy, heavy sorrow? the desire of mine eyes taken away with a stroke—this child, so full of promise, so full of comfort, so full of love—this friend, this brother, this parent, this pastor, who was as needful at least to my welfare as to my happiness? "What of this night?" this dark, dark night? O, it is the easiest of all questions for the Christian watchman! He is gone, because God loved him: he is gone, that he might be taken away from evil to come: he is gone, because God would draw your hearts upward, and because He would make heaven for you more home-like! Yes, He chides not your tears; but He will one day wipe them from your face: certainly, if not sooner, when you go to the departed, and He stands ready to welcome you into the everlasting habitations. Go forth, yet a little longer, into the work-field of your earthly day, as those who have more stored above, and less risked below!

And "what of the night?" it may be asked of the watchman yet once more, in reference to the shortening days of each one of us, and the approaching close. What can we do, each one, to improve the remaining days or weeks or months or years? How can we so number our days as to apply our hearts unto wisdom? What is there, let each one ask himself, on his knees in the secret chamber of his worship, what is there which I can yet cast out of me of evil, and what is there which I can yet bring into me of good? Not as a duty, not as a burden, not as a mere condition of safety, but rather as a bright hope and a glorious aspiration, How can I get nearer to God? how can I glorify Him on the earth? how can I so live as to remind men of Him, and so die as to make them love Him? "What of the night?" not now for the Church, but for me, even for me? How stands the reckoning of its swiftly passing hours? Am I near in time, then am I also near in state, to that solemn dawn, to that blessed day, which shall be for me the end of earth and the beginning of heaven? If "the morning cometh," so "also the night:" the bright morning for these, the dismal night for those! O let me be found of Him in peace! Let me not be ashamed before Him at his coming! "Enquire, enquire"—"return, come"—while yet the Bridegroom tarries, while yet the dying lamp can be rekindled! "The night is far spent:"—O see that "the day" be heaven!

C. J. Vaughan.

NOTES FOR READERS OUT OF THE WAY.

The winter of 1865-66 would seem to have been given to the angel that poured out his vial upon the sea. On land, the mildness of the season has been the subject of universal remark; but the average of severity has been more than reached by the extraordinary gales that have raged on the ocean. The most exposed parts of our shores, from which disaster is seldom long absent, have lately witnessed an unprecedented number of casualties. Forty wrecks, and the loss of not less than seventy lives, at Torbay, during single gale, attest the fatality of the storm at that spot. In the middle of January the Board of Trade reported between 300 and 400 shipwrecks, and the number must have been vastly increased during the gales that have followed. Of all the memorials of this terrible season, none has left such a mark on the public mind as the loss of the Australian steamer, the "London." Even the proverbial rapidity with which, in these times of daily newspapers, one event of public interest succeeds another, has failed to obliterate, almost even to lessen, the vivid impression of that terrible tragedy. Many things have contributed to deepen the interest in the "London." The terrible warning which the passengers had of the coming catastrophe; the earnestness with which they strove, while a ray of hope remained, to avert it; the calmness with which at last they met their doom; the almost miraculous escape of the boatfull, but for whom conjecture would have been on the rack for months as to the fate of the vessel; the calm courage with which the captain clung to duty, even when hope had gone; and, above all, the noble manner in which both Dr. Woolley and Mr. Draper sought to guide all their fellow-passengers to Him whose grace is so precious in the hour of unexpected death—such things have all contributed to give pre-eminent interest to the story of this ill-fated vessel. Of the mercies which were mingled with this terrible disaster, not the least to the 220 who were drowned was the circumstance which gave them the presence of Mr. Draper, a Wesleyan minister, returning to Australia, who had been advised to pay a visit to Sinai and Palestine, but had declined the advice, through eagerness to return to his colonial work. It will be long before such scenes vanish from recollection as those in which he took a principal part. "When Captain Martin, in answer to a unanimous appeal, calmly announced the cessation of all human hope, a solemn silence prevailed, broken only at brief intervals by the well-timed and appropriate exhortations of Mr. Draper, whose spiritual services had been incessant during the previous twenty-four hours. Dismay was present to every heart, but disorder to none. Mothers were weeping over little ones about to be engulfed, and the children, ignorant of the coming death, were pitifully inquiring the cause of so much woe. Friends were taking leave of friends, as if for a long journey; others were crouched down with Bibles in their hands, endeavouring to snatch consolation from passages long-known, perhaps long-neglected." Thus, even the wild voice of the storm became a preacher of the Gospel; let us hope that many an ear heard the voice of the Saviour saying sweetly above the voice of the waters, "It is I, be not afraid."

Among the vessels that were in imminent danger during the storm, but that contrived to reach a haven

was the "John Williams," the missionary ship whose launching at Aberdeen was noticed by us a few months ago, and which was on her way to the South Seas, with a missionary freight. The same calmness that prevailed in the "London" reigned in the cabin of the "John Williams," where, though the passengers were fewer, the proportion of those who knew by experience where to find support and consolation was probably greater. Gathered round the table, they alternately poured out their hearts in prayer, and sung such hymns as "Rock of ages, cleft for me." The scenes of terrible danger that have been brought so vividly before the public may well awaken our sympathies for those that go down to the sea in ships; while both to seamen and landsmen they seem designed to give new emphasis to the old lesson, "Be ye also ready."

When, speaking last month of the Sunday Services for the people in St. Martin's Hall, in which the gospel of science was to be made palateable by selections of sacred music by eminent performers, we remarked that the promoters of such meetings were not generally very self-denying or enthusiastic, we hardly expected that the history of the undertaking would so soon exemplify the remark. It has been found, or at least suspected, that meetings of the kind, for which a money charge is made, are contrary to the law, and the lectures for the present are stopped. The instructive thing is, that the promoters had not the generosity to throw themselves on the spontaneous offerings of those who attended the meetings, but have resolved, it is said, to institute a law-plea, in defence of the glorious right to make the people pay half-crowns and threepences for the only rational and enlightened mode of spending their Sunday evenings. Meanwhile, we observe that in New York a case involving the right to provide Sunday amusements for the public has been tried. The proprietor of a large beer and concert saloon, a very popular place of resort, at No. 519, Eighth Avenue, was convicted of having theatrical amusements at his place on Sunday. He did not deny that the law was against him, but pled that the law was obsolete, that the police did not make arrests under it, and therefore that he was at liberty to disregard it. The judge disallowed all his pleas, and sentenced him to a fine of fifty dollars, and imprisonment for two months.

Short though the career of the St. Martin's Hall Services has been, they have elicited opinions even from the secular press that show a great aversion to the theory on which they were founded, as well as to some of the views they were employed to advance. The lecturers were not content with that large field of science where no collision can occur with revealed truth, but eagerly fastened on positions from which they might fling sneers at the Bible, and all who believe it. The *London Review*, with deep regret, calls attention "to the melancholy and suggestive fact that many names connected with this destructive movement are names intimately connected with the University of London. These men clearly declare an open war with Christianity; they invade the sanctity of the Sabbath; they put a stumbling-block before the souls of the ignorant and the wavering; they tear to pieces the only record God has given us of his will, and of our duty and destiny; they treat all religions as so many forms of human superstition and human error; they would cultivate the mind, to the exclusion of the soul, with its immortal aspirations, hopes, and fears; and they seem to regard heaven and hell as myths, and the human soul as a blank. . . . . If this movement seeks only to teach *scientific* truths, and has no wish to interfere with the recognised forms of Christianity, are there not six days of the week on which they can devote themselves to so noble a task, without infringing upon the Lord's Day and its special duties, and without violating the sanctity of a day that all Christians more or less recognise and observe. If they profess to give religious instruction, let them tell us their creed, and what form and system of religious instruction they adopt." The *Spectator* refers to Professor Huxley's discourse, since published in the *Fortnightly Review*, as "stating notions destructive of all worship, except that very impossible kind of worship recommended by him, worship of the Unknown and Unknowable—notions which have been gaining more and more hold of merely scientific men for many generations, and which are absolutely inconsistent with admitting the activity of any supernatural will in the universe, and still more the actual occurrence of miracle." The able writer in the *Spectator*—one of the most independent newspapers of the day, and least bound by traditional views, as they are called—goes on to show the tendency of purely scientific studies to narrow one's view of the forces that are at work in the universe, and so to encourage the conclusion that as the forces of nature are constant, miracle is impossible. He then shows, that admitting that the forces of nature are immutable and indestructible, there is even in man, and much more in God, a power of controlling these forces, and directing them into channels into which they would not otherwise come. This power, exercised by God under certain conditions, produces miracles. The *Spectator* perhaps overstrains some facts in support of this position, but some notion may be formed of the perilous extent to which men of science are advancing their views when such journals feel constrained to lift up their protest against their fearful excesses.

The opposite sections in the Church of England give signs of greater activity in the maintenance and development of their views. The preparations for battle are especially obvious among the enemies and the supporters of the ritualistic movement. A "Church Association" has been formed, "not to obtain any party triumph, but to repress by legislation and other measures, the Romanizing movement which is now assuming such alarming proportions in the Church of England, especially as regards her ceremonial." A deputation, headed by Canon Wordsworth, has waited on the Archbishop of Canterbury, to present a memorial from the metropolitan clergy, urging him to use his influence to repress the advancing ritualism; but his Grace's reply was too cautious to warrant the expectation of active help. On the other hand, a very influential deputation, consisting of 150 clergymen

and laymen, waited on the archbishop to present a memorial from 40,000 communicants, of whom upwards of 3000 were clergy, and the remainder laymen, against any alterations being made in the Book of Common Prayer. The Archbishop repeated his determination, already expressed, to give his consent to no alteration without the full concurrence of Convocation. There is little doubt that the subject will be prominently discussed during the session of Parliament; but the aversion of Parliament to legislate on Church questions will probably prevent any bill from being passed. There are symptoms, too, of more vigorous assault against the Church from without; the Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Control being evidently prepared for a vigorous campaign. It does not appear that the older members of the Evangelical party are satisfied with the views and spirit of some of the younger. At a recent conference of clergymen, under the auspices of the Vicar of Islington (the Rev. Daniel Wilson), that venerable minister gave utterance to somewhat desponding sentiments on the character and tendencies of the times. "Evangelical friends," he said, "to whom, hitherto, we have looked as the faithful and unflinching supporters of the truth, are seen here and there to give way, in a greater or less degree, to dangerous innovations, and to combine their evangelical teaching with a loose creed and still looser practice. Thus we find the services intoned, the churches profusely decorated, novel vestments adopted, and musical entertainments in support of religious objects patronised by those who, a few years ago, would have shrunk from these compliances. So again we hear loose statements made regarding the plenary inspiration of Scripture, and doubts thrown out as to the eternity of punishment, and even the doctrine of the Atonement, by those whom we should least have suspected of such tendencies. The old practices of our forefathers are by such compromisers despised; new light has broken in; the Bible is too old-fashioned for the present day; they shun the Cross; they dislike the name of party, and would fain merge the entire professing Church in one brotherhood. The Church Congresses now annually held have tended largely to this result. The support given to our beloved Church Missionary and other kindred societies is beginning to fail. The Evangelical men of the present day do not, I fear, as a body, faithfully represent the teaching and practices of their forefathers at the close of the last century, or even the originators of this very clerical meeting at which we are assembled, all of whom, with two or three exceptions, have now been removed from among us."

Among the ecclesiastical rumours that have been prevalent, one is, that a measure is to be brought forward for the endowment of the Roman Catholic priesthood in Ireland. The measure is said to have been thought of at the present time as a suitable acknowledgment of the services of the priests in discountenancing Fenianism among the members of their flocks. But wherever an opportunity has occurred for the expression of their own views on this proposal, it has been so clearly hostile as to render it unlikely that it will be actually brought forward. Whether his opposition is purely disinterested may be a question; it is quite possible that the heads of the Romish Church in that country may see that the acceptance of a *regium donum* would lessen their chance of higher game, which, looking carefully before them, it is likely that they are keeping steadily in view. On the subject of national education, it is suspected that concessions are to be made to the Romish party. The Catholic University, too, it is believed, is to be endowed, and the constitution of the Queen's Colleges, hitherto unsectarian, is proposed to be modified, also in conformity with Romish wishes.

The state of the poor, both in town and country, especially as regards their habitations, continues to excite a lively interest. The progress of the London railways is every year demolishing vast numbers of dwellings, to replace which no sufficient effort is made. The cry is becoming louder and louder for legislative interference, especially where public works like railways are demolishing houses, and for some pressure on the owners of land, particularly in the neighbourhood of large towns. Mr. Peabody, the American merchant, who, a few years ago, made a gift of 150,000*l.*, which he vested in trustees for the benefit of the deserving poor, has most generously added 100,000*l.* to his former gift. This may be regarded as a testimony of his approval of the decision of his trustees to spend his gift in the erection of houses for the working classes, and of their determination, so faithfully carried out, to prevent the wasteful expenditure of any part of the fund committed to them. Meanwhile the ill-housed condition of the London poor, besides receiving such illustrations as that of Dr. Jeafferson's letter, which we noticed on a former month, has had a lurid light cast on it by revelations of the condition of some departments of the London poor-houses. The graphic papers of a correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, giving an account of his own doleful experience during a night spent in the Casual Ward of the Lambeth Workhouse, illustrate not only the great numbers of the houseless poor, but the wretched *morale* that prevails among them, and that bursts out unchecked in the Casual Ward. The evils that accrue from the separation of the charge of the poor from active Christian charity, and from committing them to such classes of persons as usually form our Poor-Law guardians, have also been illustrated by these terrible revelations. Nor is Lambeth Workhouse the only institution where similar evils have prevailed. The Hon. Arthur Kinnaird has borne witness to similar abominations, witnessed with his own eyes in other places. So has the Poor-Law Inspector. Some few improvements may be made on the arrangements for the accommodation and supervision of the casual poor; but the confessedly inadequate character of these arrangements can only show the necessity for far deeper and more comprehensive amendments. The condition of the rural labourer has also been the subject of discussion. Lord Shaftesbury, whose labours in philanthropy are beyond all praise, moved probably by the prevalent disposition to speak of the farm labourer of Dorsetshire as the most starved and ill-provided of an ill-provided class, has come forward in defence of his

county, and endeavoured to show that extra payments, allowances, and other things bring up the wages, that are nominally but 8*s.* or 10*s.*, to some 14*s.* 6*d.* a week. But other philanthropists, such as Lord S. Godolphin Osborne, are not disposed to accept Lord Shaftesbury's vindication. And certainly few men will be disposed to acquiesce in the opinion of the *Times*, that the lot of the Dorsetshire labourer is so extremely happy as to leave hardly anything to be desired. The questions raised by these discussions show the great need for the contact of Christianity with social reform. Political economy is utterly baffled by them. Its law of supply and demand breaks down, when "the London, Chatham, and Dover"—or, as some prefer to call it, "the London, Smash'em, and Over"—dashes through whole streets of workmen's abodes, and sends them scattering in every direction in search of houses that do not exist. There can be little doubt that every such case of upbreak makes additions to the class of roaming, reckless Arabs of the City, who are thenceforward lost to industry and honesty, not to say religion. And the extreme poverty of the agricultural labourer is obviously most unfavourable to the development of independence and the elevation of character. The voice of Christianity calls loudly for amendments in the social fabric, and for nothing, in large towns, is the call louder than for better and more numerous houses. The trustees of Mr. Peabody, in grappling with the problem how the deserving poor might be most benefited, decided on the erection of houses as the most unobjectionable mode of improving their condition, without hurting their independence; and the example so nobly set by him is surely worthy of many imitators.

In France, attention continues to be painfully turned to the progress of atheistic sentiments. "Twenty years ago," says *Le Témoignage*, the new organ of the Lutheran church, as quoted by the correspondent of *Christian Work*, "who would have dreamt of the great explosion of atheism which we witness? These fatal doctrines were supposed to have been conquered, but lo! they spring up on all sides, in science, in art, in literature. The current of youth and passion sets that way. . . . Nothing is more saddening than the spectacle given us by the world of intellect. . . . And the misfortune of the times is, that Christianity seems to have lost its sap and life." Other journals bear testimony to the growing frivolity and atheism of the age. The religious novelty of the year is independent morals. M. Hyacinthe, by his eloquent refutation, has increased the interest felt in it, and when the voice of his remonstrance has died away, what will remain?*

In the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, well known to be the leading Review of France, M. Alphonse Esquiros, an author who has written much on English life and manners, has lately contributed a paper on Religious Life in England. He speaks successively of the several religious denominations, dwelling even on some prominent individuals, such as Dr. Pusey and Mr. Spurgeon. He acknowledges the superiority of the Reformed Churches, especially in the promotion of popular education, free institutions, and civilisation at large; and would probably assign to Protestantism a higher position than to the Romish faith.

Dr. Livingstone, who was lately spending some time in Bombay, has written an interesting letter, giving his impressions of the present state of Indian society, and the effects that have been produced by Christian missions. Dr. Livingstone, while deeply deploring some of the obstacles to the success of Christian missions which some regard as insuperable, does not attach to them the weight that others are disposed to believe in. Neither the differences among Christians, nor the inconsistent lives of some who profess the Christian religion, make so great an impression on the natives, in the way of throwing doubt on the divine origin of Christianity, as many might suppose. Once, when he himself greatly dreaded the effects of some very gross behaviour of white people in Africa, his black friends simply remarked, "We see that whites have fools among them as well as blacks." He believes that a great change for the better is going on in Indian society. The Government, on the whole, is using its influence for good. Education is becoming very general. The educated classes are getting very sick of caste. "Caste," said a Brahmin freely to Dr. Livingstone, "is the curse of the country—it must always be a bar to any feeling of nationality." Railways, and a free English and native press, are doing a great deal. The missionary element is also doing a great work. It is a mistake that the native Christians are the worst of the community. Dr. Livingstone was much struck with a change of expression in the Christian women at Ahmedabad, Borsud, and elsewhere; they were pleasant to look at, while the women in general have a most discontented expression. "The part of the missionaries in the great leavening process that is going on is more than they cost. They are the *fons et origo* of all that is now doing; and it would be well if those who have theoretical objections to the work would come out, and calmly and philosophically examine the question for themselves."

In the history of missions, one of the most interesting things to be met with is the existence of native congregations, sufficiently large and vital to exert a sensible influence on their locality. In the *Colombo Observer* of December last an interesting account is given of a congregation of this kind, at Morotto, in Ceylon. After describing the stately appearance of Morotto, which at no distant period was quite a wretched place, mention is made of two churches, the one a splendid and costly memorial church, the other a plain Wesleyan chapel. Mr. de Zylva, till lately the pastor of this chapel, spent twenty-four years in evangelistic labours, and was the means of adding more than 600 members to the church. "When Mr. de Zylva came to the station in 1840, there was nothing to distinguish it from any other

* In consequence of the early period of the month at which the *Sunday Magazine* has to be put to press, we were led last month into a statement that was then going the round of some newspapers, but which turns out to have been unfounded, that M. Hyacinthe had been remanded to his convent in consequence of the liberal tone of some of his observations.

place in the island; the inhabitants are represented as having been poor, ignorant, and dull. He had few things outwardly in his favour. He is not of the same caste as the villagers, and we have seen how morbidly jealous they are upon this subject. He had all the usual obstacles to contend with, demonism, Buddhism, and Romanism. The first cause of a change for the better—the first thing that gained the attention and confidence of the people, was house-to-house visitation. This was carried on at all times, and in all states of the weather; meal-times were unheeded, and the fare of the poorest was readily accepted when offered, even to a washerwoman's rice-milk: an interest was taken in all their family concerns; and the Minister began to be regarded as a friend. No assumption was attempted, and language the most familiar was used in illustrating the truths of the Gospel. There was no connivance at sin, and all acts of heathenism were sharply rebuked; but a spirit of gentleness and kindness was always the most prominent feature in all Mr. de Zylva's intercourse with the families that received him. In the pulpit he is an attractive preacher; but it is rather from his earnestness, the homeliness of his style, and the striking character of his allusions, than from what a critical hearer would call words of eloquence. He loves to tell stories that have about them point and raciness. He uses the Saxon of his native language; and the half-smile that continually plays upon the countenance of those who listen to him is an evidence that he has gained their attention, and is well understood. A woman who had gone to another service was disappointed, as the minister did not come; so after sitting some time on a gravestone, she was induced to go to the Wesleyan chapel, and the Word came with power to her heart. She said: 'This is just like the talk in our house; I can understand it all.' From that time she cast in her lot with her despised neighbours, and is now walking in the fear of God."

The eagerness of the people of Madagascar for the Word of God is strikingly shown in the following letter from the Rev. R. G. Hartley, an agent of the Bible Society settled in the capital:—

"It would be difficult to exaggerate the store set upon their Bibles by the Christians here. They are obliged to be people of one book, for they have hardly any other books but the Bible, and such as explain and enforce its truths. I have been to-day to a village some miles off, where, once a week, the preachers and young men from five different villages meet me for instruction in the Gospels; and the Bible I found there, though it only reached us from England four months ago, is as well worn as if it had been used for as many years. Every part of it bears marks of its having been read over and over again; and I was much struck the other day to hear the pastor of this congregation, an old man, who has been blind for many years, quote a text in the words, not of the old version which he has known for years, but of this new one, which has been here so short a time, and which *he* has never seen. The younger people especially show the greatest eagerness in acquiring all the knowledge within their reach which illustrates the Bible; indeed they care for little else. I have four large Bible classes each week, and many of those who attend my classes attend those of the other missionaries on other days. Indeed, I think that some of the younger men attend a Bible class somewhere or other nearly every day in the week, except when they are prevented by the demands of the Government service, which everyone has to obey whenever required. Last week a deputation from each of the seven congregations in town requested to meet us, to ask us to have printed, in the form of a commentary, our weekly lessons. They said that many of them were too old to come to the classes, and others lived far away in the country, and that they too readily forgot what they only learned by word of mouth; so they asked us to prepare a commentary for them, and they would bear all the expense. We gladly assented to do all we could, and promised to give them one of the Gospels to begin with; but as they have hitherto proved very averse to paying for any of the books they have had, we required them to give us a list beforehand of those who agreed to take the book. In a week a subscription list for nearly 500 copies was brought to us, so that we shall begin at once, and bring out the book as quickly as the exigencies of our other work and the resources of the missionary printing-office will permit. English Bibles, with references, are most eagerly sought, and are made more useful than could be expected in the case of those who do not know a word of English."

From the papers of two eminent Scottish ministers, both cut off in the height of their usefulness, two interesting volumes of sermons have appeared. That by the Rev. Dr. Robertson of Glasgow is preceded by an interesting memoir, briefly sketching the course of a young man of humble origin but remarkable talents and acquirements, who, after a brilliant career at the University of St. Andrew's, came out at once a finished preacher, became minister of the parish of Mains, was presented to the collegiate charge of St. Andrew's, Edinburgh, but did not accept the appointment, and died, at the early age of forty, as minister of the Cathedral Church of Glasgow. In this last sphere, especially, his activity as a pastor was extremely great, and his efforts on behalf of his large parish worthy of the highest praise. His death was evidently the result of an overworked body and mind; his inward force worked at such a heat that his vital energies were wasted when he had not lived much more than half his days. The sermons and other papers published with them are fresh, independent, thoughtful, earnest; but they are to be viewed as the product of a mind that regarded Christianity almost wholly *as a life*,—on its subjective rather than its objective side. Some of his views would probably have been modified had he directed his attention more to the *judicial* aspect of the Divine government, and the claims of God's righteous law. The other volume is by the Rev. Dr. Park, late of St. Andrew's, the predecessor in his present charge of A. K. H. B. It is an excellent collection, the teaching based firmly on the great truths of Revelation, and enforcing and applying these with much power and beauty, with a

rare combination of faithfulness and charity, and an equally remarkable union of simplicity and culture.

The Bampton Lecture for 1865, now published, was delivered by the Rev. J. B. Mozley, B.D., the well-known author of a treatise on Augustinianism. Mr. Mozley's subject is Miracles. It is but one department of this subject that he discusses, an extremely seasonable one in the present state of speculation among intellectual men,—the antecedent probability or possibility of miracles. Are we precluded from accepting miracles, before we have inquired into the evidence of their occurrence, by the results of physical science, by historical experience, by fitting conceptions of God's attributes, or by any inherent impossibility of adequate testimony for that which miracles are, or by the existence of false miracles? To such questions as these Mr. Mozley applies himself, without any pretence of rhetoric or eloquence, but with a vigorous grasp of logic, and often with a power and success that render his book a valuable addition to Christian Apologetics, in the present temper of men's minds.

The third volume of Mr. Rawlinson's "Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World," is devoted to the history of Media and that of Babylonia. Mr. Rawlinson, the brother of Sir Henry Rawlinson, of Assyrian fame, is well known as a most elaborate scholar, who has especially devoted himself to show the connection between ancient history, particularly as illustrated by modern lights, and the history recorded in the Bible. Media and Babylonia are interesting to the Bible student chiefly as having been the seats, the one of the deportation of the ten tribes, the other of that of the Jews, during their several captivities. The chapter on the religion of the Medes is one of much interest and importance. In the appendix we have a translation of the "Standard Inscription of Nebuchadnezzar," in which he is believed to make allusion to his remarkable illness. A very elaborate account is given of the fall of Babylon, based on Herodotus, Xenophon, and the Hebrew Scriptures.

"Theology and Life," is the title given to a collection of sermons just published by Professor Plumptre, of King's College, London. The sermons were preached chiefly on special occasions, several of them before the University of Oxford. They furnish a remarkable instance of the union of the highest culture of the age with Christian faith and earnestness. Mr. Plumptre's sympathies are wide, and his turn of mind is hopeful and charitable—disposed to take a favourable view of movements that seem to many full of unmitigated evil, yet not blind to the dangers to which this temper is exposed, and eager to prevent his tolerance from passing into doubt, or what is worse, indifference. Mr. Plumptre is a writer of unusual freshness and brilliancy, with an acute, penetrating mind, that, if it be sometimes overstrained, yet often throws beautiful light on Bible history, as well as on the problems of the age. The first sermon in the volume handles a subject of remarkable interest—the ministry of great cities. On the one hand, in such a place as London, the Christian labourer is apt to be overwhelmed, and thrown into despair by the fearful mass of ignorance, carelessness, vice, and wretchedness; on the other hand, the very greatness of the work, once he begins to it, has a stimulating effect on the labourer; he has the advantage, too, of ceaseless intercourse with men of thoughts and feelings different from his own, educating him in charity and forbearance; and he has the opportunity of taking a better estimate than others of the great questions of the day in their bearing on the work of Christianity. The chief interest of these sermons lies in their being the production of a serious, thoughtful, highly-educated mind, guiding others of the same class along the paths he himself has trod. They are earnest and honest effusions of the writer's heart, with a remarkable adaptation to the present time. On some points we may not accept all his conclusions. His explanation of justification by faith is not fully coincident with the doctrine which Luther called the *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*; and while with his whole heart he upholds the sacrifice and atonement of Christ, he seems to shrink from the doctrine that his death was the penalty of sin.

Under the title "Ecce Homo," we have a remarkable book, designed as a survey of the Life and Work of Jesus Christ. It is an elaborate attempt to explain both on human principles, and to show the wise adaptation of the means to the end sought to be accomplished. If viewed as an amendment on Renan, the book is extremely interesting, and seems to promise a still further advance when the unknown but very able writer's opinions are more fully developed. But if regarded from a higher stand-point, it is very defective, though even then extremely suggestive. The view which the writer takes of Christ's object is extremely limited—not even alluding to the expiation of man's guilt, as if that formed any part of his plan—but regarding the moral elevation of mankind as the great purpose for which Christ lived and laboured. The question of his miracles is not discussed; it is only assumed as undeniable that he professed to work miracles. The integrity of the record is at least suspected; the accounts are often considered likely to have been exaggerated. The ability of the writer of this book is unquestionable, and the grasp and constructive power which it evinces are alike rare and remarkable. There can be no doubt too, that it evinces, in a remarkable way, the wisdom that underlies Christ's life and teaching, and that it often brings out very vividly a meaning and a principle where ordinary readers do not perceive them. It shows that the channels in which Christianity was made to flow were the best that could have been chosen, and were selected with a skill to which no other movement furnishes a parallel. Still, without denying the supernatural elements in Christ's life and teaching, this book seems to reduce them to the smallest amount—giving almost everything to reason, and leaving little or nothing to faith. But after having shown the transcendant wisdom that conceived and shaped Christianity, the writer confesses his (or perhaps we should say her) inability to explain the origin of the Christian Church. "For others it must be enough to say, 'the Holy Ghost fell on those that believed.' No man saw the building of the New Jerusalem; the workmen crowded together the unfinished walls and unpaved streets; no man heard the clink of trowel and pickaxe; *it descended out of heaven from God.*"

Drawn by R. Barnes. Engraved by J. Swain.

"TURNING, I SAW THE GREY HEAD AND THE WHITE SMOCK OF MY FRIEND OLD ROGERS."

Page 409.

ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BY THE VICAR.

XIV.

ALTHOUGH I do happen to know how Miss Oldcastle fared that night after I left her, the painful record is not essential to my story. Besides, I have hitherto recorded only those things "quorum pars magna"—or *minima*, as the case may be—"fui." There is one exception—old Weir's story, for the introduction of which my reader cannot yet see the artistic reason. For whether a story be real in fact, or only real in meaning, there must always be an idea, or artistic model in the brain, after which it is fashioned: in the latter case one of invention, in the former case one of choice. And here I may be pardoned if I claim the sympathy of my intelligent readers in this, that I have from month to month to provide a fragment of my life-chart, the bearings of which to the rest of it cannot be seen, and which therefore may sometimes, to an eye unaccustomed to consider the globosity of things drawn upon a plane, be greatly misunderstood. Such an eye will discover in the story what never was there, and so blind itself to what is there.

In the middle of the following week I was returning from a visit I had paid to Tomkins and his wife, when I met, in the only street of the village, my good and honoured friend Dr. Duncan. Of course I saw him often—and I beg my reader to remember that this is no diary, but only a gathering together of some of the more remarkable facts of my history, admitting of being ideally grouped—but this time I recall distinctly because the interview led to many things.

"Well, Doctor Duncan," I said, "busy as usual fighting the devil?"

"Ah, my dear Mr. Walton," returned the doctor—and a kind word from him went a long way into my heart—"I know what you mean. You fight the devil from the inside, and I fight him from the outside. My chance is a poor one."

"It would be, perhaps, if you were confined to outside remedies. But what an opportunity your profession gives you of attacking the enemy from the inside as well! And you have this advantage over us, that no man can say it belongs to your profession to say such things, and *therefore* disregard them."

"Ah, Mr. Walton, I have too great a respect for your profession to dare to interfere with it. The doctor in "Macbeth," you know, could

> not minister to a mind diseased,
> Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
> Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
> And with some sweet oblivious antidote
> Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff
> Which weighs upon the heart."

"What a memory you have! But you don't think I can do that any more than you?"

"You know the best medicine to give, anyhow. I wish I always did. But you see we have no *theriaca* now."

"Well, we have. For the Lord says, 'Come unto me, and I will give you rest.'"

"There! I told you! That will meet all diseases."

"Strangely now, there comes into my mind a line of Chaucer, with which I will make a small return for your quotation from Shakespeare. You have mentioned *theriaca;* and I, without thinking of this line, quoted our Lord's words. Chaucer brings the two together, for the word *triacle* is merely a corruption of *theriaca*, the unfailing cure for everything.

> Crist, which that is to every harm triacle."

"That is delightful: I thank you. And that is in Chaucer?"

"Yes. In the Man-of-Law's tale."

"Shall I tell you how I was able to quote so correctly from Shakespeare? I have just come from referring to the passage. And I mention that because I want to tell you what made me think of the passage. I had been to see poor Catherine Weir. I think she is not long for this world. She has a bad cough, and I fear her lungs are going."

"I am concerned to hear that. I considered her very delicate, and am not surprised. But I wish, I do wish, I had got a little hold of her before, that I might be of some use to her now. Is she in immediate danger, do you think?"

"No, I do not think so. But I have no expectation of her recovery. Very likely she will just live through the winter and die in the spring. Those patients so often go as the flowers come! All her coughing, poor woman, will not cleanse her stuffed bosom. The perilous stuff weighs on her heart, as Shakespeare says, as well as on her lungs."

"Ah, dear! What is it, doctor, that weighs upon her heart? Is it shame, or what is it? for she is so uncommunicative that I hardly know anything at all about her yet."

"I cannot tell. She has the faculty of silence."

"But do not think I complain that she has not made me her confessor. I only mean that if she would talk at all, one would have a chance of knowing something of the state of her mind, and so might give her some help."

"Perhaps she will break down all at once, and open her mind to you. I have not told her she is dying. I think a medical man ought at least to be quite sure before he dares to say such a thing. I have known a long life injured, to human view at least, by the medical verdict in youth of ever imminent death."

"Certainly one has no right to say what God is going to do with anyone till he knows it beyond a doubt. Illness has its own peculiar mission, independent of any association with coming death, and may often work better when mingled with the hope of life.

I mean, we must take care of presumption when we measure God's plans by our theories. But could you not suggest something, Doctor Duncan, to guide me in trying to do my duty by her?"

"I cannot. You see you don't know what she is *tqinking;* and till you know that, I presume you will agree with me that all is an aim in the dark. How can I prescribe, without *some* diagnosis? It is just one of those few cases in which one would like to have the authority of the Catholic priests to urge confession with. I do not think anything will save her life, as we say, but you have taught some of us to think of the life that belongs to the spirit as *the* life; and I do believe confession would do everything for that."

"Yes, if made to God. But I will grant that communication of one's sorrows or even sins to a wise brother of mankind may help to a deeper confession to the Father in heaven. But I have no wish for *authority* in the matter. Let us see whether the Spirit of God working in her may not be quite as powerful for a final illumination of her being as the *fiat confessio* of a priest. I have no confidence in *forcing* in the moral or spiritual garden. A hot-house development must necessarily be a sickly one, rendering the plant unfit for the normal life of the open air. Wait. We must not hurry things. She will perhaps come to me of herself before long. But I will call and inquire after her."

We parted; and I went at once to Catherine Weir's shop. She received me much as usual, which was hardly to be called receiving at all. Perhaps there was a doubtful shadow, not of more cordiality, but of less repulsion in it. Her eyes were full of a stony brilliance, and the flame of the fire that was consuming her glowed upon her cheeks more brightly, I thought, than ever; but that might be fancy, occasioned by what the doctor had said about her. Her hand trembled, but her demeanour was perfectly calm.

"I am sorry to hear you are complaining, Miss Weir," I said.

"I suppose Dr. Duncan told you so, sir. But I am quite well. I did not send for him. He called of himself, and wanted to persuade me I was ill."

I understood that she felt injured by his interference.

"You should attend to his advice, though. He is a prudent man, and not in the least given to alarming people without cause."

She returned no answer. So I tried another subject.

"What a fine fellow your brother is!"

"Yes; he grows very much."

"Has your father found another place for him yet?"

"I don't know. My father never tells me about any of his doings."

"But don't you go and talk to him, sometimes?"

"No. He does not care to see me."

"I am going there now: will you come with me?"

"Thank you. I never go where I am not wanted."

"But it is not right that father and daughter should live as you do. Suppose he may not have been so kind to you as he ought, you should not cherish resentment against him for it. That only makes matters worse, you know."

"I never said to human being that he had been unkind to me."

"And yet you let every person in the village know it."

"How?"

Her eye had no longer the stony glitter. It flashed now.

"You are never seen together. You scarcely speak when you meet. Neither of you cross the other's threshold."

"It is not my fault."

"It is not *all* your fault, I know. But do you think you can go to a Heaven at last where you will be able to keep apart from each other, he in his house and you in your house, without any sign that it was through this father on earth that you were born into the world which the Father in Heaven redeemed by the gift of his own Son?"

She was silent; and, after a pause, I went on.

"I believe, in my heart, that you love your father. I could not believe otherwise of you. And you will never be happy till you have made it up with him. Have you done him no wrong?"

At these words, her face turned white—with anger, I could see—all but those spots on her cheek-bones, which shone out in dreadful contrast to the deathly paleness of the rest of her face. Then the returning blood surged violently from her heart, and the red spots were lost in one crimson glow. She opened her lips to speak, but apparently changing her mind, turned and walked haughtily out of the shop and closed the door behind her.

I waited, hoping she would recover herself and return; but, after ten minutes had passed, I thought it better to go away.

As I had told her, I was going to her father's shop. There I was received very differently. There was a certain softness in the manner of the carpenter which I had not observed before, with the same heartiness in the shake of his hand which had accompanied my last leave-taking. I had purposely allowed ten days to elapse before I called again, to give time for the unpleasant feelings associated with my interference to vanish. And now I had something in my mind about young Tom.

"Have you got anything for your boy yet, Thomas?"

"Not yet, sir. There's time enough. I don't want to part with him just yet. There he is, taking his turn at what's going. Tom!"

And from the further end of the large shop, where I had not observed him, now approached young Tom, in a canvas jacket, looking quite like a workman.

"Well, Tom, I am glad to find you can turn your hand to anything."

"I must be a stupid, sir, if I couldn't handle my father's tools," returned the lad.

"I don't know that quite. I am not just prepared to admit it, for my own sake. My father is a lawyer, and I never could read a chapter in one of his books—his tools, you know."

"Perhaps you never tried, sir."

"Indeed, I did; and no doubt I could have done it if I had made up my mind to it. But I never felt

inclined to finish the page. And that reminds me why I called to-day. Thomas, I know that lad of yours is fond of reading. Can you spare him from his work for an hour or so before breakfast?"

"To-morrow, sir?"

"To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow," I answered; "and there's Shakespeare for you."

"Of course, sir, whatever you wish," said Thomas, with a perplexed look in which pleasure seemed to long for confirmation, and to be, till that came, afraid to put its "native semblance on."

"I want to give him some direction in his reading. When a man is fond of any tools, and can use them, it is worth while showing him how to use them better."

"O thank you, sir!" exclaimed Tom, his face beaming with delight.

"That *is* kind of you, sir! Tom, you're a made man!" cried the father.

"So," I went on, "if you will let him come to me for an hour every morning, till he gets another place, say from eight to nine, I will see what I can do for him."

Tom's face was as red with delight, as his sister's had been with anger. And I left the shop somewhat consoled for the pain I had given Catherine, which grieved me without making me sorry that I had occasioned it.

I had intended to try to do something from the father's side towards a reconciliation with his daughter. But no sooner had I made my proposal for Tom than I saw I had blocked up my own way towards my more important end. For I could not bear to seem to offer to bribe him even to allow me to do him good. Nor would he see that it was for his good and his daughter's—not at first. The first impression would be that I had a *professional* end to gain; that the reconciling of father and daughter was a sort of parish business of mine, and that I had smoothed the way to it by offering a gift—an intellectual one, true, but not, therefore, the less a gift in the eyes of Thomas, who had a great respect for books. This was just what would irritate such a man, and I resolved to say nothing about it, but bide my time.

When Tom came, I asked him if he had read any of Wordsworth. For I always give people what I like myself, because that must be wherein I can best help them. I was anxious, too, to find out what he was capable of. And for this, anything that has more than a surface meaning will do. I had no doubt about the lad's intellect, and now I wanted to see what there was deeper than the intellect in him.

He said he had not.

I therefore chose one of Wordsworth's sonnets, not one of his best by any means, but suitable for my purpose—the one entitled, "Composed during a Storm." This I gave him to read, telling him to let me know when he considered that he had mastered the meaning of it, and sat down to my own studies. I remember I was then reading the Anglo-Saxon gospels. I think it was fully half-an-hour before Tom rose and gently approached my place. I had not been uneasy about the experiment after ten minutes had passed, and after that time was doubled, I felt certain of some measure of success. This may possibly puzzle my reader; but I will explain. It was clear that Tom did not understand the sonnet at first; and I was not in the least certain that he would come to understand it by any exertion of his intellect, without further experience. But what I was delighted to be made sure of was that Tom at least knew that he did not know. For that is the very next step to knowing. Indeed, it may be said to be a more valuable gift than the other, being of general application; for some quick people will understand many things very easily, but when they come to a thing that is beyond their present reach, will fancy they see a meaning in it, or invent one, or even—which is far worse—pronounce it nonsense; and indeed show themselves capable of any device for getting out of the difficulty, except seeing and confessing to themselves that they are not able to understand it. Possibly this sonnet might be beyond Tom now, but at least there was great hope that he saw, or believed, that there must be something beyond him in it. I only hoped that he would not fall upon some wrong interpretation, seeing he was brooding over it so long.

"Well, Tom," I said, "have you made it out?"

"I can't say I have, sir. I'm afraid I'm very stupid, for I've tried hard. I must just ask you to tell me what it means. But I must tell you one thing, sir: every time I read it over—twenty times, I daresay—I thought I was lying on my mother's grave, as I lay that terrible night; and then at the end there you were standing over me and saying, 'Can I do anything to help you?'"

I was struck with astonishment. For here, in a wonderful manner, I saw the imagination outrunning the intellect, and manifesting to the heart what the brain could not yet understand. It indicated undeveloped gifts of a far higher nature than those belonging to the mere power of understanding alone. For there was a hidden sympathy of the deepest kind between the life experience of the lad, and the embodiment of such life experience on the part of the poet. But he went on:

"I am sure, sir, I ought to have been at my prayers, then, but I wasn't; so I didn't deserve you to come. But don't you think God is sometimes better to us than we deserve?"

"He is just everything to us, Tom; and we don't and can't deserve anything. Now I will try to explain the sonnet to you."

I had always had an impulse to teach; not for the teaching's sake, for that, regarded as the attempt to fill skulls with knowledge, had always been to me a desolate dreariness; but the moment I saw a sign of hunger, an indication of readiness to receive, I was invariably seized with a kind of passion for giving. I now proceeded to explain the sonnet. Having done so, nearly as well as I could, Tom said:

"It is very strange, sir; but now that I have heard you say what the poem means, I feel as if I had known it all the time, though I could not say it."

Here at least was no common mind. The reader will not be surprised to hear that the hour before breakfast extended into two hours after breakfast as well. Nor did this take up too much of my time, for the lad was capable of doing a great deal for him-

self under the sense of help at hand. His father, so far from making any objection to the arrangement, was delighted with it. Nor do I believe that the lad did less work in the shop for it: I learned that he worked regularly till eight o'clock every night.

Now the good of the arrangement was this: I had the lad fresh in the morning, clear-headed, with no mists from the valley of labour to cloud the heights of understanding. From the exercise of the mind it was a pleasant and relieving change to turn to bodily exertion. I am certain that he both thought and worked better, because he both thought and worked. Every literary man ought to be *mechanical* (to use a Shakespearean word) as well. But it would have been quite a different matter, if he had come to me after the labour of the day. He would not then have been able to think nearly so well. But *labour, sleep, thought, labour again*, seems to me to be the right order with those who, earning their bread by the sweat of the brow, would yet remember that man shall not live by bread alone. Were it possible that our mechanics could attend the institutions called by their name in the morning instead of the evening, perhaps we should not find them so ready to degenerate into places of mere amusement. I am not objecting to the amusement; only to cease to educate in order to amuse is to degenerate. Amusement is a good and sacred thing; but it is not on a par with education; and, indeed, if it does not in any way further the growth of the higher nature, it cannot be called good at all.

Having exercised him in the analysis of some of the best portions of our home literature,—I mean helped him to take them to pieces, that, putting them together again, he might see what kind of things they were—for who could understand a new machine, or find out what it was meant for, without either actually or in his mind taking it to pieces? (which pieces, however, let me remind my reader, are utterly useless, except in their relation to the whole)—I resolved to try something fresh with him.

At this point I had intended to give my readers a theory of mine about the teaching and learning of a language; and tell them how I had found the trial of it succeed in the case of Tom Weir. But I think this would be too much of a digression from the course of my narrative, and would, besides, be interesting to those only who had given a good deal of thought to subjects belonging to education. I will only say, therefore, that, by the end of three months, my pupil, without knowing any other Latin author, was able to read any part of the first book of the Æneid—to read it tolerably in measure, and to enjoy the poetry of it—and this not without a knowledge of the declensions and conjugations. As to the syntax, I made the sentences themselves teach him that. Now, I know that, as an end, all this was of no great value; but as a beginning, it was invaluable, for it made and *kept* him hungry for more; whereas, in most modes of teaching, the beginnings are such that without the pressure of circumstances, no boy, especially after an interval of cessation, will return to them. Such is not Nature's mode, for the beginnings with her are as pleasant as the fruition, and that without being less thorough than they can be. The knowledge a child gains of the external world is the foundation upon which all his future philosophy is built. Every discovery he makes is fraught with pleasure—that is the secret of his progress, and the essence of my theory: that learning should, in each individual case, as in the first case, be *discovery*—bringing its own pleasure with it. Nor is this to be confounded with turning study into play. It is upon the moon itself that the infant speculates, after the moon itself that he stretches out his eager hands—to find in after years that he still wants her, but that in science and poetry he has her a thousand-fold more than if she had been handed him down to suck.

So, after all, I have bored my reader with a shadow of my theory, instead of an outline. After all, again, the description would have plagued him more, and that must be both his and my comfort.

So through the whole of that summer and the following winter, I went on teaching Tom Weir. He was a lad of uncommon ability, else he could not have effected what I say he had within his first three months of Latin, let my theory be not only perfect in itself, but true as well—true to human nature, I mean. And his father, though his own book-learning was but small, had enough of insight to perceive that his son was something out of the common, and that any possible advantage he might lose by remaining in Marshmallows was considerably more than counterbalanced by the instruction he got from the vicar. Hence, I believe, it was that not a word was said about another situation for Tom. And I was glad of it; for it seemed to me that the lad had abilities equal to any profession whatever.

XV.

On the next Sunday but one—which was surprising to me when I considered the manner of our last parting—Catherine Weir was in church, for the second time since I had come to the place. As it happened, only as Spenser says—

"It chanced—eternal God that chance did guide,"

—and why I say this, will appear afterwards—I had, in preaching upon, that is, in endeavouring to enforce the Lord's Prayer by making them think about the meaning of the words they were so familiar with, come to the petition, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;" with which I naturally connected the words of our Lord that follow: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." I need not tell my reader more of what I said about this, than that I tried to show that even were it possible with God to forgive an unforgiving man, the man himself would not be able to believe for a moment that God did forgive him, and therefore could get no comfort or help or joy of any kind from the forgiveness; so essentially does hatred, or revenge, or contempt, or anything that separates us from man, separate us from God too. To the loving soul alone does the Father reveal himself; for love alone can understand him. It is the peace-makers who are his children.

This I said, thinking of no one more than another of my audience. But as I closed my sermon, I could not help fancying that Mrs. Oldcastle looked at me with more than her usual fierceness. I forgot all about it, however, for I never seemed to myself to have any hold of, or relation to, that woman. I know I was wrong in being unable to feel my relation to her because I disliked her. But not till years after did I begin to understand how she felt, or recognize in myself a common humanity with her. A sin of my own made me understand her condition. I can hardly explain now; I will tell it when the time comes. When I called upon her next, after the interview last related, she behaved much as if she had forgotten all about it, which was not likely.

In the end of the week after the sermon to which I have alluded, I was passing the Hall-gate on my usual Saturday's walk, when Judy saw me from within, as she came out of the lodge. She was with me in a moment.

"Mr. Walton," she said, "how could you preach at Grannie as you did last Sunday?"

"I did not preach at any body, Judy."

"Oh, Mr. Walton!"

"You know I didn't, Judy. You know that if I had, I would not say I had not."

"Yes, yes; I know that perfectly," she said, seriously. "But Grannie thinks you did."

"How do you know that?"

"By her face."

"That is all, is it?"

"You don't think Grannie would say so?"

"No. Nor yet that you could know by her face what she was thinking."

"Oh! can't I just? I can read her face—not so well as plain print; but, let me see, as well as what Uncle Stoddart calls black-letter, at least. I know she thought you were preaching at her; and her face said, 'I shan't forgive *you*, anyhow. I never forgive, and I won't for all your preaching.' That's what her face said."

"I am sure she would not say so, Judy," I said, really not knowing what to say.

"Oh, no; she would not say so. She would say, 'I always forgive, but I never forget.' That's a favourite saying of hers."

"But, Judy, don't you think it is rather hypocritical of you to say all this to me about your grandmother when she is so kind to you, and you seem such good friends with her?"

She looked up in my face with an expression of surprise.

"It is all *true*, Mr. Walton," she said.

"Perhaps. But you are saying it behind her back."

"I will go home and say it to her face, directly."

She turned to go.

"No, no, Judy. I did not mean that," I said, taking her by the arm.

"I won't say you told me to do it. I thought there was no harm in telling you. Grannie is kind to me, and I am kind to her. But Grannie is afraid of my tongue, and I mean her to be afraid of it. It's the only way to keep her in order. Darling Aunt Winnie! it's all she's got to defend her. If you knew how she treats her sometimes, you would be cross with Grannie yourself, Mr. Walton, for all your goodness and your white surplice."

And to my yet greater surprise, the wayward girl burst out crying, and, breaking away from me, ran through the gate, and out of sight amongst the trees, without once looking back.

I pursued my walk, my meditations somewhat discomposed by the recurring question:—Would she go home and tell her grandmother what she had said to me? And, if she did, would it not widen the breach upon the opposite side of which I seemed to see Ethelwyn stand, out of the reach of my help?

I walked quickly on to reach a stile by means of which I should soon leave the little world of Marshmallows quite behind me, and be alone with nature and my Greek Testament. Hearing the sound of horse hoofs on the road from Addicehead, I glanced up from my pocket-book, in which I had been looking over the thoughts that had at various moments passed through my mind that week, in order to choose one (or more, if they would go together) to be brooded over to-day for my people's spiritual diet to-morrow—I say I glanced up from my pocket-book, and saw a young man, that is, if I could call myself young still, of distinguished appearance, approaching upon a good serviceable hack. He turned into my road and passed me. He was pale, with a dark moustache, and large dark eyes; sat his horse well and carelessly; had fine features of the type commonly considered Grecian, but thin, and expressive chiefly of conscious weariness. He wore a white hat with crape upon it, white gloves, and long, military-looking boots. All this I caught as he passed me; and I remembered them because, looking after him, I saw him stop at the lodge of the Hall, ring the bell, and then ride through the gate. I confess I did not quite like this; but I got over the feeling so far as to be able to turn to my Testament when I had reached and crossed the stile.

I came home another way, after one of the most delightful days I had ever spent. Having reached the river in the course of my wandering, I came down the side of it towards Old Rogers' cottage, loitering and looking, quiet in heart and soul and mind, because I had committed my cares to Him who careth for us. The earth was round me—I was rooted, as it were, in it, but the air of a higher life was about me. I was swayed to and fro by the motions of a spiritual power; feelings and desires and hopes passed through me, passed away, and returned; and still my head rose into the truth, and the will of God was the regnant sunlight upon it. I might change my place and condition; new feelings might come forth, and old feelings retire into the lonely corners of my being; but still my heart should be glad and strong in the one changeless thing, in the truth that maketh free; still my head should rise into the sunlight of God, and I should know that because He lived I should live also, and because He was true I should remain true also, nor should any change pass upon me that should make me mourn the decadence of humanity. And then I found that I was gazing over the stump of an old pollard, on which I was

leaning, down on a great bed of white water-lilies, that lay in the broad slow river, here broader and slower than in most places. The slanting yellow sunlight shone through the water down to their very roots anchored in the soil, and the water swathed their stems with coolness and freshness, and a universal sense, I doubted not, of watery presence and nurture. And there on their lovely heads, as they lay on the pillow of the water, shone the life-giving light of the summer sun, filling all the spaces between their outspread petals of living silver with its sea of radiance, and making them gleam with the whiteness which was born of them and the sun. And then came a hand on my shoulder, and, turning, I saw the grey head and the white smock of my old friend Rogers, and I was glad that he loved me enough not to be afraid of the parson and the gentleman.

"I've found it, sir, I do think," he said, his brown furrowed old face shining with a yet lovelier light than that which shone from the blossoms of the water-lilies, though, after what I had been thinking about them, it was no wonder that they seemed both to mean the same thing,—both to shine in the light of His countenance.

"Found what, Old Rogers?" I returned, raising myself, and laying my hand in return on his shoulder.

"Why He was displeased with the disciples for not knowing——"

"What He meant about the leaven of the Pharisees," I interrupted. "Yes, yes, of course. Tell me, then."

"I will try, sir. It was all dark to me for days. For it appeared to me very nat'ral that, seeing they had no bread in the locker, and hearing tell of leaven which they weren't to eat, they should think it had summat to do with their having none of any sort. But He didn't seem to think it was right of them to fall into the blunder. For why, then? A man can't be always right. He may be like myself, a foremast-man with no schoolin' but what the winds and the waves put into him, and I'm thinkin' those fishermen the Lord took to so much were something o' that sort. 'How could they help it?' I said to myself, sir. And from that I came to ask myself, 'Could they have helped it?' If they couldn't, He wouldn't have been vexed with them. Mayhap they ought to ha' been able to help it. And all at once, sir, this mornin', it came to me. I don't know how, but it was give to me, anyhow. And I flung down my rake, and I ran in to the old woman, but she wasn't in the way, and so I went back to my work again. But when I saw you, sir, a readin' upon the lilies o' the field, leastways, the lilies o' the water, I couldn't help running out to tell you. Isn't it a satisfaction, sir, when yer dead reckonin' runs ye right in betwixt the cheeks of the harbour? I see it all now."

"Well, I want to know, Old Rogers. I'm not so old as you, and so I *may* live longer. And every time I read that passage, I should like to be able to say to myself, 'Old Rogers gave me this.'"

"I only hope I'm right, sir. It was just this: their heads was full of their dinner because they didn't know where it was to come from. But they ought to ha' known where it always come from. If their hearts had been full of the dinner He give the five thousand hungry men and women and children, they wouldn't have been uncomfortable about not having a loaf. And so they wouldn't have been set upon the wrong tack when He spoke about the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees; and they would have known in a moment what He meant. And if I hadn't been too much of the same sort, I wouldn't have started saying it was but reasonable to be in the doldrums because they were at sea with no biscuit in the locker."

"You're right; you must be right, Old Rogers. It's as plain as possible," I cried, rejoiced at the old man's insight. "Thank you. I'll preach about it to-morrow. I thought I had got my sermon in Foxborough Wood, but I was mistaken: you had got it."

But I was mistaken again. I had not got my sermon yet.

I walked with him to his cottage and left him, after a greeting with the "old woman." Passing then through the village, and seeing by the light of her candle the form of Catherine Weir behind her counter, I went in. I thought Old Rogers' tobacco must be nearly gone, and I might safely buy some more. Catherine's manner was much the same as usual. But as she was weighing my purchase, she broke out all at once:

"It's no use your preaching at me, Mr. Walton. I cannot, I *will* not forgive. I will do anything *but* forgive. And it's no use."

"It is not I that say it, Catherine. It is the Lord himself."

I saw no great use in protesting my innocence, yet I thought it better to add—

"And I was not preaching *at* you. I was preaching to you, as much as to any one there, and no more."

Of this she took no notice, and I resumed:

"Just think of what *He* says, not what I say."

"I can't help it. If He won't forgive me, I must go without it. I can't forgive."

I saw that good and evil were fighting in her, and felt that no words of mine could be of further avail at the moment. The words of our Lord had laid hold of her; that was enough for this time. Nor dared I ask her any questions. I had the feeling that it would hurt, not help. All I could venture to say, was:

"I won't trouble you with talk, Catherine. Our Lord wants to talk to you. It is not for me to interfere. But please to remember, if ever you think I can serve you in any way, you have only to send for me."

She murmured a mechanical thanks, and handed me my parcel. I paid for it, bade her good night, and left the shop.

"O Lord," I said in my heart, as I walked away, "what a labour thou hast with us all! Shall we ever, some day, be all, and quite, good like Thee? Help me. Fill me with Thy light, that my work may all go to bring about the gladness of Thy kingdom—the holy household of us brothers and sisters—all Thy children."

And now I found that I wanted very much to see my friend Dr. Duncan. He received me with his

stately cordiality, and a smile that went farther than all his words of greeting.

"Come now, Mr. Walton, I am just going to sit down to my dinner, and you must join me. I think there will be enough for us both. There is, I believe, a chicken a-piece for us, and we can make up with cheese and a glass of—would you believe it?—my own father's port. He was fond of port—the old man—though I never saw him with one glass more aboard than the registered tonnage. He always sat light on the water. Ah, dear me! I'm old myself now."

"But what am I to do with Mrs. Pearson?" I said. "There's some *chef-d'œuvre* of hers waiting for me by this time. She always treats me particularly well on Saturdays and Sundays."

"Ah! then, you must not stop with me. You will fare better at home."

"But I should much prefer stopping with you. Couldn't you send a message for me?"

"To be sure. My boy will run with it at once."

Now, what is the use of writing all this? I do not know. Only that even a *tête-à-tête* dinner with an old friend, now that I am an old man myself, has such a pearly halo about it in the mists of the past, that every little circumstance connected with it becomes interesting, though it may be quite unworthy of record. So, kind reader, let it stand.

We sat down to our dinner, so simple and so well-cooked that it was just what I liked. I wanted very much to tell my friend what had occurred in Catherine's shop, but I would not begin till we were safe from interruption; and so we chatted away concerning many things, he telling me about his sea-faring life, and I telling him some of the few remarkable things that had happened to me in the course of my life-voyage. There is no man but has met with some remarkable things that other people would like to know, and which would seem stranger to them than they did at the time to the person to whom they happened.

At length I brought our conversation round to my interview with Catherine Weir.

"Can you understand," I said, "a woman finding it so hard to forgive her own father?"

"Are you sure it is her father?" he returned.

"Surely she has not this feeling towards more than one. That she has it towards her father, I know."

"I don't know," he answered. "I have known resentment predominate over every other feeling and passion—in the mind of a woman too. I once heard of a good woman who cherished this feeling against a good man because of some distrustful words he had once addressed to herself. She had lived to a great age, and was expressing to her clergyman her desire that God would take her away: she had been waiting a long time. The clergyman—a very shrewd as well as devout man, and not without a touch of humour, said: 'Perhaps God doesn't mean to let you die till you've forgiven Mr. ——.' She was as if struck with a flash of thought, and sat silent during the rest of his visit. When the clergyman called the next day, he found Mr. —— and her talking together very quietly over a cup of tea. And she hadn't long to wait after that, I was told, but was gathered to her fathers—or went home to her children, whichever is the better phrase."

"I wish I had had your experience, Dr. Duncan," I said.

"I have not had so very much experience as a general practitioner, having been so long at sea. But I am satisfied that until a medical man knows a good deal more about his patient than most medical men give themselves the trouble to find out, his prescriptions will partake a good deal more than is necessary of hap-hazard.—As to this question of obstinate resentment, I know one case in which it is the ruling presence of a woman's life—the very light that is in her is resentment. I think her possessed myself."

"Tell me something about her."

"I will. But even to you I will mention no names. Not that I have her confidence in the least. But I think it is better not. I was called to attend a lady at a house where I had never yet been."

"Was it in——" I began, but checked myself. Dr. Duncan smiled and went on without remark. I could see that he told his story with great care, lest, I thought, he should let anything slip that might give a clue to the place or people.

"I was led up into an old-fashioned, richly-furnished room. A great wood-fire burned on the hearth. The bed was surrounded with heavy dark curtains, in which the shadowy remains of bright colours were just visible. In the bed lay one of the loveliest young creatures I had ever seen. And, one on each side, stood two of the most dreadful-looking women I had ever beheld. Still as death, while I examined my patient, they stood, with moveless faces, one as white as the other. Only the eyes of both of them were alive. One was evidently mistress, and the other servant. The latter looked more self-contained than the former, but less determined and possibly more cruel. That both could be unkind at least, was plain enough. There was trouble and signs of inward conflict in the eyes of the mistress. The maid gave no sign of any inside to her at all, but stood watching her mistress. A child's toy was lying in a corner of the room."

I may here interrupt my friend's story to tell my reader that I may be mingling some of my own conclusions with what the good man told me of his. For he will see well enough already that I had in a moment attached his description to persons I knew, and, as it turned out, correctly, though I could not be certain about it till the story had advanced a little beyond this early stage of its progress.

"I found the lady very weak and very feverish—a quick feeble pulse, now bounding, and now intermitting—and a restlessness in her eye which I felt contained the secret of her disorder. She kept glancing, as if involuntarily, towards the door, which would not open for all her looking, and I heard her once murmur to herself—for I was still quick of hearing then—'He won't come!' Perhaps I only saw her lips move to those words—I cannot be sure, but I am certain she said them in her heart. I prescribed for her as far as I could venture, but begged a word with her mother. She went with me into an adjoining room.

"'The lady is longing for something,' I said, not wishing to be so definite as I could have been.

"The mother made no reply. I saw her lips shut yet closer than before.

"'She is your daughter, is she not?'

"'Yes,'—very decidedly.

"'Could you not find out what she wishes?'

"'Perhaps I could guess.'

"'I do not think I can do her any good till she has what she wants.'

"'Is that your mode of prescribing, doctor?' she said, tartly.

"'Yes, certainly,' I answered—'in the present case. Is she married?'

"'Yes.'

"'Has she any children?'

"'One daughter.'

"'Let her see her, then.'

"'She does not care to see her.'

"'Where is her husband?'

"'Excuse me, doctor; I did not send for you to ask questions, but to give advice.'

"'And I came to ask questions, in order that I might give advice. Do you think a human being is like a clock, that can be taken to pieces, cleaned, and put together again?'

"'My daughter's condition is not a fit subject for jesting.'

"'Certainly not. Send for her husband, or the undertaker, whichever you please,' I said, forgetting my manners and my temper together, for I was more irritable then than I am now, and there was something so repulsive about the woman, that I felt as if I was talking to an evil creature that for her own ends, though what I could not tell, was tormenting the dying lady.

"'I understood you were a *gentleman*—of experience and breeding.'

"'I am not in the question, madam. It is your daughter.'

"'She shall take your prescription.'

"'She must see her husband if it be possible.'

"'It is not possible.'

"'Why?'

"'I say it is not possible, and that is enough. Good morning.'

"I could say no more at that time. I called the next day. She was just the same, only that I knew she wanted to speak to me, and dared not, because of the presence of the two women. Her troubled eyes seemed searching mine for pity and help, and I could not tell what to do for her. There are, indeed, as some one says, strongholds of injustice and wrong into which no law can enter to help.

"One afternoon, about a week after my first visit, I was sitting by her bedside, wondering what could be done to get her out of the clutches of these tormentors, who were, evidently to me, consuming her in the slow fire of her own affections, when I heard a faint noise, a rapid foot in the house so quiet before; heard doors open and shut, then a dull sound of conflict of some sort. Presently a quick step came up the oak-stair. The face of my patient flushed, and her eyes gleamed as if her soul would come out of them. Weak as she was she sat up in bed, almost without an effort, and the two women darted from the room.

"'My husband!' said the girl—for indeed she was little more in age, turning her face, almost distorted with eagerness, towards me.

"'Yes, my dear,' I said, 'I know. But you must be as still as you can, else you will be very ill. Do keep quiet.'

"'I will, I will,' she gasped, stuffing her pocket-handkerchief actually into her mouth to prevent herself from screaming, as if that was what would hurt her. 'But go to him. They will murder him.'

"That moment I heard a cry and what sounded like an inarticulate imprecation, but both from a woman's voice; and the next, a young man—as fine a fellow as I ever saw—dressed like a game-keeper but evidently a gentleman, walked into the room with a quietness that strangely contrasted with the dreadful paleness of his face and with his disordered hair; while the two women followed, as red as he was white, and evidently in fierce wrath from a fruitless struggle with the powerful youth. He walked gently up to his wife, whose outstretched arms and face followed his face as he came round the bed to where she was at the other side, till arms, and face, and head, fell into his embrace.

"I had gone to the mother.

"'Let us have no scene now,' I said, 'or her blood will be on your head.'

"She took no notice of what I said, but stood silently glaring, not gazing, at the pair. I feared an outburst, and had resolved, if it came, to carry her at once from the room, which I was quite able to do then, Mr. Walton, though I don't look like it now. But in a moment more the young man, becoming uneasy at the motionlessness of his wife, lifted up her head, and glanced in her face. Seeing the look of terror in his, I hastened to him, and lifting her from him, laid her down—dead. Disease of the heart, I believe. The mother burst into a shriek—not of horror, or grief, or remorse, but of deadly hatred.

"'Look at your work!' she cried to him, as he stood gazing in stupor on the face of the girl. 'You said she was yours, not mine; take her. You may have her, now you have killed her.'

"'He may have killed her; but you have *murdered* her, madam,' I said, as I took the man by the arm, and led him away, yielding like a child. But the moment I got him out of the house, he gave a groan, and, breaking away from me, rushed down a road leading from the back of the house towards the home-farm. I followed, but he had disappeared. I went on; but before I could reach the farm, I heard the gallop of a horse, and saw him tearing away at full speed along the London road. I never heard more of him, or of the story. Some women can be secret enough, I assure you."

I need not follow the rest of our conversation. I could hardly doubt whose was the story I had heard. It threw a light upon several things about which I had been perplexed. What a horror of darkness seemed to hang over that family! What deeds of wickedness! But the reason was clear: the horror came from within; selfishness, and fierceness of temper

were its source—no unhappy *doom*. The worship of one's own will fumes out around the being an atmosphere of evil, an altogether abnormal condition of the moral firmament, out of which will break the very flames of hell. The consciousness of birth and of breeding, instead of stirring up to deeds of gentleness and "high emprise," becomes then but an incentive to violence and cruelty; and things which seem as if they could not happen in a civilised country and a polished age, are proved as possible as ever where the heart is unloving, the feelings unrefined, self the centre, and God nowhere in the man or woman's vision. The terrible things that one reads in old histories, or in modern newspapers, were done by human beings, not by demons.

I did not let my friend know that I knew all that he concealed; but I may as well tell my reader now what I could not have told him then. I know all the story now, and, as no better place will come, as far as I can see, I will tell it at once, and briefly.

Dorothy—a wonderful name, *the gift of God*, to be so treated, faring in this, however, like many other of God's gifts—Dorothy Oldcastle was the eldest daughter of Jeremy and Sibyl Oldcastle, and the sister therefore of Ethelwyn. Her father, who was an easy-going man, entirely under the dominion of his wife, died when she was about fifteen, and her mother sent her to school, with especial recommendation to the care of a clergyman in the neighbourhood, whom Mrs. Oldcastle knew; for, somehow—and the fact is not so unusual as to justify especial inquiry here—though she paid no attention to what our Lord or his apostles said, nor indeed seemed to care to ask herself if what she did was right, or what she accepted (I cannot say *believed*) was true, she had yet a certain (to me all but incomprehensible) leaning to the clergy. I think it belongs to the same kind of superstition which many of our own day are turning to. Offered the Spirit of God for the asking, offered it by the Lord himself, in the misery of their unbelief they betake themselves to necromancy instead, and raise the dead to ask their advice, *and follow it*, and will find some day that Satan had not forgotten how to dress like an angel of light. Nay, he can be more cunning with the demands of the time. We are clever: he will be cleverer. Why should he dress and not speak like an angel of light? Why should he not give good advice if that will help to withdraw people by degrees from regarding the source of all good? He knows well enough that good advice goes for little, but that what fills the heart and mind goes for much. What religion is there in being convinced of a future state? Is that to worship God? It is no more religion than the belief that the sun will rise to-morrow is religion. It may be a source of happiness to those who could not believe it before, but it is not religion. Where religion comes that will certainly be likewise, but the one is not the other. The devil can afford a kind of conviction of that. It costs him little. But to believe that the spirits of the departed are the mediators between God and us is essential paganism—to call it nothing worse; and a bad enough name, too, since Christ has come and we have heard and seen the only begotten of the Father. Thus the instinctive desire for the wonderful, the need we have of a revelation from above us, denied its proper food and nourishment, turns in its hunger to feed upon garbage. As a devout German says—I do not quote him quite correctly—"Where God rules not, demons will." Let us once see with our spiritual eyes the Wonderful, the Counsellor, and we shall not surely turn from Him to seek elsewhere the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Those who sympathize with my feeling in regard to this form of the materialism of our day, will forgive this divergence. I submit to the artistic blame of such as do not, and return to my story.

Dorothy was there three or four years. I said I would be brief. She and the clergyman's son fell in love with each other. The mother heard of it, and sent for her home. She had other views for her. Of course, in such eyes, a daughter's *fancy* was, irrespective of its object altogether, a thing to be sneered at. But she found, to her fierce disdain, that she had not been able to keep all her beloved obstinacy to herself: she had transmitted a portion of it to her daughter. But in her it was combined with noble qualities, and, ceasing to be the evil thing it was in her mother, became an honourable firmness, rendering her able to withstand her mother's stormy importunities. Thus Nature had begun to right herself—the right in the daughter turning to meet and defy the wrong in the mother, and that in the same strength of character which the mother had misused for evil and selfish ends. And thus the bad breed was broken. She was and would be true to her lover. The consequent *scenes* were dreadful. The spirit but not the will of the girl was all but broken. She felt that she could not sustain it long. By some means, unknown to my informant, her lover contrived to communicate with her. He had, through means of relations who had great influence with Government, procured a good appointment in India, whither he must sail within a month. The end was that she left her mother's house. Mr. Gladwyn was waiting for her near, and conducted her to his father's, who had constantly refused to aid Mrs. Oldcastle by interfering in the matter. They were married next day by the clergyman of a neighbouring parish. But almost immediately she was taken so ill, that it was impossible for her to accompany her husband, and she was compelled to remain behind at the rectory, hoping to join him the following year.

Before the time arrived, she gave birth to my little friend Judy; and her departure was again delayed by a return of her old complaint, probably the early stages of the disease of which she died. Then, just as she was about to set sail for India, news arrived that Mr. Gladwyn had had a sunstroke, and would have leave of absence and come home as soon as he was able to be moved; so that instead of going out to join him, she must wait for him where she was. His mother had been dead for some time. His father, an elderly man of indolent habits, was found dead in his chair one Sunday morning soon after the news had arrived of the illness of his son, to whom he was deeply attached. And so the poor young creature was left alone with her child, without money, and in

weak health. The old man left nothing behind him but his furniture and books. And nothing could be done in arranging his affairs, till the arrival of his son, of whom the last accounts had been that he was slowly recovering. In the meantime his wife was in want of money, without a friend to whom she could apply. I presume that one of the few parishioners who visited at the rectory, had written to acquaint Mrs. Oldcastle with the condition in which her daughter was left, for, influenced by motives of which I dare not take upon me to conjecture an analysis, she wrote, offering her daughter all that she required in her old home. Whether she fore-intended her following conduct, or old habit returned with the return of her daughter, I cannot tell; but she had not been more than a few days in the house, before she began to tyrannise over her, as in old times, and although Mrs. Gladwyn's health, now always weak, was evidently failing in consequence, she either did not see the cause, or could not restrain her evil impulses. At length the news arrived of Mr. Gladwyn's departure for home. Perhaps then for the first time the temptation entered her mind to take her revenge upon him, by making her daughter's illness a pretext for refusing him admission to her presence. She told her she should not see him till she was better, for that it would make her worse; persisted in her resolution after his arrival; effected, by the help of Sarah, that he should not gain admittance to the house, keeping all the doors locked except one; and it was only by the connivance of Ethelwyn, then a girl about fifteen, that he was admitted by the underground way, of which she unlocked the upper door for his entrance. She had then guided him as far as she dared, and directed him the rest of the way to his wife's room.

My reader will now understand how it came about in the process of writing these my recollections, that I have given such a long chapter chiefly to that one evening spent with my good friend, Dr. Duncan; for he will see, as I have said, that what he told me opened up a good deal to me.

I had very little time for the privacy of the church that night. Dark as it was, however, I went in before I went home: I had the key of the vestry-door always in my pocket. I groped my way into the pulpit, and sat down in the darkness, and thought. Nor did my personal interest in Dr. Duncan's story make me forget poor Catherine Weir and the terrible sore in her heart, the sore of unforgivingness. And I saw that of herself she would not, could not, forgive to all eternity; that all the pains of hell could not make her forgive, for that it was a divine glory to forgive, and must come from God. And thinking of Mrs. Oldcastle, I saw that in ourselves we could be sure of no safety, not from the worst and vilest sins; for who could tell how he might not stupify himself by degrees, and by one action after another, each a little worse than the former, till the very fires of Sinai would not flash into eyes blinded with the incense arising to the golden calf of his worship? A man may come to worship a devil without knowing it. Only by being filled with a higher spirit than our own, which, having caused our spirits, is one with our spirits, and is in them the present life principle, are we or can we be safe from this eternal death of our being. This spirit was fighting the evil spirit in Catherine Weir: how was I to urge her to give ear to the good? If will would but side with God, the forces of self, deserted by their leader, must soon quit the field; and the woman—the kingdom within her no longer torn by conflicting forces—would sit quiet at the feet of the Master, reposing in that rest which He offered to those who could come to Him. Might she not be roused to utter one feeble cry to God for help? That would be one step towards the forgiveness of others. To ask something for herself would be a great advance in such a proud nature as hers. And to ask good heartily is the very next step to giving good heartily.

Many thoughts such as these passed through my mind, chiefly associated with her. For I could not think how to think about Mrs. Oldcastle yet. And the old church gloomed about me all the time. And I kept lifting up my heart to the God who had cared to make me, and then drew me to be a preacher to my fellows, and had surely something to give me to say to them; for did he not choose so to work by the foolishness of preaching?—Might not my humble ignorance work his will, though my wrath could not work his righteousness? And I descended from the pulpit thinking with myself, "Let Him do as He will. Here I am. I will say what I see: let Him make it good."

And the next morning, I spoke about the words of our Lord:

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him!"

And I looked to see. And there Catherine Weir sat, looking me in the face.

There likewise sat Mrs. Oldcastle, looking me in the face too.

And Judy sat there, also looking me in the face, as serious as man could wish grown woman to look.

THE MARRIAGE IN CANA.

When Moses with his potent wand
Before the stubborn monarch stood,
Beneath the prophet's outstretch'd hand
The stricken waters turn'd to blood :

But when in dayspring calm and bright
The Son of God his face reveals,
And pours the dawn of Gospel light
Amid the Galilean hills,

Veil'd is the lowly wedding guest,
He breathes in love his will divine,
And instant on his high behest
The waters brighten into wine !

O heavenly Guest ! beside our gates,
Tho' in the garb of flesh no more,
Thy loving spirit ever waits
To bless the banquet as of yore.

And yet how oft in hours of mirth
A world once lost, by Thee restored,
Forgetful of its second birth
Owns not its Saviour as its Lord !

How oft in lawless hours we mock
Thy nearness with our heedless din !
How often, when we hear Thee knock,
Our hearts refuse to let Thee in !

But when the tinsel splendours fade,
When mirth dies out and health is gone,
When fold on fold the deepening shade
Makes all our pathway drear and lone,—

Then, when the conscience starts aghast
At visions of the coming end,
We fain would have Thee near at last,
And own the Saviour as a friend.

Fond hearts, to seek earth's fleeting stream,
When e'en for them Thy side was riven
That life's unfailing fount might flow
Empurpled with the wine of Heaven !

If only we our hearts address
To entertain our risen Lord,
His unseen hand shall ever bless
The private task, the social board.

We need not deem the roof too low ;
No shade can make His glory dim ;
And duty takes a golden glow
If only it be done for Him.

O thought, life's humblest walk to cheer—
That whatsoe'er the morrow brings
Of dark or bright, of smile or tear,
Is hallow'd by the King of kings !

Lord, give us grace to make it ours ;
Whate'er our lot on earth may be,
Its toil, its mirth, its thorns, its flowers—
To consecrate them all to Thee !

J. H. Clark.

OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS; OR, METHODS TO DO GOOD.

BY THE EDITOR.

VI.—THE CHRISTIAN'S WORK.

Many of Paul's expressions have a warlike ring, and suggest to our fancy soldiers who occupy some of those trying positions which the chances of war often call them bravely, and sternly, to hold. He says, for example, "Having done all, stand." Now, there is nothing, as I am told and believe, which puts the firmness of men to so severe a test as that. It requires no great courage to play the soldier when, in firing or charging, advancing or retreating, they are engaged in the active duties of the field ; but calmly to hold a position where, unsustained by excitement—allowed neither to fight, nor advance, nor retire—they have to stand exposed to the shot that plunges into their ranks, making bloody gaps they have nothing to do but fill up, this tries the mettle of the bravest men. For this, the highest soldierly quality, our countrymen are pre-eminently distinguished, owing some of their greatest victories to their power of unmoveable and heroic endurance under, not as in Paul's days a shower of arrows, but a shower of iron. Wellington is reported to have said of Waterloo that the battle turned on whether we or the French could stand *pounding* longest. Having done all, we stood ; and the day was ours.

To such trials God sometimes puts his chosen and beloved people. After having done everything to protect themselves from the assaults of the Tempter, to defend their reputation, their purity, or peace, duty to God and his cause, duty to themselves or others, requires them to do nothing more, than just hold their post ; maintain their position ; patiently endure wrongs they might, but are not allowed to, repel ; and bear without complaint trials or temptations which they cannot avoid, and are not allowed to escape from. So stood Noah by the ark for many years, the butt and scorn of an ungodly world ; and so stood a greater than Noah before an infuriate crowd of hating, hissing, cursing, blood-thirsty enemies. Impeached of high treason, accused of many crimes which his soul abhorred, our Lord confronted the storm, letting it beat on his bent, innocent, blessed head. He stood, dumb, opening not his mouth—to the perplexity, and surprise, and terror of the Roman, answering not a word. Having done all,

he stood—stood to be calumniated, tried, cruelly scourged, basely spat on, insulted with a crown of thorns, and condemned in the cross to a death of peculiar pain and infamy. He made no reply—offering no resistance, nor summoning the angelic legions that hovered above the scene, and were ready to descend with flaming swords to his rescue.

Equally warlike is that other expression where Paul says, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable." Be steadfast, unmoveable! are such words as we can fancy addressed to men who have formed into square to receive cavalry—the front rank kneeling to present a hedge of steel, and the next erect, with knit brows, and heads bent to the barrel of the musket along which their eye glares with deadly aim. Hurled on by the tempest, the wave comes swelling, foaming, roaring against the rock; and so, launched against this serried square, comes a mass of cavalry, with the sun flashing on their swords and the very ground shaking beneath their tread. The sight is terrific. The shock threatens to sweep all before it. The moment is critical. Let the line of the square waver, let it break, and all is lost: the foe, like a whirlwind, rush in at the gap to ride down and cut down the men, crushing the life out of brave hearts beneath their horses' feet. The issue now turns on each man keeping his post; standing to it like a tree rooted to the soil. At this terrible moment, just before the shock, I can fancy their leader, as he runs his eye along the grim faces of his line, calling out, "Be steadfast, unmoveable," ere he gives the signal which, followed by a loud crash of musketry, empties many a saddle, and rolls back that proud array in bloody discomfiture, like a billow shattered against a rock.

The Church of Christ is often placed in equally critical circumstances, the issue of her struggle depending on those who support his cause standing true to it and to each other. The most fatal results have followed the treachery or cowardice which, though but in a few, has broken the line; their example infecting others, the panic has spread, and the enemy who, so to speak, poured in at the gap, have scattered ranks that unbroken, "steadfast and unmoveable," had stood the shock of battle, and come off victorious. And many such moments also there are in that life-long fight which every Christian has to maintain with temptation. No doubt God promises Divine assistance; and that when the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. Yet in our conflicts with the devil, the world, and the flesh, how much depends on our being steadfast and unmoveable? Let us dally with temptation, waver, give way in the least degree, yield but an inch, and the day is lost—as we ourselves also should be but for the sovereign grace and mercy of Him who, blessed be his name, promising to heal our backslidings and love us freely, delivers his "darling from the dogs."

To watch, to fight, with steady front to meet and repel temptation—in other words to do no evil, is, however, though an important part, but one, and not the most important part of Christian work. The Church of the living God bears no resemblance to those communities of ants where a certain number of these curious insects form a sort of standing army, and have no other duties but to defend and battle for the commonwealth; the building, and provisioning, and other duties of the ant-hill belonging to others, and not to them. Nor, to take an illustration from the arrangements of human society, does Christ's kingdom resemble this or that of any neighbouring sovereign; where the military, wearing a distinct garb and exempted from those productive labours whereby others support themselves and add to the wealth of the country, form a distinct order of the community. The type of a Christian is seen not in lands where citizens and soldiers, working and fighting men, form different classes; but rather in those troubled regions of the East, where the husbandman, constantly exposed to the attack of murderers and robbers, ploughs the soil with a carbine slung at his back, or a sword dangling at his side. We are to be ever ready to resist the devil and fight the good fight of faith, yet our main vocation is to work; and he were but half a Christian who, though more successful than the best saints in that he never went to battle but he went to victory, only resisted temptation—only did no evil. Such negative goodness would present a poor and very inadequate specimen of the Gospel. What God requires of his people is much more than that—is to "do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly" before him; is not only to depart from evil but to do good; is to be followers of Him who, while holy, harmless, and undefiled, went about doing good; is, in the words of an apostle, by a benevolent and beneficent life of active, holy, useful labours to abound in the work of the Lord. In regard to which I remark—

All Christians belong to "the working classes"—in a sense. There is one glory of the sun, says St. Paul, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differeth from another star in glory. Nor, in respect of variety, is Heaven itself unlike the firmament, which forms its starry floor. Basking in the cloudless sunshine of God's countenance, and engaged day and night in the lofty services of his throne, are different orders of celestials—angels and archangels, seraphim and cherubim, principalities, dominion and powers; all perfect mirrors of the Divine perfections, yet each class, like the stars beneath their feet, differing from another in glory. And on leaving Heaven for earth, we find that, however widely they differ, variety is equally a feature of both. The very globe itself presents a series of heights and hollows, hills and dales, mountains that, towering above the clouds, are covered with eternal snow, and valleys that, robed in flowers and crowned with fruit, lie smiling at their giant feet—often, as the humbler classes of society would be, had they grace to look without envy on those above them, happier in their humility than the mountains that overshadow them in their cold, stormy, lofty, barren pride. A corresponding variety meets and delights us in every department of nature; for though in the services of Divine worship, within the church, some, the worst enemies of unity, insist on uniformity, we may say, as the old philosophers did of a vacuum, that

Nature abhors it. Uniformity is not the mind or manner of God. What variety of plants between the stately cedar and the lichen that seems only to colour the surface of the naked rock; between leviathan, either floating like an island on the glassy deep, or, in his rage, churning the sea into snowy foam, and those creatures which the microscope detects, of forms so minute that ten thousand millions—a number equal to the whole human race—have been found in the space of one square inch. With such inequalities in heaven and earth, among angels and animals, it were strange if human society presented a uniform aspect, no corresponding variety. It does. God has placed men in different circumstances and endowed them with different gifts. Society has its heights and hollows; and it were as easy, by throwing down the mountains into the valleys, to reduce this globe itself, as to reduce it to one dead, uniform, uninteresting level. Such "equality, liberty and fraternity" as the French of last century raved of, and to reach waded to their knees in blood, was a dream. These are the privileges of Christ's kingdom; and of none other. Slaves, whom the truth makes free, are free indeed. Those who love one another as Christ loved them, are brothers; and more than brothers. And the grandest and only attainable equality is that of the grace of God. It raises all who receive Christ, peasants and princes both, to a common but lofty level; redeeming them by one blood, sanctifying them by one Spirit, constituting them kings and priests to God, and calling them all up to the glory which Jesus had with the Father before the foundation of the world. The varied conditions of society are the result of laws which man did not enact, and cannot repeal. And though none are forbidden, provided they do not make ambition their god, and wealth, power, or rank their good, from seeking to improve their circumstances, and rise above the level of their birth, as the earth has its hills and valleys, the world will have its higher and lower classes; some wealthy, others poor; the few who do not need to depend on labour for their subsistence, and the many who must earn their daily bread with the sweat of their brain or of their brow—but who, thank God, may find in the prospects of faith and the promises of eternal rest, what can sweeten a cup which the sweat of labour is apt to sour.

On turning, however, to the kingdom of grace, we find that all who belong to it—kings and statesmen, warriors, philosophers, and divines, men of every trade, rank, and profession, men and women alike, belong to "the working class." All are equally the servants of one Master; and what are servants for but to work? Redeemed by the blood of Christ—his and not our own, we are called to spend and be spent in his service. Here for employment more than enjoyment, for self-denial rather than self-indulgence, every one, even the humblest and obscurest Christian, may adopt the lofty language of Nehemiah, and speaking of himself, say, "I have a great work to do, therefore I cannot come down." We have first to labour for our own good, eagerly asking, What shall I do to be saved? and giving all diligence to make our calling and election sure. Then, living in a world that has many claims on our pity and much need of our help, on a wild shore, as it were, where the waves are roaring, and from wrecks, with thousands perishing, the cry sounds above the wail of the storm and the thunder of the breakers, Oh, come over and help us, we are called to work for the good of others. Working, toiling, enduring, we ally ourselves to the saints in glory, the blessed dead—who die in the Lord, and whose works do follow them; to angels also, who are ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who are heirs of salvation; to Jesus also, who entered on his Father's business at an early age, and to the last hour, when they nailed his feet to the cross, went about doing good; to God himself, of whose works in creating angels, kindling suns, calling worlds into being, directing the whole complicated machinery of providence and of grace, Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Necessity, the mother of invention, is also the mother of work; and it may need an effort of resignation to reconcile people to a position where, from day to day and from year's end to year's end, they have to work to live. But to live to work, should be our choice, and esteemed a noble destiny. "My Father worketh hitherto," said Christ. God lives to work; and by such a life we prove ourselves the children of our Father which is in heaven.

Now, in regard to the character of the work in which Christians are to spend their life, I remark that it is the work of the Lord; and this, it is important to observe, may embrace our most common employments. Some appear to think that God's service, like that of the king who required the Israelites to furnish the tale of bricks without supplying straw to make them, enjoins and demands impossibilities; as, for instance, when believers are required to "pray without ceasing." How, it is asked, can any man pray without ceasing? But take the injunction, not in the letter which killeth, but in the spirit which giveth life, and it is not so impossible as many suppose; nor at all impossible, as has been proved by multitudes who have gone to exchange in glory the perpetual prayers of earth for the perpetual praises of the skies. Undertaking no work; giving no advice; entering into no company: if senators, never rising in parliament; if soldiers, never going into battle; if seamen, never embarking on a voyage; if travellers, never beginning or resuming a journey; if surgeons, never performing an important and difficult operation; if judges, never taking their place on the bench; if ministers, never leaving their study for the pulpit; whatever they were, never engaging in life's most common business without seeking the help of God; —prayer, like a silver thread, runs through the web of their life. It is no exaggeration to say of them, that, though not always actually engaged in prayer, yet always ready to engage in it—always maintaining their minds in a prayerful frame—with the bow never unbent, the instrument, though not always sounding, never out of tune—they prayed without ceasing.

Not less possible than to "pray without ceasing," is, though it may seem to some impossible, this other duty of "always abounding in the work of the Lord."

Entered on, and carried on, in a devout and pious spirit, our most common avocations rise out of their secularities into a loftier region. Assuming the character of religious duties, they may be called the work of the Lord. For, as a scene, though it presents at all times in fruitful fields and waving forests, gleaming river, shaggy mountains, winding shores, and rolling sea, identically the same objects, glows with beauty and brightness when bathed in sunshine, so piety makes a good man's whole life religious—the heavenly spirit in which they are done imparting a heavenly character to the humblest and most homely of his works. We may be engaged in the work of the Lord as well with a spade or plough in our hand as a bible; on our knees scrubbing a floor, as on our knees in the attitude and act of prayer. Come, for example, into this workshop of Corinth, where Paul is spinning cordage, or sewing a covering, or, axe in hand, fashioning a pole, or otherwise busy tent-making. Finding the great Apostle of the Gentiles employed in such secularities, one is tempted to address him in God's words to the prophet, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" Is this a place, or that an employment for such a man as Paul? And yet though, all fashioned alike, made of the same materials, and sold in the same market, there is no apparent difference between his tents and those of others, whether Paul work with axe or needle, the hours he spends in tent-making are sanctified—are spent in the work of the Lord. He asserts a minister's just claim to maintenance, and yet earns his bread with the sweat of his brow, foregoing his rights that the ministry be not hindered. Acting from the noblest motives and for such an end, Paul gives a religious character to a common employment; and the needle of the tent-maker neither demeans nor dishonours the hand that waved tumultuous assemblies into silence, and won the honours of a martyr's chain. Whether I eat or drink, he said, or whatsoever I do—go to a feast, or a funeral; make tents, or sermons; go to the market to sell my work for money, or to the church to sell Christ's free salvation without money or price; earn my bread with the sweat of my brow, or accept the hospitality of Gaius, mine host; make tents at Corinth, or fight with wild beasts at Ephesus; escape from Damascus in a basket, or, brought to bay, stand like a lion before Nero at Rome, I do all to the glory of God! Doing so, all he did, and doing so all we do, may be appropriately called the work of the Lord.

God's people shall renew their strength and mount up with wings as eagles. But it is quite a mistake to fancy that, like that bird, which builds her nest on the dizzy crag, and soars aloft, and sails along in the paths of the clouds and thunder, religion belongs only to the highest, and what are called holy, duties of life. While she rises to its highest, she stoops to its meanest, occupations. As well as the seraphs that sing before the throne, as the heralds who sound the trumpet of the gospel and proclaim salvation to perishing sinners, as the Christian who enters his closet to hold communion with God, they are doing the work of the Lord who kindle a fire, or sweep a floor, or guide a plough, or sit over a desk, or work at a bench, or break stones on the road, with a desire so to do their work that God may thereby be glorified. All work done from such motives and for such an end, becomes the work of the Lord—and thus our life, in all its phases, entirely spent in the work of the Lord, should flow on like a river which, however rough its bed, short or long its course, tame or grand the scenes through which it passes, springs from a lofty fountain, and, born of the skies, bears blessings in its waters and heaven reflected in its bosom.

I remark, further, that those things which are done in the name and service of religion, are emphatically the work of the Lord. This is the sense in which Paul uses the phrase, when, writing to the Corinthians, he says, "Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear, for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do:" and what he means by that comes out clearly in his eulogium on Timothy, "I have no man like-minded who will naturally care for your state, for all seek their own things, not the *things of Jesus Christ;* but ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the Gospel." And what are the things of Jesus Christ, here identified with the work of the Lord, but those grand objects for which, leaving his Father's bosom, the Son of God descended on this world to live, to labour, to sorrow, to suffer, and to lay down his life on Calvary—a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins and a noble substitute for the persons of men?

With tastes and a nature like ours, our Lord appreciated the pleasures of friendship, and of feasts also. He had an exquisite enjoyment in the beauties of nature—passing many happy hours in his journeys through the smiling land, in quiet walks by the shores of Gennesaret, and midnight musings among the hoary olives of Gethsemane. But these, though pleasant brooks to drink in the way, were not the things He lived for. In his Father's glory, and lost souls saved, and a ruined world redeemed, he had nobler objects: these drew him from the skies; to these He referred when, addressing Pilate, He said, "For this cause came I into the world." He came to work out salvation; and would God that all men, answering the call, Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, went up to heaven from doing what He came from it to do. There is no doubt that that is the work of God. Our Lord has distinctly said so—this is his reply to those who asked him, What shall we do that we might work the works of God? "This is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent"—in other words, that ye lay hold on eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.

And this salvation, about which many are so strangely careless, is the great work that has engaged God himself from the counsels of eternity, and shall engage him to the end of time: for which he has revealed mysteries, and wrought miracles, and bestowed gifts—in number beyond reckoning, in value beyond all the power of words to express, or the highest flights of fancy to imagine. Has the sea been divided? Has the sun been stopped? Has bread fallen from the skies, and water gushed from the flinty rock? Have the lame leaped, and dumb lips sung, and blind eyes seen, and its grim tenants left

the tomb? It was to prepare the way for this work —to further a work of God's greater than creating out of nothing a thousand worlds, or lighting the night with the fires of ten thousand suns. To save our lost race, God did not spare his own Son. For that end He gave up his Son to death, and the Son gave up himself. And why does God at this moment tolerate the flagrant crimes and wickedness of earth? Why sleep the fires of Sodom? Where are the waters of the avenging deluge? In preserving the world from destruction, in sending summer and winter, seed time and harvest, in raising up one nation and casting down another, in directing and over-ruling all sublunary events from the fall of kingdoms to the fall of a sparrow, God has one purpose. It is that which angels have come down from heaven to help and devils have come up raging from hell to hinder—the salvation of sinners and ingathering of his chosen people. For their sake He spares his enemies: the tares for the wheat; Sodom for the Lots within its walls; nor till the last of these has left them, shall the City of Destruction be ready for burning. And how should men labour for an end that is of such value in God's eyes, and should be of such importance and immediate urgency in their own? To be saved and sanctified ourselves, and to be also the instruments of saving others—of plucking brands from the burning, the drowning from the devouring sea, this is especially and emphatically "the work of the Lord"; one in which men, who are exalted to be fellow-heirs with Christ, are called to be fellow-workers with God.

In those works which may be especially called the work of the Lord, be it observed that God's people are required not only to engage, but to abound, and to abound always. A harp is mute till its chords are made to tremble: and as its strings emit no sound till they are struck, some plants emit no fragrance till they are crushed—yielding their odours to the hand that bruises them. So is it with some people. When all things go well with them—fortune smiles, health blooms on the cheek, prosperity flows—bearing them on its affluent tide to wealth, or fame, or place, or power, or whatever is the object of their ambition, they neglect their souls. They drown all thoughts of another world in the pleasures of this. Nor is it till the scene changes, and the calm turns into a howling storm, and God, in the form of poverty, sickness, disappointment, bereavement, lays the hand of affliction on them, that they turn to him; and, seeking the salvation of their own and of others' souls, betake themselves to the true business of their life. And hard as such afflictions were to bear, how many in heaven are now thanking God that they lost friends and fortune; and that when they were driving full sail on destruction, he sent a storm that woke them up to see, and, by his timely help, to escape their danger? If the prodigal had not starved by the swine troughs, he had never been regaled at his father's table. If Jonah had not been tossed on the sea, and also tossed into it to be whelmed in darkness and the depths, he had never broken the peace, and, bringing them to repentance, saved the people of Nineveh. If the widow of Zarepthah had not looked with horror-stricken eyes on an empty barrel, she had never met the Prophet whom she brought to her house to fill it. If the crimes of the thief had not brought him to the cross, he might never have been brought to Christ. It is by a blow that many in the first instance are brought to their knees; nor do some ever become rich, till misfortunes make them poor.

But this work, however God's people may, in the first instance, have been led to engage in it, is one in which they are called to abound in all circumstances and seasons. They may be more lively at one time than another. Grace, like the ocean, has its spring as well as common tides; and, as in times of revival, an extraordinary effusion of the Spirit may reveal itself by more than ordinarily earnest prayers, devout exercises, holy lives, and liberal offerings of time and money to the cause of Christ. But the abundance of God's people more resembles that of a river which, fed by perennial springs, is always flowing, than the summer flood which, though it fills its stony channel to the brim with a red, rapid, roaring river, so soon as the lightnings cease to flash, and thunders cease to peal, leaves its bed dry—in a few hours, or days at furthest. Though a believer, from a sense of the feebleness of his love and the fruitlessness of his life, may be often constrained to cry, "My leanness, my leanness!" it should not, and need not, be so. The grace of God is marked by the affluence which characterises all his works. What abundance in that sun which has shone so many thousand years, and yet presents no appearance of exhaustion, no sign of decay? What abundance of stars bespangle the sky; of leaves clothe the forest; of raindrops fall in the shower; of dews sparkle on the grass; of snow-flakes whiten the winter hills; of flowers adorn the meadow; of living creatures that, walking on the ground, or playing in the waters, or burrowing in the soil, or dancing in the sunbeams, or flying in the air, find a home in every element—but that red fire in which, type of hell, all beauty perishes, and all life expires?

This lavish profusion of life, and forms, and beauty, in nature, is an emblem of the affluence of grace, of God's saving, sanctifying grace. In Christ all fulness dwells. We are complete in Him. There is in his blood sufficient virtue to discharge all the sins of a guilty world, and in his Spirit sufficient power to cleanse the foulest and break the hardest heart. Ye are not straitened in me, says God, but in yourselves. Try me herewith, He says—ask, seek, knock! Who does will find that it is only a faint image of the plenitude of grace we behold in that palace-scene where the king, looking kindly on a lovely suppliant, bends from his throne to extend his golden sceptre, and say, What is thy petition, and what is thy request, Queen Esther, and it shall be given thee to the half of my kingdom?

The abundance that characterises all God's works, and especially his grace and saving mercies, should characterise all our services. Take prayer for example. Though all find time to sin, some allege that they have no time to pray. Believe them, and they are so engaged, and indeed overwhelmed with the cares and business of the world, that they have no leisure for an exercise without which, I venture to say, the soul is as unable to live as is the body without food;

as are flames without air; as are plants without water. So they neglect prayer. They have no closet in their house for prayer; the family altar where pious parents worshipped is a ruin; and between their door and this well of life the untrodden grass grows green. How does an old and even popish proverb rebuke their carelessness, and refute their false pretences? *Mess* and meat, it says, hinder no man's work; as, if it needed proof, is demonstrated by some illustrious examples recorded in the Word of God. Look for instance at Daniel! Prime Minister of the King of Babylon, at the helm of the state, with the complicated affairs of a vast empire to manage, he found time, besides offering many silent and sudden ejaculations, for stated closet prayer thrice every day. Look at the royal Psalmist! His case is not less, but rather more remarkable. Involved in incessant troubles, with a throne to defend, twelve turbulent tribes to govern, cases of justice to decide, cabinet councils to hold, armies to lead to battle, how did he abound in prayer? Amid the bustle of camps and the temptations of a court, he prayed, not twice, according to common custom, nor with Daniel thrice, but seven times each day—living in an atmosphere of devotion, he consecrated half his waking hours with prayer. How much the Church owes to David's prayers! To these she owes his psalms. By these he kindled those fires of devotion which have kept her piety alive through all succeeding ages. While to prayers that drew down strength from heaven Daniel, no doubt, owed the faith and fortitude which threw open his closet window to the gaze of spies, and descended with unblanched cheek and majestic mien into the den of lions. And let Christians remember that they shall sit nearest these saints in glory who in abounding, believing prayers have most resembled them on earth.

But with prayer the work of the Lord embraces all the duties belonging to the Christian life; and to see how we should not only make, but abound, for example, in sacrifices on behalf of the cause of God and salvation of souls, look at the conduct of the Israelites in the wilderness! The conduct of the Israelites? "Can any good thing," people may ask "come out of Nazareth"—be found in such a stiff-necked, ungrateful, and rebellious race? Hardly had they seen the sea engulph Pharaoh and his host, when they murmured for water: water gush from the flinty rock, when they murmured for bread: bread in the form of manna lying round their tents, when they murmured for flesh: yet one bright passage in their history puts to shame many of higher pretensions, and also higher attainments. The tabernacle of God, in other words the cause of religion, stood in need of their self-denial and liberality. Though He who rained manna from the skies and turned the rock into a flowing stream could have done without their aid, raising a gorgeous tabernacle, like his cloudy pillar, from the desert sand, He conferred on them, as He still confers on us, the honour and privilege of contributing to his cause. "This is the thing," said Moses, "which the Lord God hath commanded, Whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring an offering to the Lord, gold, silver, and brass; blue, scarlet, purple, and fine linen; oil for the light, spices for the incense, and precious stones for the breastplate." So their leader appealed to the people; and as the water gushed from the rock to the stroke of his rod in a broad, full, sparkling stream, they answered this appeal with a flood of gifts. Rich, though, alas! too rare, examples of pious bounty, of earth reflecting the glorious affluence of heaven, the maid forgot her ornaments and the bride her attire; ears, fingers, arms were spoiled of sparkling jewels; gold gleamed and precious stones flashed thick on the vast, rising heap of fragrant spices, and finest textures of Egyptian looms; the spoils of Egypt were poured into the treasury; and such was the flood of gifts which answered Moses' call, that he had to cry, Hold, it is enough!

Pity it is, not creditable to religion it is, that the liberality of those whom Christ has redeemed with his blood needs, now-a-days, so much and often the stimulus of rivalry, the charm of eloquence, urgent and earnest entreaties—the spur often, the curb-rein almost never. Would to God, we were more fired with the love of souls and of Him who spared not his own Son to save us! Then would we spare our persons and our purses less; and not only abounding, but delighting in the work of the Lord, our life would rise more to the height of its motto, these grand words of Paul—I will gladly spend and be spent for Christ.

HEBE DUNBAR: AGED FOURTEEN AND A HALF.

Her peaceful being slowly passes by
To some more perfect peace.
TENNYSON.

I.

I DO not distinctly remember how many weeks before her death I became acquainted with Hebe Dunbar, but I think it was about six weeks. The place she has occupied in my thoughts cannot be measured by days and weeks. I seemed to have known her for years. And yet I have not much to record: a few meetings and partings; a few conversations; a few prayers; that is all. How little of our deepest impressions can be given in words; how much must be for ever left unsaid! I have tried, in the following pages, to recall a few of those brief moments which death has made so unspeakably sad and precious to those that remain.

From a Photograph. Engraved by J. Swain.

HEBE DUNBAR.

II.

It was one Sunday afternoon, about five o'clock, that I paid my first visit to Hebe. She was half-reclining on a sofa by the window, and thus appeared to me two or three years older than she really was. There was no death on her face. The rounded oval, the olive-dark complexion, the quiet unsuffering eyes, might have belonged to any one in perfect health. The weariness and exhaustion which even now at times stole over her, and which latterly became almost constant, had not then left a trace of pain; and yet we knew, as we sat there by her sofa, that the light of another world was upon her. For a few moments I could say nothing; when I spoke, it was to ask her whether she suffered much. She said, "Only sometimes; but I feel so weak." As I began to speak of suffering and patience, her father whispered to me, "She is very young." He was right; in a moment I felt how dry and tedious all ordinary moralising must be, and how useless to her. This bright young soul, so soon to be launched into the eternal world, what did it need! Surely, to forget the darkness of the grave, the coldness of death, to look to the light and warmth beyond. I knelt down close beside her; I asked, "if she knew that she could never get well?" She looked at me very quietly and, without answering, nodded her head slowly. I said "You must not be afraid to die. Do you believe that God loves you?"

"Yes, I think He loves me and cares for me. I try to believe I am not afraid to die."

"You must not think of the next life as strange and dark, but as beautiful and full of joy. Christ is there beyond the grave, in an eternal summer, waiting to welcome all those who love Him."

As I continued, she listened very patiently, with the same quiet and collected expression of countenance, and when I prayed, she closed her eyes; and when I came to the Lord's Prayer, she repeated it after me with great earnestness.

III.

The next time I saw her she was quite cheerful and much less reserved. She showed me the flowers that had been sent her, and chose some of them for me. She was very anxious that I should take a glass of wine before I went. It was one of those little marks which proved her constant thoughtfulness for others. Some days after I found her much lower; doubts and troubles seemed to have come over her mind, chiefly about loving God. She thought she loved her parents and friends more than God. I tried to explain to her that in loving them she was loving God; I thought that human love made heaven possible to the soul; that she might love her father and mother freely, for that love was given her to teach her the love of God, and was in fact only another form of it.

Her attention soon wandered. I felt she was getting tired. I could not quite read the meaning of her face; there was a certain look of bewilderment about it. I thought she was not understanding me, and when I left I felt wretched to think I could give her so little comfort. Fearing I might weary her, I did not call the next day, and on the following morning she sent for me. She wanted to ask me some questions. When I came, however, she was too much exhausted to speak or listen much. Rousing herself for a moment, she said, quite suddenly, "Sometimes I have bad thoughts; what am I to do?" I explained that to have a bad thought is not in itself a sin; it is a sin directly it is encouraged. We cannot help bad thoughts; they come we know not how, but we can crush them directly they arise; then they have not hurt us." This, I think, satisfied her. Some days after I found her sitting up on a low mattress on the ground. I then, for the first time, realised what a child she was. I sat down by her side, and she put both her little hands in mine, and she began telling me all that came into her head.

"Is it not strange the people did not believe in Christ, when He did so many miracles? That is a beautiful parable about the prodigal son; and I am so fond of the 23rd Psalm, 'The Lord is my shepherd;' but the fourteenth chapter of St. John I like better than all,—about the 'many mansions.'"

Afterwards she said something had been on her mind for many days, doubts and fears; she felt she was not fit for heaven. I said we might rest quite happy about that, because God was our Father. Of course all would not have exactly the same heaven; heaven was a state far more than a place, and would vary with the condition of the soul. The heavens of St. John and the penitent thief were doubtless very different; but both were with Christ in Paradise. He took both to Himself, and He would make them fit to dwell with Him for ever. As to her fears, the question was, "Had God forsaken her?" She was anxious; she felt herself not good enough. That was a sign that God's Spirit was with her and dwelling in her; no one ever felt that without his teaching, and He, who was thus proved to be with her, had said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Every fear, every anxiety was a sign that God's light was disclosing the darkness in order to remove it.

I could see that her experience varied very much with the phases of her disease. I begged her to believe that God never changed so; that what she felt about Him never altered his love for her, because "He was the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

She would complain at times that she could not pray, and latterly prayer of any length exhausted her. I asked her at moments to use short sentences. Prayer needed no words; it was an offering of the spirit, not the lips, "though the lips helped us sometimes to pray."

IV.

During the first few weeks she had wonderful returns of health and vivacity; some days she would declare she felt herself getting well. We almost began to hope ourselves, and talked of possible recovery. But our better reason reminded us that consumption was ever thus treacherous, flushing with momentary life the form that must so soon wither for ever. On such days I asked her to lay in stores of spiritual strength against the coming weakness and relapse. We could then read more of the Bible and

pray more, and she was made very happy by it. We took those hours of revival as a blessed respite given us by One who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, nor ever lays a burden upon his children too heavy for them to bear. It was during one of those last gleams of health, as I was just leaving her unusually cheerful and happy, that she chose a perfectly white rose from some flowers that had been sent her that morning, and gave it to me. I often look at the sere leaves now, and think of the gentle hand that will never give me another.

V.

She was never troubled now with any doubts about God's love and care for her here or beyond the grave. The thought of heaven was one of unclouded peace. At times she seemed almost to breathe the air of another world. I never knew in so young a person such depth of spiritual communion. Whilst praying, she would often appear quite rapt and abstracted from all outward things; and but for the occasional and silent moving of the lips you might have thought she was in a deep sleep. What love had the Father bestowed upon her, giving her strong faith and comfort as she entered into the shadow of the dark valley! Our own hearts seemed purified and elevated in the midst of the watchings; and as we marked the kindling of her face at the message of Divine love, and listened at times to her words of sweet patience and thoughtfulness for others, and joined in the prayer which to her was the water and the bread of life, we knew that she was being taught by the Spirit, and that the true light was now shining.

VI.

And now the disease rapidly increased. She hardly ever rested. I often came in late to say an evening prayer; but I dreaded wearying her. Sometimes I could not tell whether she was conscious or not; at others, I could do little more than sit by her side during those terrible fits of coughing, and stroke her dear face with my hand bathed in eau-de-cologne, or whisper what short words of comfort I could think of as she dozed away. Then at times she would suddenly revive, and taking my hand in both of hers press it to her lips, or stretch out both arms to kiss me as I left her, and murmur, "Dear, dear clergyman!" She now got a sharp and constant pain in her side when she coughed; and as I knelt down one day she took my hand, and, looking at me earnestly said, "Pray that this pain in my side may go away."

"Dearest child!" I said, "you must suffer now. You will never lose that pain. Remember, the pain was not taken away from Christ, but an angel comforted Him; and you too shall be comforted. We will pray for comfort and faith and patience, shall we not?"

She moved her head with a slow and thoughtful assent, and never again prayed to have her pain taken away.

"I know I must suffer," she said, and no complaining word escaped her lips; only, after a dreadful fit of coughing, she would place her hand upon her breast, with a look of piteous pain and exhaustion, and exclaim, "Oh, mamma, dearest mamma!"

VII.

Day after day now followed, leaving nothing to record. Little passed between us. When I came I would generally kneel down and whisper a few words of prayer in her ear; and only the gentle pressure of her hand told me that, as she lay with closed eyes, she was still conscious of my presence. The slightest exertion seemed too much for her. I almost dreaded coming to see her for fear she should rouse herself from some unconscious sleep, or suffer afterwards from the excitement of an interruption.

We all felt so utterly powerless to soothe or alleviate her sufferings, and from this feeling, although with many a wistful longing to see her, I stayed away for two days. On the morning of the third she sent for me. I was surprised to find her sitting up in an arm-chair. She appeared anxious and excited. I began to fear that doubt and despondency had again taken possession of her mind; but it was not so. She felt the approach of death, and had gathered up all her remaining strength to speak to us before the last lethargy stole over her. Her father and mother were with her. She had been talking much to them before I came. She was full of grief, and for the first time since I knew her I saw her eyes filled with tears. But there was no fear there. She wept because she was going to leave us, and because she now realised, perhaps for the first time, the full meaning of that separation. Her usual calmness forsook her. Her lips faltered, and her slender frame shook with emotion. She could not find words to express the thoughts which glowed within; but all her words and movements expressed intense and overpowering feeling. It was as if the deep impulses of her nature, which it would have taken years to develope, had suddenly blossomed and burned out in a minute. Naturally, she was quiet and reserved in many ways, but at this supreme hour all constraint seemed to vanish. She was never to feel, or weep, or love any more, and the emotions of a life-time were crowded into a few seconds.

"I love you," she sobbed; "I love you all so much!" and turning to me, as I knelt by her side, "and you, too,—I love you, dear, dear clergyman! Come to me soon in heaven. I pray that God will send you to me." And she threw her arms round my neck and sobbed violently.

Then, as she grew more tranquil, "Will you come to my funeral?"

"Yes, my darling," I said; "but you won't be there."

"Oh! but you will come!"

"Yes, dear. I will come and read the service for you." And I could say no more, for my own words choked me, and I kissed her forehead tenderly, but she said, "No, no! let me kiss your lips!" and so I kissed her again; but she was now growing very faint from exhaustion, and, dreading for her the consequences of so much excitement, I left her, promising to come in again about tea-time.

VIII.

That was our last happy evening together. I say happy, for the idea of impending death was so familiar that it had well-nigh lost its power to grieve us, except when her acute suffering brought it more vividly home. That evening she bore up wonderfully. All traces of the morning's agitation had left her. She was unusually calm—unusually free from pain and coughing. She thought she could take a little weak tea. I dropped small pieces of biscuit into it, and, kneeling down by her arm-chair, tried to coax her to eat a little, but, after one or two attempts, she laid her head upon my shoulder and would eat no more. I had brought her a little book of meditations, and, after tea, I read some of it aloud to her; and then she found me some Psalms, and amongst them her favourite—the 23rd, and would have me read it and explain it; and, after that, as the twilight deepened, I knelt down and prayed with her the last prayer that I can feel sure she really joined in, and shortly before I left the restlessness and coughing recommenced, which was never to leave her any more.

* * * * * *

One evening at five o'clock I came. I had chosen a few verses to read to her. I was thinking, as I stood at the door, of some very short words of prayer. I thought, perhaps, I should find her lying exhausted, but still conscious. I thought I would tread softly, and whisper very low; and that she would notice my presence with the faintest pressure of the hand, and, perhaps, half open the dreamy eyes. I little knew the hand had been cold for hours,—the tender, loving eyes closed for ever.

H. R. Haweis.

HEROES AND MARTYRS OF THE REFORMATION IN ITALY.

BY W. L. ALEXANDER, D.D.

II.—THE BROTHERS VALDEZ.

Travellers on the American prairies tell us that frequently the extensive conflagrations, which spread over these vast plains, have their origin in some very trifling accident—the careless throwing aside of a lighted match, the scattering of a few sparks from some traveller's fire, or the emptying of the glowing ashes from some Indian's pipe. Similar to this was the rise and progress of the Reformation in some of the countries where it took effect. It was but "a little matter" to outward appearance that kindled the great fire which spread with such wonderful rapidity over Germany and the northern states of Europe. That an honest and outspoken monk, scandalised by the profligate sale of indulgences, should utter his vehement protest against such abuses, was a thing not worth the notice of either ecclesiastical or political dignitaries, or, if noticed, a thing only to be laughed at as one may laugh at the rage of a puny child. But the utterance of that protest was the small spark which, falling on prepared material, kindled a conflagration in which the grand edifice of papal domination in these countries, which it had taken centuries to build, was all but utterly consumed, leaving little beyond its blackened walls to tell of its former greatness.

No such spectacle as this was presented by the Reformation in Italy. There no Luther arose; and if there had, it is very doubtful whether he would have been able to make his voice be heard so as to pervade the masses of the people. In Italy the flames burst forth sporadically, and in many cases without any traceable connection with each other; and each burnt out or was violently extinguished without communicating its influence to any large extent. This result is in a great measure accounted for by the state of things described in the preceding chapter.

The morning-star of the Reformation in Italy was, if we may so speak, a double star. Two brothers, Juan and Alfonso Valdez, natives of Spain, were honoured to be the first openly to labour for the propagation of evangelical doctrine in that land at the time of the Reformation. Like the object to which we have compared them, the two brothers were so closely connected—revolved so, as it were, around a common centre, and were so constantly changing their relative positions, alternatively giving and receiving from each other, that it is difficult, in some cases impossible, to discriminate the working of the one from that of the other. Some writers have given up the attempt in despair; whilst others have fallen on the expedient of creating an imaginary person, in whom both brothers are made to coalesce, and whom they call Juan Alfonso Valdez.* There can be no doubt, however, that Juan and Alfonso were distinct persons. Erasmus, writing to Juan, speaks of his brother Alfonso, and adds that they so closely resembled each other in body and in mind that they seemed almost one person,† a statement which, while it clearly establishes the fact that they were distinct, may also serve to account in some measure for their being so often confounded.

The brothers were twins, and were born at Cuenca, in Castille, about the beginning of the sixteenth century. Their father was hereditary regidor of their native town, and a person of rank and influence.‡ At an early period the brothers were placed at the Castilian Court; and we find Alfonso in the suite of the young King Charles, when he went to be crowned as Emperor

* Llorente, Hist. de l'Inquisition, t. ii. p. 281.
† Erasmi Epp., in his collected works. Lugd. Bat. 1703.
‡ Bayle says that Juan Valdez was a juris-consult, and was made a knight by Charles V. Dr. M'Crie makes Alfonso an ecclesiastic; but authority is wanting for this.

at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1520. He accompanied the Emperor to Worms, and was present at the diet held there in 1521, where Luther appeared to defend his proceedings, and where he made his noble protest, "Here I stand; I can do nothing else; so help me God." It is probable that Valdez heard the discussions on both sides at that memorable conference; and it is a proof of his sagacity that, though but young and inexperienced, he saw more clearly how things stood, and whither the current was tending, than men who had been trained in diplomacy and were accustomed to affairs. "The majority in Germany and Rome thought that when the diet placed Luther under a ban, the whole affair was ended and peace restored; and only a few were as shrewd as the Spaniard Alfonso Valdez, who wrote from Worms to his friend Peter Martyr,* an account of all that passed, and concludes with the words, 'And so as people think we have got to the end of this tragedy, as I believe we are but at the beginning of it.'" † He saw that the Pope, by obstinately seeking the condemnation of Luther, and refusing to convene a general council, was repudiating the only means by which the peace of Christendom could be preserved.

Before this time, Alfonso, whilst yet a youth, had declared himself on the side of the friends of culture and liberal studies against those who still clung to the darkness and barbarism of the preceding century. A fierce controversy had arisen in Spain between the monks and the humanists (as the followers of the restored learning were called), in consequence of the condemnation and burning of the writings of Erasmus; and in this Alfonso took part with youthful fervour, and a zeal which provoked the taunt that he was more Erasmian than Erasmus himself. The policy of the Emperor led him to side with Erasmus, and when this became apparent the clergy sought to quiet the tumult as quickly and adroitly as they could. The skill of the Inquisitor-General came to their aid; he accepted the dedication to himself of a translation into Spanish of one of Erasmus's treatises, the "Enchiridion Militis;" by this the storm was allayed; and the Emperor felt himself free to make what use he could of the learned Hollander in the delicate and difficult policy, amid conflicting parties, which he found it expedient to pursue.

Valdez returned to Spain with Charles in 1522; and not long after this became Secretary of State under the High Chancellor Gattinara, at that time the ruling spirit in the imperial councils. In 1527 we find him with the Emperor in Palencia, and there he received a letter from the Archdeacon of Palencia, Alfonso Hernandez, the translator of the "Enchiridion," to transmit to Erasmus. He seems also to have been the writer of a letter from the Emperor to Erasmus, sent from Burgos, in December, 1527.

In this way his intercourse with that remarkable man commenced, an intercourse which cannot but have exerted a potent influence on the mind and character of one so ardent and susceptible as Alfonso Valdez. Juan also was a correspondent of Erasmus. The high esteem in which both the brothers were held by him is apparent from many expressions of admiration and affection which his letters contain.

In May, 1527, occurred an event which startled the civilised world, and produced a deep effect through Europe. This was the capture and sacking of Rome by the imperial army, led thither by Bourbon, who himself fell in the assault. The heated passions of the troops, inflamed by the sufferings and privations they had endured, and in the case of the German portion of them by religious animosity, and no longer under the restraint which the authority of their leader would have imposed, found vent in the most frightful excesses of cruelty, rapine, and lust. Shops were emptied of their stores; the churches and monasteries were spoiled of their most valuable ornaments and sacred treasures; the abodes of the citizens and the palaces of the nobility and higher clergy were plundered; a merciless butchery, that spared neither age nor sex, deluged the streets with blood; persons of the highest rank were taken prisoners, subjected to the grossest indignities, and allowed to escape with their lives only on the payment of a heavy ransom; high-born ladies were exposed to the cruelest insults, daughters were torn from their mothers' arms to gratify the brutal passions of the soldiery, and children were tortured to compel their parents to disclose treasures which they were supposed to have concealed.* For eight days this scene of dark and unbridled license continued, until barbarity itself began to be satiated with its excesses. The Pope the while was a prisoner in the castle of St. Angelo, whither all who could escape in time were pent up in close confinement. The utmost distress began to prevail within its walls. The stock of provisions was beginning to be exhausted; and as the approaches were so strictly guarded that not the smallest supply could be introduced, starvation began to stare the inmates in the face. Pestilence also, engendered by the multitude of dead bodies that lay corrupting in the streets, threatened to penetrate the fortress. It was only after long delays and the payment of a vast fine that the Pope was permitted to be at liberty.

To many the calamities that had come upon the papal see were regarded as the fulfilment of the predictions and warnings which had been from time to time bursting from the lips and pens of those whom the presence and pressure of measureless corruption had forced to take up the language of ancient prophecy and apply it to Rome. On all hands a feeling prevailed that the Divine indignation was marked by the calamities which had befallen the Pope and his adherents; and while some rejoiced in this, and even sought to add bitterness to the pontiff's sufferings by mockery and ridicule, there were many who, whilst they pitied the sufferers, were awe-struck with what they could not but regard as a terrible manifestation of the Divine wrath. In what light these events were regarded by the Emperor it is not easy to say. On first hearing of the sack of Rome and the imprisonment of the Pope, Charles gave utterance to expres-

* Not the Reformer, but another of the same name, a native of Anghiera.

† Von Raumer, Geschichte Europas seit dem ende des 15ten Jahrhunderts, i. 264.

* Guicciardini, Storia d'Italia, bk. xviii. ch. 3. Buonaparte, Sacco di Roma del anno 1527.

sions of grief and horror ; but the readiness which he showed to take advantage of the Pope's distresses for his own ends, and the harsh terms to which he constrained him to submit, lead to the suspicion that in his secret heart Charles was not greatly distressed by what had happened. A still more clear indication of the feeling at the Imperial Court, in reference to this matter, is furnished by a production which at this time came from the pen of the Emperor's secretary, Alfonso Valdez. The design of this treatise is to show that the blame of the disturbances which had brought such calamity on Rome rested with the Pope and his party. It is in the form of a dialogue between Lactontio, an officer of the Emperor, and an archdeacon who has just arrived from Italy at Valladolid, where Charles was when the news of the sack of Rome reached him. It is written in Spanish, and bears a title which, translated, is as follows : "Dialogue : in which are particularly discussed the things which happened at Rome in the year 1527. To the glory of God and the universal good of the Christian Republic." It was first printed in 1529 along with another Dialogue, and the two are usually found together.* They were, however, written at different times and by different pens, the one by Alfonso, and the other by Juan Valdez.

The Dialogue of Alfonso is the production of one already deeply imbued with anti-papal feeling and evangelical beliefs. In language which might almost have come from the pen of Luther himself he denounces the corruptions of the Papacy, and points out the contrast between the state of things in the Church of Rome and that which the New Testament shows the Church of Christ ought to be. He praises Luther and Erasmus for what they had done to expose and remove the corruptions of the Church ; ridicules the multiplying of reliques, whereby the faithful are put in the dilemma either of having to reject some or to believe what is absurd,—as that Mary, for instance, had two heads or two mothers ; denounces all trust in human merit for salvation ; and proclaims Christ as the sole medium of acceptance with God.

Copies of this Dialogue were circulated in MS., at first among the writer's friends, in the autumn of 1527, but copies of it seem soon to have got beyond their circle ; for in the beginning of 1528, Count Castiglione, the Papal Nuncio, who was at Burgos with the Spanish Court, had heard of it, and through his secretary intimated to Valdez the risk he was running in writing so freely as he had done of the head of the Church. In the course of the following summer, Castiglione, finding that the work was extending in circulation, and that it was proposed to translate it into Italian and French for the purpose of disseminating it where these languages were spoken, procured a copy, and formally complained to the Emperor of its anti-papal and dangerous contents. Valdez, on being called to account, expressed his regret if in his zeal to defend the Emperor he had been betrayed into any unbecoming language concerning the Pope ; but as respected the charge of having said anything contrary to the Christian faith, he begged that such a charge might not be entertained without investigation, as he was prepared to defend all he had advanced. He stated also that before issuing the Dialogue he had submitted it to the secretary of the Chancellor Gattinara, and several other persons of influence at Court, as also to the Chancellor at the University of Alcala, and not a few eminent theologians besides ; at whose suggestions some alterations had been made, and with whose approval the Dialogue was then circulated. "I have confidence in God," he concluded, "and in my innocence, that I shall come out of the investigation with honour rather than disgrace." Not satisfied with this, the Nuncio still pressed his charge, and hinted that Valdez deserved to appear in the infamous costume of the *Auto da fe*. The Chancellor, however, protected him ; and shortly after, Castiglione having troubles of his own with the papal see to occupy him, the matter was allowed to drop.

Alfonso was silenced for the time, and for a season prudently held his peace. But his brother Juan lost no time in taking up the contest, and entered the field with the other Dialogue above referred to. In this he introduces, after the manner of Lucian, as interlocutors, Mercury and Charon. These two enter into a conversation about the war then going on between the Emperor and the French King ; but their discourse is continually interrupted by the arrival of the souls of persons recently deceased, whom they question as to their manner of life before death and their religious opinions, and who are supposed to be under a necessity of answering with perfect truthfulness every question. In this way a popular preacher, a reigning duke, a bishop, a cardinal, an ascetic priest, a theologian, a pious priest, a monk, a friar, a humble and sincere Christian whose trust was only in Christ, and others, are introduced and examined. Such a method affords ample scope for exposing what the writer deemed errors and evils, both in religion and politics, and of this Juan Valdez takes full advantage. The work is written with a skill, a vivacity, and a point which Erasmus himself has not exceeded, and to which his brother in his Dialogue does not approach. Throughout the composition the sentiments are as distinctly anti-papal and evangelical as those of his brother's production.

Castiglione made a feeble effort to bring Juan under penalty for this work ; but he met with no success, and in a short time he was removed by death. It is remarkable, and shows to what an abject condition the Court of Rome was at this time reduced, that whilst the work of its own Nuncio, Castiglione, the well-known "Il Cortegiano," had been put in the Index of prohibited books, the Dialogues of the two Valdez, though translated into Italian, and circulated through Italy and printed in 1529, escaped that censure till after their death.

Alfonso still retained his place in the household of the Emperor, and in 1529 accompanied him to Bologna, and thence to Augsburg, where he was present when the Protestant Confession, prepared chiefly by Melanchthon, was presented to the Emperor and assembled princes. Alfonso had frequent intercourse with Melanchthon whilst engaged in preparing this document for presentation ; and to him the Protestants were indebted for mediating on their behalf between the

* A new edition of both Dialogues appeared in 1850.

Emperor and the papal Legate, so as to secure the presentation of their Confession.* After it had been publicly read, Valdez, in obedience to the Emperor's command, made a translation of it, in company with the Emperor's other secretary, Alexander Schweitz, into Spanish and Italian. Other services were rendered by him to the Reformers after the presentation, of which not the least was that he procured a French translation of a summary of the Confession drawn up by Melanchthon, and placed it privately in the Emperor's hands. From this time forward he seems to have been in communication with the leading Reformers. After this it is only casual glimpses that we catch of Alfonso Valdez. In December, 1531, we find a Papal Nuncio complaining of the influence at the Spanish court of one who was an enthusiastic admirer of Erasmus,† and this in all probability was Alfonso. In 1533 he seems to have remained in Italy, when the Emperor set sail from Genoa for Spain; probably not deeming it safe to risk a nearer intercourse with the Grand Inquisitor. We learn, from a letter of a Spaniard of that day, Francisco Enzinas, that such was the feeling against him among the monks in Spain, that not even the Emperor himself would have been able to save him from a violent end. When, where, and how he ended his course, no record remains to tell.

Of Juan Valdez after this we know something more. Like his brother, not finding it safe to be in Spain, he settled in Italy, and, after being for some time at Rome, he ultimately took up his abode at Naples, where he occupied himself for some time chiefly in literary pursuits. It was at this period that his "Dialogo de la Lengua," first printed at Madrid in 1737, and again in 1860, was produced; a work of much interest on the Spanish language and literature.‡ But his heart was set on other things. He was labouring in secret to propagate the knowledge of Christ among those with whom he had intercourse. Celio Secondo Curione calls him a man of the greatest piety and learning, and compares him to a mine-digger who was secretly labouring for the overthrow of the papacy; unlike his early friend and model Erasmus, whom the same writer stigmatises as a "pitifully unsteadfast character." He gradually gathered around him a company of kindred spirits, who, like the pious Jews of old, in times of national degeneracy and darkness, "spake often one to another," encouraged and helped each other in the pursuit of the truth, and sought, as they had opportunity, to make known to others the truth they had found. Of this society Juan Valdez was the centre and main-spring.

A man of culture, well versed in theological knowledge though a layman, strongly attached to evangelical truth, and feeling its power on his own heart and life, Valdez was eminently fitted to fill the place to which he was thus providentially called. With earnest zeal and unwearied assiduity he laboured to promote the cause, to which he had given himself both in his own country and in Italy. The former he could reach only by means of his pen; and this he used with diligence and ability. One of his earliest works at this time is a Dialogue, written apparently in Spanish, but which was published first in Italian at Venice in 1546. It is entitled "Alfabeto Christiano," and aims at a delineation of the leading truths of Christianity. Juan himself is one of the interlocutors; the other is Julia de Gonzaga, the widow of Vespasian Colonna, Duke of Trajetto; and the Dialogue is probably a report of what in substance actually passed between them. At that time Ochino was startling the community of gay and pleasure-seeking Naples with his eloquent and earnest addresses, delivered during Lent, 1536; and the conversation reported is said to have taken place after one of these addresses. The Duchess was accompanied home from the church by Valdez, to whom she took the opportunity of opening her mind; informing him that she felt a terrible struggle between the fear of hell and the desire of heaven on the one hand, and the fear of people's tongues and the desire of earthly honour on the other. Valdez points out to her that the existence of such a struggle was a favourable symptom, for it showed that the darkness had been assailed by its proper antagonist, the light of truth; and he encourages her to believe that though the Gospel had in the first instance done the work of the law in her, by agitating her conscience, it would in due time do its own proper work in giving her peace. To Julia's remark that she had always heard it said that the way to Christian perfection was by keeping such vows as the monks and nuns took on them, Valdez replies: "Let them say, lady; but believe me that, monk or no monk, a man has just as much perfection as he has of faith in and love to God, and not an atom more." He then tells her that "fire can no more cease to warm than faith can fail to bring forth the fruits of love; that faith is to be viewed as the tree of which love is the fruit." This brings up the question What is faith? and to this Valdez replies: "By faith I understand not a mere belief of the history of Christ, for that may well exist, and does exist, without love, and for this reason St. James calls it *dead* faith, such as wicked men and devils may have; but I mean thereby that which lives in the soul,—obtained not by human labour and skill, but by the grace of God through supernatural light,—a faith which holds for true all God's words, his threatenings as well as his promises; so that the man when he hears Christ say, *He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned*, so confides in these words as true that he has not the least doubt of his own salvation."* The Duchess replies that she believes all the doctrines of Christianity; but Valdez goes on to show that though, were she asked, she would profess her assent to each article in the creed, yet were one to ask whether she believed that God had forgiven her

* "Hispanus secretarius, qui benigne pollicetur et jam cum Cæsare et Campegio, de mea sententia contulit." Melanchthon to Luther, June 19, 1529.

† Letter from Aleander to the Papal Secretary at Rome. Laemmer, Monument. Vatican, p. 94.

‡ Tickner, History of Spanish Literature, i. 502.

* It will be seen that Valdez, like many of the Reformers, identified *assurance* (fiducia) with *faith* (fides); compare the Confess. Augustan. Art. 20; Melanchthon's Apologia, p. 172; Calvin, Institutio, iii. 2, 16.

sins she would probably reply that she thought so, but was not sure; and this uncertainty, he says, arises from want of faith; for, if she believed with all her heart what she confessed in the creed, she would, when she confessed the remission of sins, whatever pain she might feel because of the offences she had committed against God, not hesitate with open mouth to say that God had forgiven her all her sins. It would require too much space to follow out this conversation in detail. One or two passages, however, may be given, as setting forth the writer's views on important points. On the conflict of the flesh and the spirit he says:—"St. Paul divides men into two parts, the one of which he calls the flesh, the other the spirit: the one the old man, the other the new man. By the old man, he intends man not quickened by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and by the new man he means man so quickened. The old man he calls flesh and body, subject to sin; whence it is clear that under the name *flesh* he includes the whole man, soul and body, without the Holy Spirit,—nature without grace. . . . . Whence it may be concluded that your soul is in one of three states: it is either mingled with the flesh and become carnal, or it is joined to the Spirit and become spiritual, or it is in conflict, because the flesh would have it for its own, but the Spirit is drawing it to itself." Regarding the true knowledge of God, he says that it comes only through Christ. "This way," says he, "is the certain, the clear, the sure path; this is the even, the royal highway. And know, lady, that in the knowledge of God through Christ lies the whole being of the Christian; for to know God through Christ, we must first know Christ. And since we cannot know Christ by natural light nor by any human effort, unless God open and illuminate the eyes of our soul, therefore I say that this knowledge of God through Christ is supernatural, and requires for its production the special grace of God. Now, when we know God through Christ, we know Him as full of love and goodness, merciful and compassionate, because we find in Christ love, benignity, mercy, and compassion." Christ, he asserts, came into the world to make satisfaction for original sin, whose abiding guilt only the eternal God himself can remove; He came to satisfy for the sins of all men of the Past, the Present, and the Future; He came to bring men to the condition of sons of God. The Dialogue concludes with some practical directions to the Duchess how best to care for the promotion of her spiritual interests, without exposing herself to the malice of the enemies of the truth.

Such caution was necessary in the state of things which then existed at Naples. The Viceroy Toledo was fired with zeal for the extirpation of heresy, and the Theatine friars took care that the flame should not languish for want of fanning. Only a couple of weeks before the conversation reported by Valdez is said to have taken place, an Imperial edict had appeared in Naples, forbidding all intercourse with persons infected with the Lutheran heresy, on pain of death and confiscation of goods. Not long after this the Viceroy inhibited Ochino from preaching, but was not able to prevent him from finishing his course. Perhaps the private regard of the Emperor both for him and Valdez, prevented their being interfered with so much as their enemies could have wished.

Several other works were prepared by Valdez at this time. The first was a translation of the Book of Psalms from the Hebrew, which he dedicated to the Duchess de Gonzaga; of which no copy is known to exist. To the same lady he dedicated also his next work—a Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans and the First Epistle to the Corinthians (Geneva, 1556, 1557, 1856); a work remarkable for its thorough-going investigation of the meaning of the Apostle, and its combination of learned interpretation with practical exposition. A treatise on the proper interpretation of Scripture, another on the best manner of preaching, and another on how the sons of Christians should be taught, we know that he wrote only from the testimony of others.* One of his most valuable works, however, has been preserved in the Italian translation, though the original Spanish is lost. It is entitled, "The Hundred and Ten Divine Considerations."† It was published after his death by Celio Secundo Curione, and was afterwards translated into French, English, and Dutch; it was also retranslated into Spanish.‡

What effect Valdez created by these writings, it is impossible to determine. But there can be no doubt that by his personal qualities and efforts he exerted a powerful influence on the circle in the midst of which he moved. Himself of noble descent, he found access to the high-born in the land of his adoption; and he possessed every advantage for acting upon persons of this class by his teachings. His health was feeble; but one who was no friend to him describes him as having a handsome countenance and most pleasing manners, and as speaking in a sweet and attractive voice. He combined, in a remarkable degree, elevation and strength of intellect with prudent zeal and simple and earnest piety. "He was most undoubtedly," writes an admiring friend, "both in words and in actions, and in all his counsels, a most perfect man. He devoted an atom only of his mind to the consideration of his feeble emaciated body; the greater part of his most pure intellect, as if out of the body, was always raised to the contemplation of truth and of Divine things."§ With such endowments and qualities, he soon gathered around him a circle of educated persons, whose hearts were touched with

* Haym. Biblioteca Italiana, ii. 618; Discorso del Vergerio prefixed to Il Catalogo de' Libri le quali nuovamente nel mese di Maggio, 1548, sono stati condonnati e scommunicati per heretici,—a very rare book, cited by Young, Life and Time of Palcario, i. 237. A Latin translation, however, of the tract on education, by Vergerio, is extant under the title of Lac Spirituale. An edition was printed at Brunswick in 1864.

† Le cento e dieci divini considerazioni. Basle, 1563.

‡ The French translation was made by Claude Kequisseren, and published at Lyons in 1563, and again at Paris in 1565. The English translation appeared at Oxford in 1638; the translator was Nicholas Ferrer, and the work came forth under the sanction of George Herbert, who has appended some notes. A reprint was issued at Cambridge in 1646, to which is prefixed a letter from Herbert, dated 1632, which has led to the supposition that an earlier edition must have appeared at Cambridge: Young, i. 230. The Spanish translation was not discovered till after a new translation, made in 1855, had been issued; it was published in 1862. A new edition of the Italian was published at Halle in 1860, edited by Dr. Boehmer, who has added a collection of biographical notices of the brothers Valdez. A new translation into English, by J. T. Betts, has just appeared, to which Mr. Wiffen has prefixed a valuable Memoir of the author. Of this work the writer of this article obtained a sight only after his own memoir was in print.

§ Bonfadio, Letter to Carnasecchi, quoted by Young, i. 234.

religious convictions, and whom he laboured to build up in knowledge, piety, and true holiness.

These friends held their meetings in private, in Valdez' own house, in the outskirts of the city, or in some other isolated residence where they might enjoy communion with each in the pursuit of truth without drawing on them the notice of those to whom such pursuits were odious. One of their favourite retreats was at Posillipo, a promontory which divides the bay of Naples into two portions, and where the delicious climate of that region dispenses its benignant influences. Here, sheltered from every wind that blows, amidst vineyards and groves, and cultivated fields, with the cloudless sky above and the deep blue sea before, numerous villas are clustered, especially on the western side, where the hill slopes down to the beautiful bay of Baiae. To one of these villas Valdez and his friends were wont to retreat, and there, in quiet and amid the serenest influences of nature, they took sweet counsel together, seeking to strengthen each other for the conflicts of life, and to help each other forward to that brighter and happier country they were longing to reach. At these meetings were to be found some of the choicest spirits of the day. There might be seen Ochino in his habit as a Capuchin friar, with his pale eager countenance, his snow-white hair and beard, and his bright restless eyes that bespoke the fervent soul of one of whose eloquence the cold Charles V. said, "It would make stones weep." Thither came Peter Martyr Vermiglio, the learned, large-minded man to whom England owes so much; and with him the young noble Galeazzo Carracciolo, the friend in after-years of Calvin and Beza, to whom the former dedicates his commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians in terms of most eloquent eulogy, and whom the latter hailed as "a second Moses." There, too, were to be found Pietro Carnesecchi, who, steadfast in his attachment to the truths which he had heard at these conferences, was years after counted worthy of the martyr's crown;—Marc Antonio Flaminio, the scholar and poet;—Jacopo Bonfadio, the historian;—and others besides, whose names are not so well known to later times. Nor were worthy representatives of the other sex wanting; for there were to be seen such noble women as Isabella Manricha, of Bresegna, the friend of Olympia Morata, and who chose exile and poverty rather than relinquish her profession of the truth; the Duchess Julia de Gonzaga, reputed the most beautiful woman of the time, and who was saved from the tender mercies of the Inquisition only by the kind hand of death;—and the noble Vittoria Colonna, one of the brightest ornaments of Italian literature, and whose majestic beauty was the fitting counterpart of her elevated and serene intellect. With most of these names we shall meet again in the course of these sketches. To all of those who bore them, Juan Valdez stood in the relation of a teacher, counsellor, and friend.

These pleasant and edifying meetings were destined to be rudely broken up. In 1549, Caraffa, Archbishop of Naples, was called to Rome, and left as his vicar Scipione Rebiba, whose zeal for the Church led him to pursue the most violent measures to extirpate heresy. An active persecution of the Lutherans commenced, in which many suffered. Valdez himself was saved by death from the fate which would in all probability have befallen him at the hands of his enemies. He passed away in peace, but the society which he had gathered suffered much, and was utterly dispersed. One at least of their number, Alois di Caserta, endured martyrdom, being beheaded along with another of noble birth, Gargano d'Aversa, at Naples, in 1564. Others fled in various directions. Some of the ladies retired into convents, where, without taking the vows, they were permitted to live in peace. The feeling with all was probably that expressed by Bonfadio in a letter to Carnesecchi:—"Where should we go, now that Valdez is dead? This has been a great loss for us and for the world; because Signor Valdez was one of the rare men of Europe."*

PREJUDICE; OR, THE BLACK POLYANTHUS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STUDIES FOR STORIES."

Part I.

When I was between twelve and thirteen years of age (said my friend, Sophia West), I was sent to a school in the country, which was under the care of two ladies, both widows, one the widow of a French Protestant pastor, the other of an English physician. Of the latter we saw but little: she was at the time of my arrival a great invalid.

Including two little girls, the children of the French lady, there were twelve pupils, four of whom were nearly grown up, and seldom condescended to play with us, or permitted us to address them by their Christian names. These young ladies were Miss L'Estrange Miss Ashley, Miss Morton, and Miss Ward.

Of the second four I was the youngest. We slept in four little white beds, in the same large chamber. we learnt the same lessons, had the same masters, and were great friends.

The third four were very much petted and played with by the elder girls; but we who held the middle place did not enter much into their sports, as considering them too childish; therefore, though we patronised them, and worked for their dolls, we frequently reminded them of our superior age and importance, and always spoke of them as "the children." Our names were Juliet Ashley, Belle L'Estrange, Margaret Smythe, and Sophia West.

We were very happy at that school, which was a large old brick house, more brown than red: it stood in a valley, and was surrounded by a very large

* Bonfadio, Letters, p. 33.

garden, which was bounded on one side by a small shallow river. The lawn sloped down to the river, and several large weeping willows hung over it, and gave the house their name. It was called "The Willows." Beyond the garden was a hop plantation, and again, beyond that, a cherry orchard. We had free access to both, and were permitted to spend much of our half-holidays out of doors. There was an empty coach-house in the yard. It was given up to our use; and there we had a swing, some hutches for our rabbits and guinea-pigs, and there also we kept numbers of little birds, which we used to buy of a man in the neighbourhood, at the rate of 3*d.* for a redcap, 6*d.* for a linnet, 9*d.* for a robin, 1*s.* for a goldfinch that could sing, and half-a-crown for a canary.

If one little girl bought a redcap every one else did the same, and so with the rabbits, the guinea-pigs, the white mice, and the jackdaws. More than fifty common little cages garnished the white-washed walls of the coach-house; and the gardener's children drove a flourishing trade, by supplying us with different kinds of berries, buds of trees, cow-parsley, bran, thistle-seed, and other delicacies for our pets.

Though we had so many birds, Madame had passed a sumptuary law, limiting them to the species that I have named, for the sufficient reason, that if she should give leave to one little girl to purchase a bird of any other sort, each of the others would wish for one also.

Belle L'Estrange and I were especial friends. Our little white beds stood almost close together, and we had our drawers and boxes in common. Therefore, one day in April, when the weather was more than commonly fine, and it was a half-holiday, we were disagreeably surprised, when we came in from our walk, to find our beds moved and separated, and the elderly woman who attended us, Mrs. Massey by name, busily engaged in putting up a small blue bed, and evidently making preparations for a fresh pupil. Massey told us that she had known for some days that a new pupil was expected, and that she was to sleep in our room; "and I thought what a pleasant thing it was for you, young ladies," she proceeded—"makes it so cheerful for you."

"Massey, you didn't think so," said Juliet; "you knew we shouldn't like it."

Massey smiled, and taking up the hammer began to use it to so much purpose that for the present our murmurs were drowned.

"I'm sure, miss, I don't know any reason why you should not like it," she observed, when she laid the hammer down.

"Why did Madame keep it a secret from us, then?" replied Juliet. "She did not do so when Sophia was coming. And besides, Massey, just see what a mess you have made; every one of our boxes moved, and all the beds pushed out of their places."

"It was Madame's orders, Miss Ashley," said Massey. And she sat at the foot of the little blue bed, making up rosettes to trim it with, and taking all our grumbling and discontent with the most placid composure.

We asked an infinity of questions, but could not obtain much information. "The young lady was in mourning," she said. "She had already arrived. She had dark hair, and seemed to have been crying." She then volunteered the information that a parrot in a cage had been handed through the carriage window, and that it was now standing in the hall.

A parrot! We wondered whether Madame would permit her to keep it. We did not know that we should consider it particularly fair if she did, for *we* were not allowed to have parrots.

When Massey was not pleased at our remarks, she shook the curtains or rustled her work. She now, evidently, wished us to talk of something else, and asked us whether we bought anything during our walk.

"Only some rape seed," said Belle, "and a black polyanthus. Oh, dear, how disagreeable this is. Are you sure Madame said my bed was to go into this corner?"

"Yes, Miss Belle. Well, to be sure, what a deal of money you young ladies spend on your pets. Now, if I were you, miss, I should consider what a great room this is, plenty of space for all to be comfortable; and I should make up my mind to be pleased, and make the young lady welcome, instead of looking so melancholy."

"So Madame fetched the new girl from the station, in the carriage," observed Belle, in a reflective tone. "I thought I heard a rumbling in the court-yard. That was the carriage, no doubt."

The slightest possible smile stole over Massey's features. "Did you indeed, miss?" she replied, taking up the valance, and pushing the long lath through the slide. "Well, do you know, young ladies, last night I heard a queer kind of rumbling myself."

"Indeed?" we all exclaimed.

"Yes, indeed, ladies. I was in the linen-room, under this, you know, and it had struck ten. First, I heard a pattering exactly like feet running about, and I said to myself that never can be the dear young ladies, for they were snug in bed an hour ago. Well, I listened, and presently I heard a rumbling sort of noise, just as if somebody was jumping from one of your beds to the other, Miss West, and Miss Belle L'Estrange. So I said to myself, I shall think it my duty, if ever I hear that noise again—these are the very words I said, I can assure you—shall think it my duty to tell Madame."

A short silence followed this announcement, but we soon began to question Massey again. She parried most of our questions; and excepting that she said the young lady was brought "by a roughish-spoken gentleman, in a light great-coat," we were not much the wiser for them. We declared there was something mysterious about the whole affair. Massey repeated that she was sure we should like the young lady when we knew her; and having now finished and sewn on the last of her blue rosettes, she began to put on our afternoon frocks.

"A roughish-spoken gentleman, in a light great-coat," said Juliet. "I don't believe he was a gentleman at all; only farmers wear light great-coats."

"I'll tell you what, Miss Ashley," said Massey, when she untied Juliet's frock, and it fell to the floor with a thump, "this won't do at all; here's your

frock pocket as full of canary seed as it can hold. A pretty thing for a young lady to do, turning her pocket into a seed bin! Some day you'll get an imposition set you for this."

"Well," said Juliet, "then the man should not sell it in such thin paper: the bag broke, and if I had not put it in my pocket it would all have been spilt on the road."

"Ay, here's Miss West's pocket full of cow-parsley," continued Massey, proceeding to examine my frock with a rueful face. "Deary me, what a life I do lead with you, young ladies! Last Monday was a week I really thought I must speak to Madame, for when I was turning out Miss Belle's pocket for the wash, up spirted a lot of bran into my face, and all over my cap and the clean carpet."

"Well, Massey," replied Belle, "if you would be so kind as to hang up a light great-coat for us, on these pegs, we could all keep our seeds in it. You know there would be six pockets at least; and what a convenience this would be, especially if we could have them without the rough-spoken gentleman."

"Dear me," exclaimed Massey, in a tone of vexation, "you young ladies are as sharp as needles; to think that I should have said such a thing, when Madame was so particular that you should not know but what Miss Palmer came unexpected like."

"O her name's Palmer, is it?" said Belle, "and she was expected to come unexpectedly?"

"Tut, tut. There it is again. Such provoking children never did I see. I never gave it a thought, I am sure; but you are as sharp as needles. Keep your head still, Miss Belle, or I shall hurt it with the brush. There's Madame's foot on the stairs, and your bonnets not hung up yet, nor your walking-shoes put away. Let her see the room neat, if you please, young ladies."

We had scarcely put these things away when Madame entered, followed by a girl about our own age. She was dressed in mourning, and had been evidently crying. She seemed painfully shy and awkward; and when Madame introduced us to her, one by one, she blushed till her neck and arms were tinged with crimson. Madame was sure we should be delighted to have another companion; thereupon we shook hands with Miss Palmer. Then Madame was sure Miss Palmer would be very happy, and make herself extremely agreeable; upon which, Miss Palmer pinched her fingers, and looked on the floor. Then Madame said she would retire, and leave us to amuse our new friend, till tea-time. Our new friend was to sit down, and make herself at home.

Accordingly our new friend sat down at the foot of her blue bed, bent her face, dropped her hand at her side, blushed continuously; and seemed exquisitely uncomfortable.

The kind-hearted Massey, pitying her shyness, asked if she would like her boxes to be brought upstairs, doubtless thinking they might afford her something to do.

When she was gone down to fetch them an awkward silence ensued. At last Belle L'Estrange said, "We were told that you brought a parrot to school, Miss Palmer?"

"Yes," she replied, without lifting up her eyes.

I inquired what she gave him to eat.

With the same air of constraint, she murmured, "Sopped bread."

"Sopped bread," I repeated, glad of something to remark upon. "I did not know that a parrot could live on that alone."

As if it cost her a great effort she then said, "Sometimes he has Indian corn."

Presently, to our great relief, Massey returned, and helped Miss Palmer to unpack her clothes. We could scarcely contrive to keep up any sort of conversation with her, and therefore were delighted when the tea bell rang, and we could be released from the constraint which her shyness imposed upon us.

We had already made up our minds that we did not like her, and told the elder girls that our room was spoilt now, and we should never enjoy ourselves as we had done.

However, after tea, we were permitted to go into the garden for a few minutes, and Madame gave a little plot of ground to Miss Palmer: then she brightened up a little, and it appeared that she was not only very fond of gardening, but that she knew much more about the cultivation of flowers than we did; she also pleased us by her evident admiration of the black polyanthus, which was brought out in triumph by its happy owner, and planted in the middle of her own peculiar property.

Belle had bought it of an old woman, in whose garden she saw it flourishing. The old woman said it had been left there by the man who lived there before her. He was a gardener, but he had emigrated to America, and she should be happy to dispose of it. Belle being equally anxious to purchase it, the bargain was soon struck, and certainly it was the most beautiful polyanthus possible, black and velvet like. Madame had not one in the garden that could compare with it.

I think that first evening we did try to overcome Miss Palmer's shyness; but the next day, when morning school was over, and we went into the garden for our short play, we found her such a restraint, that we begged Miss L'Estrange, Belle's elder sister, to walk about with her, while we ran away to feed our birds. Miss L'Estrange did as she was asked, but very injudiciously broached the subject of the shyness; told her how very uncomfortable she made us by it, and how much we lamented it. She begged her to try and feel at home, and talk and play with her school-fellows. But it was not at all surprising that her well-meant harangue should have increased the evil; the idea that it made other people uncomfortable could scarcely fail to augment her awkwardness.

She, however, asked Miss L'Estrange to take her to the coach-house, and I well remember her appearance as she entered with her, and stood within the door. She had a sort of resolute air, as if determined to perform some very hard duty. At first Miss L'Estrange did not seem to know what to say; but when we all turned from our birds, and looked for an explanation, she exclaimed—"Oh; I've brought Miss Palmer—she—I suppose she wishes to play with you."

Miss Palmer, on this, looked, and said, hurriedly,

"No; I didn't mean—at least, I mean that I don't wish to intrude; I only meant——"

"Oh this is not intruding," said Miss L'Estrange; "the coach-house is given to the second class."

Miss Palmer coloured with confusion. She was not pretty; her black hair was stiff and intractable, her shoulders were high, and she stooped very awkwardly; but she had exceedingly large, dark grey eyes, and, when she raised them, they had a peculiarly searching, but, at the same time, somewhat of a beseeching, expression.

"I don't want to stay," she continued, drawing back towards the door; "but I meant to tell you, that—I'm sorry I made you so uncomfortable."

We all looked at Miss L'Estrange; but before anything explanatory could be said, Miss Palmer murmured that she did not know her afternoon lesson, and made her escape.

"Well," said Juliet, "so we are to be tormented with apologies and misunderstandings, as well as shyness! She will be sensitive, I suppose—I cannot bear touchy, sensitive people."

"No," said Belle; "don't you remember how tiresome Fanny Moore used to be; writing notes of apology for things she had done days before and which no one had noticed; and asking us what we had meant by things we had said a long while ago; and quarrelling, and then crying and making it up, and expecting us to cry, too—I've no patience with that kind of thing. Miss Palmer will be just like Fanny."

"Tiresome girl," said Miss L'Estrange; "and when I had been particularly begging her not to be so shy, and saying what a disadvantage it was to her."

I do not remember that anything particular happened during the rest of that day; but the next being fine, we were sent out for a long walk, Madame giving leave to Miss Palmer to stay in the garden, and work at her own little plot, which was, no doubt, kindly intended as an indulgence both to us and to her.

Miss L'Estrange was also detained to finish a drawing. Our new friend, however, had not long been out when she appeared at the window, saying that there was a man in the yard with a basket of flowers, and might she buy some? Madame gave her leave. "And I supposed that they were nosegays of cut flowers," said Miss L'Estrange, from whom we had this account, "or I should have asked leave to go also, particularly as I had heard you all say that a man had been ordered to come 'for once,' by Madame's consent."

"Yes, to be sure," we all exclaimed, when Miss L'Estrange met us at the gate of the hop plantation, and gave us this description of what had occurred. "Surely the man is not gone?"

"You shall hear," she replied. "In half-an-hour my drawing was finished, and Madame dismissed me; so I went into the garden, and there I found that sly little thing, sitting on a garden bench, with six plants in pots standing before her. There were two polyanthus plants, with flowers nearly as black as Belle's; and two lovely purple auriculas; and two other plants, that I did not much notice because they were not in flower. 'Oh,' I exclaimed, 'so these were the plants that the man brought! Why did you not say so to Madame?' She looked confused, but only said, 'I did not know that I ought.' I said, I knew that the man had been ordered to call, and that you would all be dreadfully disappointed to find him gone. So, she looked up and said, 'He told me he could not wait; but that does not much signify, for he had only these polyanthus plants, and I have bought them; besides them and the auriculas, and these cyclamen flowers, there was nothing in his basket that was worth having. I gave four shillings and sixpence for these, and he took away nothing but some fading hyacinths, and some common plants, such as they have got. It would have done no good to detain him; and, besides, he said he could not wait.' 'Oh, of course,' I said, 'if you had chosen all that was worth having yourself, it was no use detaining the man.' 'Indeed, I did not send him away,' she replied; 'he said he could not wait.' 'But,' I continued, 'I am afraid they will be very much disappointed, for they have been expecting this man for weeks; and I know they particularly wanted some of those shuttlecock-flowers, and some auriculas.' 'The man said he expected to sell them to the young ladies,' she answered; 'but as they were out, and he would not wait, I thought——' 'Oh, yes,' I interrupted, for I was disgusted at her selfishness, 'I understand perfectly—as they were out, you thought you might as well have them yourself.'"

All this Miss L'Estrange told us as we advanced towards the house, and we were in the full eloquence of regret and indignation when, at a turn in the walk, we saw Miss Palmer on a garden-seat, with all her purchases before her.

She started up when we appeared, and advanced hastily to meet us; but the moment she observed Miss L'Estrange with us, shrunk back again, and, lifting up her garden-apron, began to knot the corners, and twist them with an agitated face.

That our man should have been suffered to depart before we had seen him, and that all his best plants should have been picked out by a stranger for herself, was such a decided grievance, that offended dignity would scarcely permit us to pause before the flower-pots; and I believe we should have passed on, lovely and tempting as they looked, if Miss Palmer had not risen again, and, colouring up to the eyes, begun some stammered excuse about the man's departure.

"It was of no consequence," we answered, rather coldly.

She seemed to be attempting some explanation, but stood as if shame and shyness overcame her; when we effectually stopped her by saying, that Miss L'Estrange had explained to us that the man had nothing left for us—that we were sorry, but hoped we should be more fortunate another time.

Then we swept on towards the house, and she, to our extreme surprise, burst into a passion of tears, which arrested us, for we felt that, being such a new comer, we ought not to have annoyed her so much.

An awkward pause ensued, during which she cried most bitterly, and we stood looking on, till, happily, the first school-bell rang, and with a sudden effort, she controlled her tears, and rushed on into the house to bathe her face and recover herself.

"How odd that anyone with such a keen sense of shame should have done so mean an action," observed Miss Ward.

"I was always sure that I should never like her," said Margaret. "I felt it the moment I saw her."

"As for me," Juliet added, "I knew it before I saw her."

"Oh, come," said the elder Miss Ashley, "that really is prejudice, Juliet."

"Prejudice," I replied, taking up Juliet's cause, "not at all; our room was pulled to pieces for her before she had even entered the house; and besides, we knew by the way Madame brought her up-stairs herself, showing her so much more attention than she did to us when we arrived, and saying so many times that she knew we should be such good friends, we were sure by all this that she expected we should *not*."

The elder girls laughed heartily at this.

"There certainly was nothing of the kind done when I arrived," said Miss Ward to Miss Ashley; "on the contrary, just as grandpapa put me down out of the carriage, I saw Madame standing on the steps with you in her hand, and while she talked to grandpapa, you walked up to me and said, 'How do you do? do you like lemon-drops?' and immediately put one into my mouth. We were about six years old then, Fanny, and from that moment to this we have been on strictly confidential terms."

"Now then, young ladies," said the English teacher, "go up-stairs; the second bell rings."

Accordingly, we all hastened to take off our bonnets, and proceeded to the school-room, where we found Miss Palmer already in her place.

The afternoon, for the time of year, was unusually warm, and the sun being full upon the school-room windows, the blinds were all let down, excepting one, which was on the side that looked into the garden. Our class was reading, and the children were writing copies; we got on very well to a certain point, and then became very inattentive, lost our places, and miscalled the words; the fact was, that our eyes were so irresistibly drawn to the window, that it was quite impossible to keep them on the book. Something white had been seen gliding in and out among the flowers; it was very distant at first, and so silent and light in its movements, that it might have been taken for the ghost of a last winter's snow-wreath; but it shortly drew nearer, and had the audacity to lie down among Madame's best anemone plants. We knew very well what it was, namely, a rabbit, Speck by name, the favourite pet of little Nannette, Madame's youngest child. The whole school, by means of glances and signs, soon became aware of his escape; but we were in such perfect discipline during school-hours, and the rules enjoining silence were so strictly enforced, that not a word was said; even the little owner of the rabbit, though tears ran down her cheeks, blotted her copy, and wetted her chubby little hands, continued to work away at her pothooks, only venturing now and then to cast a glance at the lawn with a distressed and crimsoned countenance.

At length, as I with earnest diligence was trying to ring my r's and run my words sufficiently into one another, while I read a speech from Racine, after Madame, a loud and sudden sob sounded through the school-room, and little Nannette burst into a storm of tears, which was all the more vehement for her long restraint. Nannette was such a good, sensible child, and such a scene was so uncommon in the school-room, that the teacher and Madame rose instantly, anxious to ascertain what was the matter. "The walk was too much for her," exclaimed the English teacher.

"Something has hurt her," cried Madame.

"The ink," said the other teacher, "may have spirted up into her eye."

The little girl struggled to speak, and at length contrived to sob out in her native language, "O mon lapin, mon cher Speck! O mon lapin!"

The mystery was now solved; Madame hesitated, we all looked eagerly at her, but no one stirred; it wanted a quarter of an hour to the time of dismissal. "We could catch him, Madame," said Miss Ward, "if we all went at once."

A murmur of assent ran through the classes. The rabbit had now got a long way off; Nannette's sobs burst forth afresh. "Well, young ladies," said Madame, "for once you may."

We did not need a second bidding, but down went papers, pencils, books and work; and out we rushed into the sunshine, teachers and scholars.

What a joyous chase it was; we had lost sight of the rabbit, and had rushed almost to the very end of the lawn after him, when turning we beheld him near the house; back we ran; off he went into the shrubbery; many times one and another seemed to be just upon him. We cleared the little flower-beds; he turned, we doubled, whooping and crying to one another. No one ran like Belle; we thought she was sure to catch the rabbit; she dashed through a clump of laurustinus shrubs; but just as we were sure she must be upon him, down she came with a loud crash and such a scream, that we all rushed to the spot with beating hearts.

Alas! poor Belle had forgotten Miss Palmer's flower-pots, had caught her foot against one, broken another, and scratched her arms and face all over with the gravel.

The English teacher picked her up; at first she cried, more through fright than pain; and while the elder girls condoled with her, rubbed her bruises, and put her torn dress a little to rights, the children continued the chase after their rabbit. Belle soon left off sobbing, shook back her curly hair, and declared she was not much hurt; but, though she tried to laugh at her scratches, they were evidently painful, and she was obliged to sit down on the grass before she could limp homewards.

"Such a violent fall!" said Miss Quain, the English teacher; "it was a mercy Miss Belle did not break any bones; how came they here, these pots, just in the middle of the walk?"

Every eye looked towards Miss Palmer.

"Are these your flower-pots?" asked Miss Quain.

"Yes, ma'am," replied the new pupil; "at least," and then she hesitated.

"At least what?" asked Miss Quain.

"At least—I paid for them."

"If you paid for them of course they are yours; why could you not have said so without this prevarication?"

Miss Palmer looked extremely uncomfortable, and began to pick up her pots; two of them were broken, and the purple auriculas that they contained were all torn from the stems, crushed and completely ruined.

"I am sorry to have spoilt your auriculas, Miss Palmer," said poor Belle.

"There is no need to apologise," replied Miss Quain, rather sharply; "they ought not to have been left there; a most dangerous thing to do when so many children are playing about here. Whereabouts is your garden, Miss Palmer?"

"Behind these shrubs, ma'am," said the culprit.

"Then carry them there directly; let the flowers be planted at once, and then take the pots to the coach-house."

Still Miss Palmer hesitated. "If my orders are not obeyed at once I shall forfeit the plants," said Miss Quain.

Thereupon, the broken auriculas and the other plants were slowly lifted up by their owner, and carried away, as well as the pieces of pots and the scattered leaves. This little episode had almost made us forget the white rabbit, till we saw the hunting party returning slowly towards us, with failure plainly written in their faces.

They had chased the rabbit as far as the hedge which divided the garden from the hop plantation, and the cunning little animal had crept into the very middle of it; so that, as it had not been trimmed that spring, they could not reach him, though they watched him, and surrounded him on both sides. After nibbling some of the green hawthorn twigs, he sat up and began to rub his face in the most placid style; till at last, when their patience was nearly tired out, he deliberately ran through the midst of them, and bounded away among the hop poles, till they lost sight of him.

We could distinctly hear the sound of Miss Palmer's spade behind the trees. Belle presently rose from the grass; perhaps, as she had unintentionally spoilt the auriculas, and as she knew that the possession of them had already been somewhat embittered to their owner by the remarks we had made, she wished to show some interest in the operation of planting them, or to see how far they were injured.

However this may be, she asked Juliet and me to give her each an arm, and we all proceeded behind the laurustinus shrubs, to Miss Palmer's garden. Belle was vexed at the mischief she had caused; but in our inmost hearts I believe we were both secretly pleased at it, as an instance of what seemed such strict poetical justice. Miss Palmer had taken advantage of our absence to purchase plants which had been brought for us, and now these very plants were broken and spoilt by one of us; and she herself was scolded, instead of being compassionated on the occasion.

Belle, limping slightly, advanced between us; but Miss Palmer continued to dig, and did not look at us.

The afternoon sun, already getting low, was shining full on her flushed face, and it seemed to me that she held it inconveniently high, because her eyes were full of tears, and she wished to prevent them from falling.

Her spade went in several times, while she continued to look steadily before her; at last, she set it in so close to a pretty little plant that I thought she would dig it up, and exclaimed, "O Miss Palmer, do you see your little heartsease?"

On this she looked down, and the tears dropped on her cheeks; she hastily dashed them away, and then stooping, moved the earth from her heartsease, and taking up the flower-pots, began to turn out the plants and set them in the space she had dug over.

"I am afraid the auriculas are spoilt for this spring," said Belle.

"Yes," replied Miss Palmer, without looking either at us or at them; and there certainly could not be any doubt about the matter, for every stalk was snapped, and every leaf was broken.

"Well, certainly," said Juliet, rather sharply, "Belle has been severely punished for tumbling over them; she has hurt her foot very much."

"I am very sorry, and I said so at first," said Miss Palmer, still without looking at us.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," answered Juliet; "I did not hear you, and I thought, as Belle had said several times that she was sorry about the plants, it seemed odd that you did not say——"

"Juliet, I wish you wouldn't," interrupted Belle. "I did not come here to make her say anything. *I* am sorry, and I did not remember that the pots stood there."

"Very well," said Juliet, "then that is all, it seems; your foot will soon be well, and if it was worse, perhaps Miss Palmer would think it served you quite right."

There is no saying what passionate rejoinder might have been made to this, nor how far we might have forgotten all kindness and propriety, if the children, backed by Miss Ashley and Miss L'Estrange, had not dashed in upon our counsels, declaring that the rabbit had reappeared, that he was behind the yard palings, and that if we would come and help, they were sure that he could be surrounded and caught. Accordingly, Juliet and I ran away with them, Belle limped home to the house, and Miss Palmer was left behind to reflect on what had passed and plant her broken flowers.

Of course we did not catch the rabbit; but our zeal satisfied little Nannette that we were sorry for her loss, and anxious to repair it.

Many tears were shed that night by Speck's little mistress on his account; but the next day Miss Ward gave her another rabbit, quite as white and much less wild than Speck; so she was completely consoled, and he was forgotten.

That fine day was succeeded by a very rainy night, and it rained all the next day, so that little Nannette's rabbit had been bought through the gardener, whose apprentice had one for sale, and who was allowed to bring it into the hall, and exhibit it to us there, as Madame said, "for once;" a phrase by which she prefaced nearly every indulgence of the many she gave us.

The next day was also wet, and it was not till

the following morning that we could go out. The leaves had expanded so much during the soft rain, and everything looked so fresh, that while we were dressing we speculated as to whether we might venture to plant out our young geraniums that Madame was taking care of in the frames; and were full of hope for our different plants and seeds. What, then, was our consternation on reaching our little gardens, to find Belle's beautiful polyanthus, her black polyanthus, which was the pride of her heart, and of which even Madame had condescended to ask for an offset—that very black polyanthus which we had left so blooming, with every leaf, stock, and flower cut clean off level with the ground, just as if a knife had been passed over them by some person, who, contented with despoiling the plant, had left its ruins lying just where they fell! The whole school stood round lamenting, with the exception of Belle and Miss Palmer; for the former, though her foot was nearly well, could not run yet; and the latter had exhibited no wish to come into the garden; on the contrary, she had expressed her disappointment that we were not going to take a walk instead; and, as we well remembered afterwards, had said, "She was sure she should never take any pleasure in her garden again."

Everybody's exclamation was, "Who can have done this?" and poor Belle, when she arrived at the spot, stood silent for awhile with vexation; and then could not help remarking how curious it was that her plant should have died so soon after she had destroyed the lovely auriculas. However, she took her misfortune very well, and began to pick up and examine the flowers.

"This has evidently been done with a knife," said Juliet.

Just at that moment we observed that Miss Palmer was standing among us; we had been too much absorbed to notice her approach.

"A knife, and nothing but a knife, has done it," exclaimed Miss L'Estrange, stooping down more closely over the plant; "and here, Belle, is a foot-mark close to the root, not a new foot-mark."

"Oh," said Miss Palmer, "that might have been made in the chase after the rabbit."

"We never came this way," said one and another; "no one came near these gardens but Belle herself, just before she fell."

"Then she made the foot-mark herself, perhaps," remarked Miss Palmer.

"How could she?" replied Miss Ashley, steadily; "don't you see that it points the other way?"

"I was only trying to account for it," said Miss Palmer, reddening under Miss Ashley's eye.

"Well, I see no use in accounting for it," said Belle, mournfully; "no accounting will make it grow again."

"I do see the use," replied her sister, "for it could not possibly have been cut *without hands*."

Upon this, Miss Palmer fixed her large eyes for a moment on Miss L'Estrange with a peculiar expression, and a thought flashed into my mind which I would not for the world have expressed; but which I saw plainly written on the faces of all my companions, and was conscious that Miss Palmer saw it too; but she did not continue to meet our gaze, she turned hastily round, and, snatching up her rake, began diligently to work in her garden; but so timing the strokes of her tools, that she could hear every sentence we uttered, and sometimes turning half round, the rake suspended in her hand, she appeared intently to weigh our words.

"Well, this is a very mysterious thing," said Miss Ashley at last, "and I wish we could account for it." We all mentally assented to this, but no one said anything, till one of the youngest children exclaimed, after whispering to the others, "I have no knife; I hope Belle does not think I did it."

"Of course not, child," said Belle; here the rake was worked very diligently.

"I did not do it," said another little girl; "and, besides, Belle has always been so very kind to me."

"There is no one that Belle ever is unkind to," said Miss Ward, who was always the first to say a generous thing.

"No," said little Nannette, "not *on purpose;* she did not spoil Miss Palmer's auriculas *on purpose*."

What an unlucky thing it was that Nannette's conscientious qualification should have been made just at that moment. There stood the little gardens opposite to one another; the mould artificially heaped up towards the centre of each; one was crowned by the broken auriculas, the other by the cut polyanthus. "I can only say," said Miss Ward, breaking the awkward silence—"I can only say, that I wish I had never seen this foot-mark; I don't think that all the years I have been at school anything has happened that has made me feel so uncomfortable; for you see that this is not the foot-mark of a grown-up person: it is not Belle's foot-mark either, it is shorter and wider; there are no hobnails in it, therefore it could not have been done by the gardener's boy; the polyanthus stands so far from the edge, that it could not have been reached but for the foot-mark. And that the plant was spoilt for mere malice and mischief, and not for the sake of getting the flowers, is evident; for they were all left just where they fell."

All this was perfectly true, and Miss Ward did not say it unkindly; but we were no nearer to the unknown culprit, and there was another pause, during which Miss Palmer continued her operations with her back turned towards us, till some one said, "Who was the last of us at these gardens?"

Several remembered who had been left behind while we ran after the rabbit, and Belle went into the house, and there was a general though silent nod towards Miss Palmer; who, however, did not turn round till little Nannette, with her brown eyes wide open, exclaimed bluntly, "But Miss Palmer—did Miss Palmer do it?"

"No one said she did, child," exclaimed Miss L'Estrange, checking her instantly and angrily.

Miss Palmer had dropped her rake on hearing Nannette's speech; she now picked it up, and gathering her other tools together, turned and faced us; she was deeply flushed, and as she passed us, she said in a low voice, but distinct enough to be heard by us all—"But no one said she *did not*."

(*To be continued.*)

COTTAGE POEMS.

BY A CURATE.

III.—WAITING FOR ANGELS.

Two "little ones" of mine had gone astray;
From church and school I missed them all the day,
And, evening service over, to their home
Went forth to seek them, early taught to roam.
Willie and Annie Yeoman were a pair
Of pretty children,—beauty's somewhat rare
In Devilsbye; for ugliness and sin,
Though often parted, are still near of kin.
Like the lonely flowers found on desert sod
These two sweet children seemed sent straight from God.
Born in the workhouse both, they could not claim
A father's nurture, or a father's name;
And evil was the name their mother bore,
But still she found them bread, tho' little more,
By labour in the fields. From day to day
She toiled with men, as coarse and hard as they,
And more industrious, for she never slacked
At her rough work, and so she seldom lacked
Employment. And the farmers round would say
That "Jess was worth her wages any day."

The mother absent, Annie kept "the house,"
A one-roomed cottage. Timid as a mouse
Was little Annie. While she scarce could creep,
Left all day lonely, playing or asleep
Upon the floor; till Willie crept, and then
Left as sole nurse till mother came again.
Willie was far the strongest, grown a great
Stout boy of five. Annie was small at eight;
Timid and grave, and with protecting arms,
Still shielding Willie from impending harms.
With much resemblance in each childish face
There was a strange unlikeness. One might trace
In every feature lines of form the same
In each; but the mysterious spirit-flame
That filled with life the plastic mould of clay
Wrought deep'ning changes in its wondrous play:
In Annie's eyes an inward light it glowed,
In Willie's a bright outward stare it showed.

I reached the hut: already it was night,
Though early, and the moon was full and bright.
I reached the door, the soft earth hushed my tread—
No beaten path-way to the hovel led.
I entered softly at the open door,
And saw the children seated on the floor,
Just where the moon-rays, slanting thro' the pane,
Laid down a line of light. I could remain
Unseen, and so I stood, in wonder strong
The children sat so silent, for so long.

Then Willie's voice broke out, in doubting strain,
"I never saw no angels;" but again
Subdued by something Annie had made clear
To his young mind, "They will not come in here,
Because we have not got a pretty bed,
P'raps, and we have no father. Teacher said
They prayed 'Our Father' when they went to sleep
As well as 'Christ the Lord our souls to keep.'
And then the angels came."

"O Willie, no.
Father which art in Heaven it is, you know
He is our Father too. Sit still and see."
Again a silence.

Then there flashed on me
Out of a Sabbath past a little scene
Enacted in the school-room. There had been
A visitor—a rare thing in our school—
Who taught my class, most lax in form and rule.
The children fingered all her silk array,
Leant on her knee and seemed to chat and play.
I heard her talk of angels with a smile—
She looking like an angel all the while—
And saw her give the children something each,
And kindly thought she was not born to teach.
I came on Annie lingering on her way,
And looking at her picture, twice that day,
Two angels bending o'er a little bed,
She showed me then, and in her face I read
The seeing of such visions evermore
About her henceforth, and I pondered sore
On several sorts of teaching that might lead
To wait for angels in the time of need,
As these were waiting.

Need they had: that day
They were forsaken. Thither on the way
I heard the village gossip: She had fled—
The mother—left her children barely bread
Enough to last the day, and now alone
They sat and waited.

To Our Father's throne
My spirit sprang. "My faith this instant dies,"
Rashly I cried, "unless Thine open skies
Send help to these." Another instant brought
Rebuke and answer to my awful thought:
"Thou art my messenger—do not thou dare
To leave my little ones. Lo, to thy care
This night I give them!"

Then I stooped and went
Within, and gave a hand to each, and bent
My steps to theirs along the pathway white
To Dame Thorne's cottage, where they slept that night.

Engraved by Linton.

"TWO ANGELS BENDING O'ER A LITTLE BED."

THE DEATHS IN THE WILDERNESS.

"And the children of Israel spake unto Moses, saying, Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish. Whosoever cometh anything near unto the tabernacle of the Lord shall die: shall we be consumed with dying?"—*Num.* xvii. 12, 13.

THAT was the impression left upon the heart of Israel by an experience which to us is a history. They had seen that which we read of—that of which we are to speak now; *The Deaths in the Wilderness.* They were right, and they were wrong, in their impressions. Right, in saying that it is a solemn and a responsible thing to "come anything near unto the tabernacle of the Lord;" that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of that living God" who, to all who despise or hate Him, must, by the very nature of the Godhead, be (as He calls himself) "a consuming fire." But wrong, surely—our hearts are the witnesses—in so speaking as though there were a sort of fatality, a sort of promiscuous and indiscriminate mortality, involved in being thus brought nigh to Him; as though his requirements were so strict, or his judgments so arbitrary, that no man could hear his voice or see his face and live. Every part of God's dealings with them should have corrected such an impression. The daily guidance—the daily supplies—the daily offering—each one told of a God of mercy, a God of compassion, and a God of love. He who led his people in the daytime with a cloud, and all the night through with a light of fire; He who brought streams out of the rock, and fed them day after day with the very bread of heaven; He who provided for them, day by day, a lamb for a burnt-offering, that they might never lack the knowledge, however dim and misty, of an atonement and a propitiation; could not have been in reality an unloving God: He brought them out because He had a favour to them, because He had set his love upon them and chosen them. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."

Our subject is a grave one, and we must give it all its gravity. It reads a severe lesson to us all. It says to us who are far on in life's journey, "Take heed lest ye miss that good land which the Lord sware unto your fathers." And it says to the young—to those who are at the entrance of the spiritual life—those, more especially, who may be on the point of drawing nigh (as it were) to the Lord's tabernacle, to give themselves to Him as by solemn compact, that they may eat henceforth of the very bread and wine upon his table—"Remember and forget not who He is to whom ye thus devote yourselves—He is a holy God, He is a just God, of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and who cannot bear anything that is evil." But the very language of warning, if it be heard in time, has an undersong of mercy. To those more especially, whose journey still lies more in front than behind them, that must be indeed a voice not of terror but of lovingkindness, which says to them, "This is the way, walk ye in it"—let no bypath allure, let no steep and no obstacle deter you—hold on, straight and sure, in the road on which you are entering—and ye shall live and not die, ye shall prosper in your going, and enter in at last through the golden gates into the heavenly city. He that hath an ear to hear let him hear.

"The deaths in the wilderness."

Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, all tell of them. The desert through which Israel passed—in which for forty years, by reason of sin, Israel not only journeyed but wandered—is a desert of graves. It need not have been so. A small fraction of those forty years would have brought them safely to their rest. Travellers year by year cross that desert in half the days between Christmas and Easter. Therefore the long wandering itself, as well as the mortality which stamped it, was a mark of nothing but sin. All death is a memento of sin. From the beginning it was not so. "Sin entered into the world, and death by sin—and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." But these wilderness-deaths were not only mementoes of sin—they were judgments upon sin. Let us try to understand them. We will not enter (for it is needless) into the sad and piteous details. We will speak of them rather in their sum, just briefly characterizing and classifying them as lessons of reverence, lessons of holiness, and lessons of submission.

I. Lessons of reverence.

1. Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, died in the wilderness for offering "strange fire" when they stood to minister before the Lord. They should have lighted their censers from the fire supernaturally kindled upon the altar of burnt-offering on the occasion of Aaron's first sacrifice for himself and for the people. The fire of God's offerings was to be a fire provided by Himself. They thought any fire might serve the purpose. That which came first to hand was good enough for God's worship. And those two men had been highly favoured. They had been brought near, with Moses and Aaron and seventy of the elders of Israel, to see the God of Israel in the holy mount, when "there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness." Men who had been admitted once to that vision, were henceforth not as other men in privilege or in responsibility. And now they presumed, at the very opening of their sacred ministrations, to draw near in careless haste, in presumptuous self-pleasing—nay, even perhaps (to judge by the context) in a state of intoxication—to do the service of the sanctuary. Surely the solemn charge must be reiterated here, not in word, but in deed: "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord." "There went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them; and they died before the Lord." "In their coats," as they were—in the sacred linen garments of their priestly office—they were carried forth, dead men, by their own near kinsmen, and buried without the camp. And Aaron their father, and Eleazar and Ithamar their brothers, must not rend their clothes, but look on in silence upon the awful spectacle.

Priests must be all on the Lord's side, even when the stroke comes home, and strips their very house of its choicest treasures. They must leave it to others, to "the whole house of Israel," to "bewail the burning which the Lord hath kindled." It was a lesson of reverence. "Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire."

2. We pass on through but a few chapters, and find interposed, between regulations concerning the sacred oil and the shewbread of the tabernacle, and laws for the punishment of damage and murder, a brief but impressive narrative of a death in the wilderness for blasphemy. The son of Shelomith—for the poor mother's name is preserved for ever in Holy Scripture in this sole connection with a guilty (and himself nameless) son—was striving in the camp with a man of Israel, and he "blasphemed the name of the Lord and cursed. And they brought him to Moses. And they put him in ward, that the mind of the Lord might be showed them." And then the word came, that he who had been guilty of "cursing his God" must be brought forth out of the camp, the witnesses laying their hands upon his head (as though to fix the sin upon him), and stoned with stones by all the congregation. It was a lesson of reverence. "He that made the eye, shall he not see? He that made the ear, shall he not hear?"

3. "While the children of Israel were in the wilderness they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day." A small breach, you say, of a severe and burdensome law! But what are great and small when laws of God are in question? "They that found him brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him." And then the word came, that the man who had so done this thing must be brought without the camp, and stoned with stones by all the congregation. And he, too, died in the wilderness. The audacious heart of man must be taught the sinfulness of little sins—happy if even by such examples it can be brought to hear and fear! This too was a lesson of reverence.

4. And what else was the fate of Korah and his company? Men who presumed to censure the exaltation above them of the very priest and lawgiver of Israel! Men who said that they were all equally holy, and had all an equal right to the privileges of the priesthood! What is that spirit in us which makes us kick against God's order, and see no difference between the offices of his house and the freedom and license of a common room? Above all, what is that spirit which makes us overlook or disparage the necessity of the One Priesthood, and dare to offer our own vile offerings without a thought of propitiation or of intercession? Is it not the spirit of irreverence—the spirit which seeks not of the awful holiness of God, yet thinks wickedly that He is even such an one as ourselves? "How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. How much less man, that is a worm! and the son of man, which is a worm!"

II. The deaths in the wilderness are lessons, too, of holiness. They are warnings, St. Paul expressly tells us, against special sins.

1. Murmuring is one of these. The very chapter which celebrates the great deliverance opens the record also of ingratitude. "They went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. The people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?" Next there is no bread. "Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots, and when we did eat bread to the full!" Bread from heaven is the reply of a merciful and long-suffering God to the sinful complainings of his people. We pass on a little further, and this marvellous gift is itself complained of. "Our soul loatheth this light bread." Then at last "deaths in the wilderness" rebuke and punish. "The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people; and much people of Israel died." We must be taught that first to live upon God's gifts and then to quarrel with them, is a sin. It may be expressed with the lips, or it may lurk in the heart—but who is there in whom unthankfulness, discontent, the roving wish, the complaining spirit, has no place? The deaths in the wilderness are our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

2. Unbelief is a sin. Take one example of it. Men are sent from the wilderness of Paran to search the promised land, and bring Israel tidings of their future inheritance. With what eagerness must their return have been waited for! With what interest, with what a sense of honour and of privilege ought they themselves to have discharged the duty! To be the first of all Israel to tread the land consecrated by the ancient footsteps of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—to see with their own eyes that land familiar by name in the traditions even of their bondage, and now so soon to be theirs in fruition and possession—how should their hearts have burned within them as they plucked the cluster of grapes beside the brook of Eshcol, and bore it back in triumph to a waiting people! Alas! the report was all of peril and of impediment. "They brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched." "All the people that we saw in it were men of great stature . . . there we saw the giants . . . we were but as grasshoppers beside them, in their sight and in our own." And then the infection spreads everywhere through Israel. "Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! Were it not better for us to return into Egypt?" In vain did Caleb and Joshua, faithful alone among the faithless, rend their clothes in sorrow, and try to shame these faithless arguers. "The land is an exceeding good land. Rebel not ye against the Lord. The people of the land are bread for us. Their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not." "All the congregation bade stone them with stones." Then "the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle." The long-suffering of God himself is wearied out by such unbelief. There must be deaths again in the wilderness to serve as finger-posts and beacons to later generations. Yes, all that generation must lay its bones

there, save two only. "Your carcases shall fall in the wilderness." Turn you, get you back into the wilderness. You were on the very verge and margin of your rest, but your unbelief has dashed from your lips the cup of blessing. Your little ones shall enter in, when forty years have first been spent in vague and purposeless wanderings hither and thither through this desert. Nor shall this punishment be without its present foretaste. Those men who returned from the search, only to make the congregation murmur against the promise and against the Lord, died at once by the plague before the Lord. Such is unbelief: the sin of saying, God cannot, or, God will not, when He has declared that He both can and will. Yes, the graves of a generation testify against us, when we either think scorn of the pleasant land, or "limit the Holy One of Israel" in his power to bring us in thither.

3. And presumption is a sin. How instructive the close of that narrative to which we have last referred? No sooner has the voice of judgment irrevocably spoken, than a new phase of disobedience opens. "We have sinned" in doubting God's power: "lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the Lord has promised." In vain did their leader warn them that the time was past: their day of grace (in this sense) had gone down to its setting: now the meek suffering of punishment is the one duty and the one hope of the sinner: "the Lord is not among you" for conquest, though his mercy may still be yours for pardon. In vain "they presumed to go up unto the hill top": they have sinned by unbelief, now they will atone for it by presumption. But they go alone: the ark moves not, nor Moses, from the camp on which the cloud of the presence rests gloomily and with threatening: the word spoken in unbelief now comes true in punishment: the Amalekite comes down, and the Canaanite—the sword of God in their hand—and smites and discomfits Israel even unto Hormah. Strange and wonderful fertility of evil! We doubt, we hesitate, we linger, we disbelieve, while energy is required of us: then we set forward, we arm ourselves, we affect despatch and resolution and courage, when the blackening corpses of our comrades, and the verdict of punishment upon ourselves, should warn us to tarry in the camp and bear humbly the indignation of the Lord because we have sinned against Him!

4. And let our last lesson of holiness, as taught by the deaths in the wilderness, be drawn from Kibroth-hattaavah, "the graves of lust." It is the same lesson, in substance, taught also at the foot of Sinai, when Moses descending from the Mount heard the sound of wicked revelry and saw the people naked in lascivious wantonness; the same lesson, in substance, with that legible in Shittim, when the people committed whoredom with the daughters of Moab, when Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against him. "Kibroth-hattaavah, the graves of lust." The desert is full of them; of the sepulchres of men who lusted after the forbidden pleasure; men who sowed to the flesh, and of the flesh (in the most literal sense) reaped corruption. The desert is full of them; that eastern wilderness between Egypt and Canaan: and what of a desert greater and more desolate still—the wilderness of this world—the wilderness of human life? Yes, indeed! high above all the monuments reared in human suffering to human sin, tower the desert-memorials of sinful lust. Where the world slays its thousands, the flesh has slain its ten thousands. Young men, standing on the threshold of a Christian manhood—dedicating yourselves (it may be) in solemn profession to a Saviour who bought you back from all iniquity by the price of his most precious blood—be it yours to count well the cost of that warfare to which you are girding yourselves, as with temptations from without, so also and chiefly with evil lustings from within. Greater indeed is He that is in you than he that is in the world: but see that He be indeed in you—in you as your ever-present help, in you as your strength against that "corruption which is in the world," which is in the heart of man, "through lust!" God grant that none of us who now read together the record of Israel's sin and Israel's judgment, may have this, at a later day, for the head-stone of his own sepulchre, "Kibroth-hattaavah—a grave of lust!"

III. Finally, the deaths in the wilderness teach a lesson, as of reverence, as of holiness, so also of submission.

1. In Mount Hor, by the coast of Edom, a message reaches the lawgiver of Israel, announcing the near end of his brother and companion in toil and patience for Israel. It is the fulfilment, for Aaron, of the curse of Meribah. Commanded to speak to the rock, bidding it to give forth its water for the supply of the congregation, they had smitten it once and twice: the water came out abundantly, by the word of the Lord; but they who had transgressed, even in one small particular, the letter of their mandate, must exemplify the universal warning, "Be sure your sin will find you out." They shall not bring the congregation into the land which God had given them. Judge we how bitter must have been the disappointment! How would all the toil, and all the anxiety, and all the reproach and buffeting, of their responsible yet thankless office, have been at once compensated and forgotten, might they but have seen their task accomplished, and Israel in secure possession of his rest and his inheritance! But no: they have themselves swerved from the letter of one of God's commands, and have failed, to that extent, to honour Him before his people. That dispensation, of which they were the chief ministers and mediators, was designed to teach to a whole world the lesson of God's holiness and of man's duty. If they failed themselves to exemplify it, the offence must not, for the truth's sake, for holiness' sake, for salvation's sake, go unpunished. Aaron must die, and Moses, disappointed men; disappointed, but trusting and submissive still. And now the two brothers must go up together in the sight of all Israel into Mount Hor, knowing wherefore they go, and surrendering themselves implicitly to the will of God. There in the top of the mount Moses strips Aaron of his priestly garments, and puts them upon Eleazar his son; and there Aaron dies, in the top of the mount, and Moses and Eleazar return alone. For

thirty days all Israel mourns for Aaron, and then the work of life goes on without him: the stream has quickly closed over the life that has sunk in it, and God's work, once his, is now another's. Few men, I imagine, read unmoved the record of this end. The scene is before us, in the pages of Holy Scripture, as no picture and no traveller's tale could paint it: and I have called this death in the wilderness, and one other, a lesson of submission. It shows us the servant offering up life itself in duty, and then accepting, as one part of duty, the chastisement which takes life away. It shows us that, when God chastens, yea, when God punishes, yea, if God even inflicts death itself as the penalty of an individual sin, there is no proof there of his condemnation: He has done all things well: He honoured his servant with his great commission, and if He visits his sin with scourges, He is his Master and his Father and his Redeemer still.

2. The one life is taken, and the other is doomed. No long time, it is probable, elapses between the two deaths; between the sepulchre of Hor and the sepulchre of Pisgah. The weary wanderings of the desert were nearly accomplished by both the brothers: now the whole generation which left Egypt, save two persons, has passed away: when they number Israel "in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho," there is not found among them one man numbered before in the wilderness of Sinai, but Caleb only and Joshua: and now the leader and the lawgiver must himself die: the last death in the wilderness is the death of Moses; that strangest and most mysterious of all departures; not, like Aaron's decease, soothed by the presence of a loving son and brother, but accomplished in solitude and silence, the Lord showing him all the land of promise, the Lord closing his eyes, and the Lord burying him. O marvellous combination of "the goodness and severity of God!" The penalty enforced to the letter, but so enforced as to turn it into the highest of honours and the tenderest of consolations! Not by punishment is love forfeited: not because of punishment is the nomenclature of love changed. It is "Moses the servant of the Lord" who dies there in the land of Moab: and when the Divine voice speaks for the first time directly to Joshua the son of Nun, the "minister" and the successor, it still speaks as of one tenderly loved and cared for, "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise thou, and go over this Jordan!" The last death in the wilderness is a death without sting. He of whom God can say when he is departed, "My servant is dead," must indeed be not so much dead as sleeping; he is in the Lord's hand still, and God will not for ever leave his soul in hell. He still lives to Him who both quickeneth the dead, and calleth things that are not as though they were.

Let us all enter, if we have not entered yet, upon that service, which is indeed perfect freedom and tenderest love. Let us place ourselves, if we have not placed ourselves yet, under the guidance of that hand which, even when it corrects, loves still; yea, because it loves, rebukes and chastens. So, when death comes—when the dark valley must be traversed, and the deep swift river crossed—we will fear no evil. He who has been our guide unto death will guide us through death: and when He has laid us to rest, in a tomb still marked by his loving eye, will say of us to the generation which survives to take up his unfinished, his unending work, "My servant is dead"—now arise ye, and minister to me in his place, that, in the great day of Christ's appearing, "both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together!"

C. J. VAUGHAN.

THE WALDENSES.

PART. II.—THEIR PAST HISTORY AND SUFFERINGS.

"Halt, passenger! take heed what you do see,
This stone doth tell for what some men did die."

THUS run the first two lines of that quaint metrical inscription which many a visitor to Edinburgh has read on the "Martyrs' Monument" in the Greyfriars Churchyard. We remember being there on a spring morning some years ago in company with a revered friend from England. The sun shone full on the great upright stone between its flanking pillars; the grass beneath was enamelled by early daisies; while all around there was a "stillness calm and holy" that accorded with the place and the scene. My friend, after gazing on the spot awhile in silence, began to read aloud the old inscription, his tones gathering increased animation as line after line recounted cruel wrongs endured, and heroic faith displayed. After the poetry there follows this record:—"From 1661 to 1688 there were executed at Edinburgh about an hundred of noblemen, gentlemen, ministers, and others; noble martyrs for Jesus Christ. The most of them lie here." Beneath the slab itself, carved on an open Bible, there follows this grand and solemn passage from the Apocalypse: "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord . . ." Having read thus far, I perceived my friend's lips quiver, and his eyes fill with tears. The remaining words were read in silence—the words of God's own book going right to the heart as no others can. The place and the circumstances gave to this passage of sacred Scripture a depth and solemnity it might not have had elsewhere. We were standing within a bow-shot of the spot where many, whose bones lay beneath, had sealed their testimony with their blood. The intervening two hundred years seemed to shrink out of sight, and the great future day to draw near, when a response shall be given to

that question—"How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

Far away from Scotland last spring, on our way from Turin to La Tour, the little capital of the Waldensian valleys, when their wooded mountains rose to view, it seemed as if we were approaching "consecrated ground;" and when, within the valleys themselves, we visited scene after scene associated with the sufferings of those who kept Christ's word and did not deny his name, it seemed as if the whole territory had a sacredness, and every hamlet might have its "Martyrs' Monument." If our patriotism should be kindled on the field of Marathon, and our piety grow warmer amid the ruins of Iona, certainly it would be strange if one who knows what these rocks and mountain-sides have witnessed, could visit this renowned territory without a deepened reverence for the power of conscience, and an increased abhorrence of the system that would strangle its freedom.

An old Waldensian writer, speaking of the distinctive marks by which his and every true Church might be known, gives these three: "Simple conformity to the sacred word: a holy life: persecution and the Cross." Persecution and the Cross! Yes, this last mark she can truly be said to have borne throughout all her history. It does not indeed so forcibly arrest attention in her remote past as in later times; yet even so far back as the ninth century, we have historical evidence that the existence of a people in these valleys who abjured the Roman yoke was most obnoxious to the bigots of that intolerant creed. The Waldenses had then a friend, it is true, in the good Claude, Bishop of Turin; but a letter is extant from a brother prelate, angrily calling him to account for his lenity towards the heretics who dwelt near his diocese. Again, in 1198, previous to the acquisition of Piedmont by the House of Savoy, we find a decree of Otho IV., Emperor of Germany, commanding the then Bishop of Turin to exterminate from his whole diocese those "*heretiques Vaudoises* who attack the Catholic faith, and teach pernicious error." During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Waldenses suffered less within their own territory than in France and Germany, where at that epoch they were largely spread—their numbers in Europe being at one period so high as 80,000. To confine our attention, however, to the persecutions within the valleys themselves, it may safely be said that for a period of 400 years, *i.e.*, from the beginning of the fifteenth to the end of the eighteenth century, the Church and people within that little territory were exposed to a succession of assaults so fierce, that the story of their preservation is without a parallel anywhere else in the world. The Waldenses themselves recount thirty-six distinct persecutions to which they have been subjected; all of them designed to force them to yield up their ancient faith, and some of them distinctly planned to secure their extermination from the face of the earth.

The story of these persecutions, written like Ezekiel's roll within and without with lamentations and mourning and woe, cannot be detailed in a few pages. It would fill a volume. It has filled volumes. Let my readers open for themselves the pages of Leger or Monastier, and they will regard no language as too strong either to reprobate the wrongs perpetrated on an unoffending people, or to applaud the noble struggles for faith and freedom which that people made. In days like ours, when the faith of many waxes feeble, and laxity of doctrine, combined with a false liberality, would make men tolerant of almost any error, it is well to be reminded of those Italian mountaineers, who held the truth at a higher price than their lives, and who preferred persecution and the Cross with a good conscience to peace and ease with perjured faith.

And here let us understand who the real authors of the Waldensian persecutions were. Ostensibly, and looking on the surface of the page of history, they seem to have been the Dukes of Savoy, their own princes. Implicated in all this guilt and shame the Dukes of Savoy unquestionably were, because these wrongs were committed in violation of repeated and solemn treaties to protect the Waldenses—whose loyalty as subjects had been constant and unimpeached—in the exercise of their faith. But the real authors of these persecutions were the popes and their agents. The crime of the Waldenses was their scriptural religion; and in the eyes of the Roman Church no crime is so unpardonable as to assert independence of her authority. These poor people had probably suffered no harm whatever from the court of Turin, but for the pressure ceaselessly brought to bear on it by the court of Rome. Dr. Gilly illustrates this very forcibly when he says: "Let the reader, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, reflect upon the tendency of the following specimen of the numerous edicts in my possession, and I shall not be accused of doing wrong to the Church of Rome, when I affirm that the lintels of the Vatican are sprinkled with the blood of every Vaudois who died in defence of his religion: 'Charles Emmanuel, by the grace of God, Duke of Savoy, Prince of Piedmont, &c. In conformity with the brief published by his Holiness, our Lord Pope Gregory XV., and with our desire to promote the sacred wishes of his Holiness, we command, &c.' Then follows one of those penal enactments which drove unhappy men to desperation, and converted scenes of peace into an arena of frightful conflict." (Gilly, p. 285.)

Interwoven with the harrowing annals of the bloodshed and infernal cruelties endured by the Waldenses, is another and a different story: that of their heroic courage and chivalrous struggle for home and freedom, and for the faith they loved so well. These people took up arms in their own defence. They fought before they fell. And, apart altogether from the sacred cause in which they were engaged, I know nowhere a record more thrilling than this portion of their history. In their Arnauds, and Janavels, and Jahiers, we find heroes as well as martyrs. The defences of Rora and Angrogna, and the Balsille, were marvellous deeds of endurance, and daring, and trust. The long single-barrelled gun of Janavel is still preserved in the library of the little college at La Tour. One of the professors, himself a native Waldensian, had been showing us the ghastly plates

in an old copy of Leger's History of the Persecutions, ghastly from the fearful reality they give to the narrative itself; and it was startling to see how the good man's eye kindled and his cheek flushed when, turning from the book, he snatched up Janavel's now rusty matchlock, and told how the brave fellow with this weapon had picked down ruffian after ruffian rather than suffer his wife and little ones to endure bloody and brutal cruelty. Will any say that Janavel did wrong? Grant that he and his comrades should not have embrued their hands in blood,—"oppression maketh a wise man mad." The Waldenses had no wish for war or bloodshed. They held their lands by right, and had held them from time immemorial; and no stranger could have a right to intrude on their little territory to ravage and to destroy. Armed troops being sent to exterminate them because they would not deny their ancient faith, when they fought, they fought in self-defence alone. If ever, therefore, in the history of the world such a term were applicable, theirs was a Holy War.

In a territory where every spot of ground almost has its famous memory, it is difficult to know which to select for description. During my stay of twelve days in the valleys, I naturally visited very many of these. Let me invite the reader's company first to the Vale of Angrogna.

This valley, or, more properly speaking, this mountain gorge, is a lateral branch of the Valley of Lucerna; and from its mouth near La Tour to the Pra del Tor at its further extremity, is not above six or seven miles in length. Yet in this little defile have been enacted some of the most stirring events in the Waldensian annals. Taken as a whole, moreover, it is the most picturesque, though not the grandest, of the valleys. There the traveller from Scotland will often be reminded of the Trosachs, if we suppose the Trosachs magnified to an Alpine scale. Except at the upper and wilder extremity, the mountains which enclose this Italian glen are wooded to their summits; bold masses of rock rising here and there into splintered peaks from out the foliage. And such foliage! One must be on the southern slope of the Alps to comprehend its beauty. Here are forests of the native chestnut and walnut; and as the winding path carries us beneath their dense and fragrant shade, we see on every hand trees of a size and beauty to adorn the finest baronial park in England. In the lower portion of the valley we have the clear rushing stream by our side, whose banks are here wide enough to admit considerable patches of ground to be tilled on either hand; first, the irrigated meadow, now (in early spring) enamelled with tufts of the white sweet-scented narcissus, resembling at a distance pearls gleaming on green velvet. Above, on the slopes, rise vineyards and little fields of rye, or maize, intersected by mulberry trees for the silkworm; while here and there the humble dwellings of the peasant proprietors, each with its overhanging roof and rude verandahs, rise amid the few acres they both own and cultivate. By-and-by, as the valley narrows, our path begins to rise through the forest, and to wind along the steep mountain side, passing at many points underneath grand overhanging cliffs, in whose crevices, high overhead, bushes of the dwarf rhododendron, or alpenrose, display their glowing crimson flowers; while from moist nooks within hand's reach, one may gather abundance of the Alpine auricula, and deep blue gentian flowers, familiar in our gardens at home. Each winding turn of the footpath opens up to us a new stretch of the valley, contracting now into a grand defile. In sight of one of those vistas, and standing some two hundred feet above the stream, whose hoarse murmur rises through the woods, let us pause a moment. One cannot imagine a more delightful combination for painter's or poet's eye—this intermingling of wooded mountain, and nestling hamlets, and craggy peaks, and, far beyond, those dazzling snows which rise over the whole into the deep blue sky.

Our guide, a Waldensian peasant, proud of the deeds of his forefathers, ere long stops us at a point, whose interest is of a higher kind than that which mere natural beauty or grandeur can bestow. "This," said he, "is the site of Champforans." Yes, it was here that, in 1532, was held the famous Synod of the Waldensian Church, whose impress is felt in these valleys to the present hour. It was to this spot that the Reformer Farel with two friends came from across the Alps, that, as younger brethren, they might greet this ancient branch of the Christian family, and bring the cheering news of a great light now dawning over Europe to men who, in their lonely solitude among the mountains, had kept their own little lamp shining through the weary night of the dark ages.

Approaching the head of the valley, we reached another famous spot. Our path here ran along a narrow ledge cut in the face of a cliff; and between ourselves and the rocks on the opposite bank there was but the breadth of the foaming stream, and no more. This spot is the key of the pass; and here one brave man could repel a score. Our guide leant over the edge of the precipitous cliff, feathered with foliage, and pointing with his finger to a deep black pool where the water boiled and seethed far below,—"That," said he, "is the Tompie Sachetti," Sachetti's Pool. And why so called? In 1488, Charles II. of Savoy, at the instigation of Pope Innocent VIII., sent a large body of soldiers to invade this little valley, and put to the sword every man, woman, and child who should refuse to go to mass. The troops were not surprised to find a comparatively easy passage through the lower portions of the valley, for it was ever the custom of the Waldensians, when danger threatened, to withdraw into the more inaccessible fastnesses; and for this purpose, Angrogna offered peculiar advantages, since at its upper extremity the valley spreads out into a wide and singular amphitheatre, surrounded on all sides, save one, by steep and inaccessible mountains. This open space, called the Pra del Tor, which in still earlier times had served another purpose, to which we may afterwards advert, was on this occasion filled by the terrified families of the valley—women, and little ones, and the aged, being gathered together there, while the strong men had gone to defend the pass below. Here, where we now stood, some had planted themselves in ambush, behind the

rocks ; while others on the heights above were ready to hurl down huge stones on the assailants, should they force the pass. In numbers they were very few in comparison with the overwhelming force now heard approaching ; but they were nerved by a determination to defend all they held dear ; their faith was strong in the power of prayer ; and they knew that revered teachers, and aged parents were even then pleading for them on the mountain side. The approaching army is now so near that the jeers and wild insulting tones of the soldiers can be heard, anticipating an easy victory and a full glut of vengeance ; one voice especially is loud above the rest—that of Sachetti, a noted captain, and a man of colossal size, who, like another Goliath, blasphemously defied the armies of the living God. Another moment, and the brave defenders of the pass emerge from their hiding-places, and stand, fronting the intruders. The battle begins. Soldier after soldier, as they attempt to force a passage, is shot down—nor have the brave peasants yet lost an inch of ground. Sachetti, maddened with rage, pours it forth in bold but impotent threats ; neither he nor his men perceiving that behind the Waldenses there advances down the gorge a new power, which neither he nor they anticipated. Driven on by the wind, a dense mist had already blotted from sight the upper portion of the valley, and in a few minutes more had enveloped themselves. So dense the mist, a man may now scarce discern his comrade ! In any unknown mountainous country such an occurrence is fitted to alarm. Each object is confused ; each danger is magnified ; and on slippery rocks like these, the next step may be death. A panic seizes the troops—their boasting is cooled now. The Waldenses, knowing every inch of ground, follow up their advantage, and press forward on the retreating mass—now confused and disorganised, uncertain, too, whether their assailants are a score or a thousand. Vast numbers perished that day. Driven backward on each other within the narrow defile, they fell headlong over the rocks. The infamous Sachetti, among the rest, was struck down by the hand of God, and not of man ; for, slipping his foot on a rocky ledge that overhung the stream, his huge frame lost its balance and was precipitated into the rapid, which carried the mangled corpse into that deep boiling pool, from whence it was with difficulty dragged forth, and which to this hour bears his dishonoured name.

Curiously enough, the very day on which we ascended the Vale of Angrogna, we found the priest of the district (for there are some Papists even in Angrogna) superintending—for lack of other employment, perhaps—a body of workmen who were repairing and widening the path near this very point we have attempted to describe. "Ah !" said our guide, "I don't like to see this at all ; for if we had to defend Angrogna again, the narrower the road the better."

Every visitor to La Tour must be struck by the singular mass of rock which rises behind the little town from the upper slope of a mountain in the Vale of Lucerna, in form somewhat like the "*Lion's head*" of Arthur's Seat which looks down on Edinburgh. This rock is the Castelluzzo. The sad history of Waldensian massacres causes us to look up to that rock with the same thrilling interest with which we regard the tower of the old church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois in Paris, where hung the bell that summoned to the massacre of St. Bartholomew. These now peaceful valleys have had, once and again, their "St. Bartholomew ;" and from that Castelluzzo it was, that on April 27th, 1655, the signal was given to execute the dreadful orders of Christina, Regent of Savoy, who, acting *for* her son, Charles Emmanuel II., and *under* her holy father, the Pope, sent an army of 15,000 men into the valleys, *to massacre every Protestant they contained !* Think of 15,000 bigoted soldiers, infuriated by passion, let loose on a quiet and defenceless people, hemmed into this narrow mountain territory—let loose with the express command of their sovereign to ravage and to kill—their excesses excused, and even sanctioned, because committed in the service of the Holy Church ! When one even tries to imagine what will happen when these 15,000 wolves are hounded on their prey, we shudder, and exclaim, "God pity his poor sheep, thus penned within their 'ancient fold !'"

But the story itself, as given by Leger, an eye-witness, surpasses all imagination. It would seem as if the fiends of the pit had been let loose—so many and monstrous were the cruelties practised on these poor Waldenses. "Children," says he—and we do not give the most hideous portions of his description—"torn from their mothers' breasts, were seized by the feet and dashed against the rocks or walls, which were covered with their brains, while their tender bodies were cast on the common heaps ; or one soldier, seizing one limb of these innocent creatures, and another taking hold of the other, would tear them asunder, beat their mothers with them, and at last throw them into the fields. The sick and aged, both men and women, were either burnt in their houses, or literally cut in pieces ; or, stripped of their garments, were tied up like a ball, with their heads between their legs, and rolled over rocks. . . . It was then," adds the historian, "that the fugitives, who had been snatched like brands out of the flames, could address God in the words of the 79th Psalm :—

> 'O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance ;
> Thy holy temple have they defiled ;
> They have laid Jerusalem on heaps.
> The dead bodies of thy servants have they given
> To be meat unto the fowls of the heaven,
> The flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth.
> Their blood have they shed like water . . . ;
> And there was none to bury them.'"

In this horrible massacre the malice of Rome had full scope ; but for once her craft was at fault. The enemy had overshot the mark. Such hideous work as this would not hide. Leger, a Waldensian pastor, and, as we have said, himself an eye-witness of these unspeakable atrocities, fled to the friendly Swiss cantons, and with bursting heart and burning words proclaimed his people's wrongs. The news spread like wildfire. Never was a finer illustration of the Scripture truth, that "where one member suffers all the members suffer with it," than Protestant Europe afforded at that memorable epoch. To their everlasting honour, the Swiss cantons first took up the cause of

the remnant of Christ's suffering ones. Great Britain, Holland, Germany, Denmark, even France, raised one loud and united remonstance, sending special messengers therewith to the Court of Savoy. Oliver Cromwell was then Protector of England. Let his name be ever gratefully remembered and honoured as the Protector of the Waldenses! No sooner did he hear the news than he proclaimed a fast through England and Scotland; and ordered a special collection to be made for the relief of the suffering remnant, now creeping from their hiding-places among the mountains. This subscription yielded the large sum of 30,000*l.*—2,000*l.* of which were given by Oliver himself out of his privy purse; and it will interest my readers to know that while this sum, designed and funded for the Waldenses, was in large part embezzled by Charles II.,—who insolently declared that he would not pay the debts of a usurper—William and Mary made a fresh grant to the Waldenses, in lieu of that which Cromwell raised and Charles spent,—and it is out of this latter fund that at this hour each Waldensian pastor is receiving 770 francs (about 30*l.*) a year, paid him by the British Government to aid his scanty maintenance. Well were it, let us add, if all our State obligations had a history and a destination so honourable!

But Cromwell did more. He despatched to Turin a special envoy in Sir Samuel Morland, who carried a letter to the Duke in Latin—the composition of Cromwell's great secretary, John Milton—and who was commanded to express in terms of stern remonstrance and unmistakeable warning, the horror and indignation of England's Protector. Besides the Latin letter in which he spoke for his illustrious master, Milton wrote an English sonnet, where he gave his own feelings vent in lines that will only perish with the language:

"ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEMONT.

"Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipt stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubl'd to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who, having learn'd thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe."

The lips which uttered that concluding prayer, the hand that penned it, have long ago crumbled into dust: let us who are alive give God thanks that the time has at length arrived when Milton's prayer is being marvellously answered; and how much cause for such thanksgiving we have, I hope in next number to show.

D. K. GUTHRIE.

DEW.

"I will be as the dew unto Israel."—*Hosea* xiv. 5.

SOFTLY it falls on the seed new-sown
Where the soil is hard and dry,
And never a noble plant has grown
In all the years gone by.

Softly it falls on the tender blade,
That has drooped in thirsty pain
All the day on the upland glade
For lack of the early rain.

Softly it falls on the green-eared wheat
That feared it must wither away
In the searching rays of noontide heat
In the sultry summer day.

Softly it falls on the grass new-mown,
And crushed by the mower's foot—
The widowed grass, with flower gone,
And little left but the root.

Softly it falls on the lowliest weed
By the forest wayside found,
As on fragrant flowers that all men heed
In a royal garden-ground.

And not for the seed and plant alone
Does it come each day anew,
But to show to man the love of One
Who saith "I am as the dew."

But it oft complains, "His love, alas!
Is but partly seen in me;
For if He cares so much for the grass,
Then how much more for thee!"

S. R. POWERS.

PASTOR HARMS OF HERRMANNSBURG.

WITHIN the last ten years a small country parish in Hanover has gained a singular notoriety in the history of Missions. It has originated, planned, and sustained a Mission of its own. It is neither large nor wealthy, yet it has more Mission stations abroad than some not inconsiderable Churches, and it supplies not only money but men. Familiar as we are with brilliant missionary enterprises, this seems to surpass them; and it rather gains in interest and marvel when we know that it is the work of one man. It is from the parish minister that the impulse sprung; the conception was his own; and but for his undaunted, simple-hearted faith, it seems unlikely that it could have been carried out. Now that he is gone to his rest, it may be worth while to look into his life; to see what light it throws upon his work; to discover by what power he did so much.

Louis Harms was born in Walsrode, in Hanover, in 1808, the son of the clergyman of the parish, and when he was nine years old shared the family migration to the parish of Herrmannsburg. Neither the neighbourhood nor the people could have had any great attraction for a man of ordinary character. The Lüneburg Heath, in which Herrmannsburg is situated, would be to most eyes bleak and monotonous; a mere vast tract of heath and bog, thinly inhabited, and poorly tilled. But the purple heather-bloom, the deep rich colouring of both cloud and sunshine, the clear broad streams, the clumps of wood, and the sudden valleys that dip down like crevases in the even roll of the country, laid hold of Harms with a powerful fascination, and he declared there was not a country in the world he would as soon live in. The people might be ignorant, but they were sturdy, free, and independent, like the fresh strong winds that swept their heath; and Harms had a firm, strong will, a determined independence, and an unmistakable individuality of character. From the first he was attracted to the place, and seems to have always turned to it with more than the feeling of a home. At school and at the university he left the impression of great ability, and the most rigorous application; and at Göttingen, where he studied, he seems to have conceived the idea of ranging through the whole domain of human learning. His brother states that it was to satisfy the unrest of his spirit which had not yet found satisfaction through faith in Christ. With the aid of an extraordinary memory, extraordinary perseverance, and a large self-reliance, he made rapid progress in his studies, and became the pride of his fellow-students and his home. He was an adept in such manly exercises as a German university will recognise, in fencing and swimming; and he had a lofty sense of truth, and

a purity that is attributed to his passionate love for his mother, and that made him instinctively shrink from many sins. "Bear up," he wrote in a friend's album about this time, "although the last prop break, and all is lost, if you have only honour." He did not know what fear was: "I never was afraid in my life," he said. He was impetuous, impatient, not very considerate of others, imperious, and inflexible, and the awe of his brothers and sisters. It was a mixed and very intelligible character, a character that he always retained in its main features, though the defects were greatly modified by the grace of God. The strict morality he maintained, passed at the time for Christian life; and in a church where the spirit of religion had worn down to be a form, and a university where almost every man was a rationalist, he found little encouragement to faith. As late as last year he wrote that out of the two millions of Christians in Hanover, the most never read the Bible, nor went to the Lord's Supper, nor appeared at church; but occupied themselves entirely with their own concerns: and thirty years ago the picture would have been less favourable. A man might travel then from north to south of Hanover, and not find a single faithful pastor. It was not by outward circumstances, but against them that he was led to Christ. As he sat in thought one night, he turned to the seventeenth chapter of St. John. It was over this prayer of our High-Priest that the light came upon him, and he recognised the sacrificial death of Christ. Ignorant of fear, yet on that night, he says, when he was brought to the knowledge of his sins, he cowered under the wrath of God, and trembled in every limb. He had already passed through much inward conflict, of which he long bore the traces; no one of ordinary intellectual power could well escape it when thrown into the student society of the time. But now that he had fairly passed out of it, his life assumed a new direction. He left Göttingen after a final brilliant examination, to take the situation of tutor at Lauenburg for nine years. His design of mastering the sciences was thrown aside; he sought out the isolated Christians and drew them into fellowship, and Lauenberg held always a dear place in his memory. He removed in 1839, to Lüneburg, where he continued his Bible-meetings, and preached, though still holding the position of tutor. His peculiar mental training and mental conflict, the firmness and entireness with which he held the truth, and his knowledge of many forms of error, won for him considerable influence. It was scarcely possible to resist his appeals; even then men noticed the deep and settled peace, and felt that nameless but powerful impression left by an earnest, holy man. He had a habit of looking straight into the face with a fixed and calm glance that reached to the innermost heart, and drew out a frank confession and confidence. During this time he had been asked, both to join the mission-house at Hamburg and to go to New York; but his passion for the Heath overcame every other feeling, and thirteen years after he had left the university, he joined his father at Herrmannsburg; the next year he was appointed his coadjutor; and on his father's death, in 1848, he became sole pastor.

He now fairly settled down to his work. It was among peasants and peasant proprietors, and the people who would be found in a common country village. Slowly a change came to be noticed in the parish. The careless, stubborn, and ignorant diminished; the farmers came more regularly to the church; ploughboys sang Luther's hymns instead of country ballads; in houses where the Bible had not been opened, it was daily read; the people spoke frankly on religion, and were grave and quiet, and came to be known as *Herrmannsburgher* at the markets and fairs; and any stranger who passed that way would notice the tidier houses and brighter look of the neighbourhood; and if he passed at noon would be amazed to hear the bell peal from the little wooden spire, and to see in every field the labour stopped, and the head unbared, at prayer, and to hear from some groups of haymakers, or at the early harvest, the measured cadence of a hymn. There was evidently some remarkable influence at work; every inquiry traced it up to the new pastor. He had not only determined to work, but had flung himself upon his work with a characteristic impetuosity, not to be either slackened or exhausted, till he could work no more. Woe to me, he once said, if I live to be both old and strong. He preached four, sometimes five times every Sunday, and his services were often prolonged to three hours. He catechised not only the young but the old. He came into constant intercourse with his parishioners and led them into the fullest intercourse with him. And it was natural that labour so ardent, so full of faith and self-sacrifice, of a man whose spirit was visibly touched by God's Spirit, and his words with God's word, should produce a singular result. Outwardly at least there was not a parish in Hanover like Herrmannsburg. It recalled in its piety, simplicity, gravity, and the vigour of its Christian life, in the universal and apparently hearty service of God, the full and happy recognition of Jesus Christ the Saviour, and the manifest living presence and operation of the Holy Ghost—in all these it recalled the ideal and beautiful pictures painted of apostolic times.

Almost immediately after Harms was settled in his charge, there rose before his soul one night, he says, the words, *Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.* He could not sleep; "for it continually thundered in my soul: Man, what hast thou done to help so many perishing men? I had no other answer than, Nothing. The day after, I went to some of them that believed, and that I knew loved the Word of God, and I put before them that we must do something for the poor heathen." Elsewhere he wrote, "It is not long since there came to Herrmannsburg a poor disabled *Candidat*—disabled, for he dared no longer preach; poor, for it had been his habit to live so that he had nothing over. He had no money to pay his way; but a lady presented him with three gulden, wrapped in a quarter of a pound of tobacco, and with these he went on his journey. When he came here, he made known to the people that there were heathens, wretched and miserable. Then the people said, If that is true, we must help them; and a widow came and brought six shillings, and a labourer

sixpence, and a child a silver penny." Suggestive hints like these were sure to act powerfully upon a man like Harms. The zeal for God which had been kindled in his parish was easily turned upon missions; as he went from house to house, the words he dropped fell like seed into ready ground; what was so much in his thoughts worked its way out almost involuntarily in his sermons; and when he took courage and proposed to his neighbours that they would be their own missionaries, twelve stepped forward and said they were ready. At that time any one who spoke of missions was laughed at; to be interested in them was considered the sign of a disordered intellect; and the man who advocated them was deemed scarcely safe except in prison. It was as bold an act of faith as will be found in the history of missions, when Mr. Harms, in such circumstances, brought forward his proposal. For he did not suggest an annual sermon, a collection, that they might help some existing society, or that they might support a missionary—proposals which, in this country, would not fill us with any surprise, yet above which a congregation never soars; but in the midst of general indifference and contempt for missions, he put it to a group of peasants and small farmers, with no doubt much of the prejudice and ignorance of their class, to volunteer for missionary service and to take the entire burden of supporting a separate mission. He seems to have felt that what was done at Antioch might be done again, and not to have distrusted that where the Spirit of God works, a right and lofty enthusiasm is always possible. "If not, it were surely the stupidest folly if I touched this work with so much as a finger." No doubt he went about it thoughtfully, and not by rash impulse; for enthusiasm is not made up of even any number of sudden impulses; and no doubt his thoughtfulness made him rest his appeal on the primitive ground of faith, and to condemn, with perhaps too sweeping words, the mere mission work which becomes a fashion in the church, and to which people give because it is the custom. He had no patience with the principle by which, "having had a new coat for ourselves, we will bestow the clippings on the heathen." "As a believing Christian," he asserted, "you cannot help carrying on mission work with all earnestness and with all your heart, though you should have to do it alone." "Generous," "Good," "Manly," men are disposed to say: but he was satisfied that it was right.

House-room was not difficult to obtain, for one of the yeomen who had volunteered brought his farm with him as a gift to the mission. Aided by his brother, Harms began the suitable training of these men, and led them over a very suitable and extensive course of theology, taught, no doubt, in its practical aspects and adapted to the position and habits of the students. Africa was fixed on for a mission field; the students and all the parish fell heartily into the project; and the only remaining difficulty was the expense of transit. A sailor who had joined the mission-house suggested the building of a ship; it would be their own property, would perform all their journeys, and might earn as much by freight as would maintain it. Harms stepped boldly into this undertaking also, and commissioned a ship, the *Candace*, to be built at Harburg; and this being ready in due time, sailed in the end of 1853 with eight missionaries, two smiths, a tailor, a butcher, a dyer, and three labourers on board, and took them safely to Natal. They had intended to make their way to the Gallas, the most desperate tribe of Eastern Africa, but as the Imaum at Mombaz had refused them passage through his land, they sought to penetrate through Natal among the Kaffirs, and work their way northwards, planting stations as they went. This entire mission project was of large outline. It embraced missionaries distinctively to teach, and colonists distinctively to labour; yet the missionaries were not to shrink from work, nor the colonists from teaching. It was conceived that these colonies might be made partly self-supporting, that the stations would thus be more stationary, that settlements would be formed on which, if necessary, the outposts could fall back. It was the transference of an entire Christian community to a heathen people, to live among them as Christians, and with the one object of introducing Christianity. It was also a bold and large conception to push up these colonies through hostile tribes and over tracts unknown to Europeans, to link them in a long chain, and at every halt in the patient march to spread the knowledge of the Gospel. So this little peaceful army contemplated fighting their way till they had conquered the land for Christ. It was grand enough work for a kingdom, tedious and difficult enough to task the energies of an entire Church; but it was projected by a single man, and to be carried out by a single parish.

The ship had not long sailed when the vacant places in the mission-house were filled. Fresh volunteers came forward, other colonists were ready to share the privations of their brethren; and as often as the *Candace* returned she was sent out again with fresh supplies of men. It was a great drain upon the parish; but there is scarcely a corner of Germany from which there is not an emigration, and Herrmannsburg could as well spare its people to Africa as to America. Upwards of forty have sometimes left at once; and forty-eight young missionaries are always in training. For, as the need became greater, the zeal of the people kept pace with it, and five years ago a hundred offered themselves in a body. The training has grown more systematic; the students continue to be examined and tested by the supreme ecclesiastical tribunal, and depart with their authority and sanction; and almost uniformly they have turned out well. It was in the comparative leisure of waiting for the first tidings of the ship that Mr. Harms planned another work. Touched, as some of the best of his countrymen were about that time, by the position of discharged convicts, it struck him that to improve it would be a righteous mission at home. Suspected, and possibly tainted by imprisonment, they found an honest calling almost impossible, and their sympathies and habits had been perverted to crime. If they had some shelter till the possible good in them was strengthened, some time of probation that would stamp them again with an honest mark, and some kindly and firm friend to watch them, they might be restored to society. A neighbourhood so peaceful, orderly,

and Christian, and so far away from the stir of life, seemed to Harms favourable for the experiment. A farm was bought large enough to employ the men in tillage, one of the parishioners took charge of it, and the Asylum has since kept its doors open to those who came, with various results, but a preponderating success. About the same time, also, it became necessary to start a Missionary Magazine. It was impossible to satisfy all who wished to hear of their friends in Africa, by letter. The interest rapidly spread out of the neighbourhood, and, indeed, out of Hanover, and to meet the demands made upon his time and pen, Harms took refuge in printing. It was well also that the young missionaries should become familiar with type: they might, if it proved necessary, print their own books, and set up a press among the heathen. A modest beginning was made at the mission-house with a monthly missionary paper; hymn-books and catechisms; reprints sufficiently accurate and orthodox to satisfy so thorough an antiquarian and sound a Lutheran as the pastor; sermons preached in the village church; and other volumes, followed: and the press, never idle, brings in an annual profit of six hundred pounds. While Mr. Harms was undertaking these fresh labours, he took nothing from the old. His parish was as closely tended, his services were as numerous, his activity and minute self-sacrifice as remarkable: and while his influence was thus spreading at home, he was able after ten years to sum up such results as these abroad:—"In the year 1853 our first missionaries sailed from Hamburg, and as they entered on their work in 1854, our mission in Africa is now ten years old. We have there the following mission stations, Herrmannsburg, Ehlanzeni, Etembeni, Müden, New Hanover, Empangweni, Enhlangana, Sterkspruit, Emakabeleni, Emonjeni, Emlalazi, Endlangabo, Injesane, Isisingisingi, Entombe, Ehlomohlomo, Etaka, Emyati, Enhlonyana, Etombe, Ekombela, Linokena, Goyon, Litheyane, and two that are not yet completed. Besides the necessary dwellings and offices at these stations for the missionaries, colonists, and for some of the converted Kaffirs, there are six pretty churches, small and great, and the stations are surrounded by tilled fields and gardens. Herrmannsburg has the look of an imposing village, and hundreds of cattle, almost a thousand sheep, and many horses and swine roam through the fields; poultry crowd the farm-yards, and smiths, carpenters, wheelwrights, shoemakers, tailors and others, all have their workshops. Avenues of gum trees run through the streets, and beyond the town are little forests of peaches. In Herrmannsburg, Etembeni, Litheyane, Linokena, and Goyon, there are altogether one hundred and ninety baptised natives, of whom one hundred and thirty are Bechuanas, and sixty are Kaffirs; in New Hanover there are two baptised families, and in Ekombela the first baptised Zulu. At several stations, such as Empangweni, where all seemed dead, there is now life. The Bechuanas are increasing their attendance at school, so that there are more than a hundred scholars at Linokena, and even the old chief, Moilve, learns his letters, spectacles on nose. This hath God wrought, the same God who so often and so sharply smote us, but who hath not turned away his grace."

These last words show that the mission was not exempt from trial. Those who went out first were roughly enough received; sent from coast to coast, suspected in one place as democrats, in another as Jesuits, and obliged at last to make such shift as they could. The *Candace* was sometimes in danger; was at one time maliciously inserted in the Shipping-list as lost, and was not always fortunate in a captain. Rumours were spread of the most ludicrous sort: as that Harms had fled to America with the mission-chest, that he had fitted out the *Candace* as a privateer, manned her with Malays, and was watching vessels at the mouth of the Elbe. Living was found more expensive than had been supposed; and the way north to the Gallas was sometimes suddenly threatened or closed. There were deaths, and alas! even mutual recriminations and dissensions, and some of the oldest missionaries and one or two of the colonists split off from the main body, and stations were seriously crippled and forsaken. Some of these were serious trials, and painful enough to bear; but it all came right in the end; the secessionists returned; and last year there were fresh openings and encouragements. The missionaries were already located with Sechele and the Bechuanas, with Umpanda and the Zulu Kaffirs, and had hopes of pressing on through Mosele-Katse's people. They have now a firm hold on another tribe, the Mamagale, who were mixed up with the Bechuanas, and shared the confusion of the present Boer war. One of them had been taken prisoner by the English, and carried away to Kaffraria. When there he became a Christian, and returned to his people to tell them of Christ. He begged books on every side, and taught them to read in Dutch and in the Bechuana tongue, so that when they clustered round the Herrmannsburg missionary, and he settled among them, there were at once fifty candidates for baptism. A new station has been opened there, called Bethany—a village, laid out with six streets and a church and school—and already seventy-eight persons, including two of the four chiefs, have been baptised. "The women do much for the spread of God's kingdom, even those that are not baptised. In the largest village there is a woman, yet unbaptised, who every evening makes a great fire in the open space, collects the young people about her, and teaches them often till midnight." Altogether, over one hundred and twenty have been baptised by the missionaries last year alone, and not after superficial, but thorough and most painstaking training. At home the asylum for prisoners continues to give satisfaction; some of the former inmates have died, it is believed, in faith; from others in England and elsewhere grateful letters have been received and good accounts; and as an institution the farm is almost self-supporting. So strong does the missionary life continue, that it has overflowed its first limits, and six missionary clergymen have been sent to America, one to Australia, and one to India. The last mission was established through a curious coincidence. Mr. Nagel, of Hamburg, who has been banker, shipper, and factotum to Harms, had a brother-in-law in the

Telugu Mission. This mission was not supported, and the missionary, a loyal Lutheran, begged for help from Herrmannsburg. Mylius had been formerly an Indian missionary, but, returning with shattered health, he had been for thirteen years in the Frederiken-Stift, in Hanover. When the matron of this Stift died, the old love for India grew warm in his heart; and he wrote at this time to Harms, "Send me to the heathen, to Africa, anywhere you will, only send me to the heathen;" there was also over 300*l.* in the mission treasury. It appeared impossible to mistake the drift of these circumstances, and Mylius is now in Telugu, expecting fresh helpers from the inexhaustible little parish.

During these certainly not inexpensive labours, Harms never seems to have wanted money. His theory was peculiar. He made no appeal in any public way save to his own church; his people were poor; he was not in favour with the wealthy; he made no literal acknowledgment of money forwarded. He was a reticent, self-contained man, not given to babbling out his own counsel, and he seldom talked of a plan until he was prepared to execute it. Yet he wrote of help mysteriously sent from places with which he had no communication, and at the times when he needed it. "God be thanked," he says, "that I have no need to beg from men. Through Jesus Christ, my great High-Priest, I go joyfully to the throne of grace, and I pray with assured confidence that I shall receive grace when I have need of it. Therefore I say to Him, 'Dear Jesus, thou willest that this mission be carried on: but see, here is one want, and there is another.' Verily, though you should require a thousand crowns or more, you would not apply there in vain." His way of keeping accounts was in unison. "In the whole course of the year I never make a comparison between income and expenditure. What is given I take, and what is to be spent I spend. In this way I spare myself all anxiety about how far the money will reach; and on the day before the annual festival I reckon up." As a theory this is subject to grave objections, and requires unusual conditions; but in Mr. Harms' case it worked well. It requires a larger faith, a deeper mutual confidence, a more genuine simplicity and wisdom, than are readily found; but granted that under certain circumstances it is possible, and there is no doubt of its superior ease—above all of the advantage it gives of a more habitual, personal dependence upon God. His parish supported him with an unsurpassed devotion and self-sacrifice. Some of his parishioners have handed him £50 and £100 at once; some who had no money have presented him with property; and all have laid their gifts down in the open and generous spirit of the early Church; they gave, indeed, what they had, and with a patient and cheerful stinting of themselves that, were it general, would revolutionise our missions. "A short time ago," he once wrote, "I had to pay a merchant on behalf of the missions 550 thaler, and when the day drew near I had only 400. Then I prayed to the Lord Jesus that He would provide me with the deficiency. On the day before, three letters were brought; one from Schwerin with twenty, one from Buckeburg with twenty-five, and one from Berlin with one hundred crowns. The donors were anonymous. On the evening of the same day, a labourer brought me ten thaler, so that I have not only enough, but five over." "Last year," he said in 1858, "I needed 15,000 thaler, and the Lord gave me that and sixty over; this year I needed double, and the Lord has given me double and 140 over." He has never withdrawn from his work for want of means; as it has expanded he has always found his means expand. And this will be best seen from the accompanying table:—

	Expenditure.	Income.	Profit of the Printing Press, includ d in Income.
	Thaler.	Thaler.	Thaler.
1854	14,950*	15,000	
1855	9,642	9,722	
1856	14,878	14,978	
1857	14,781	14,796	
1858	30,993	31,133	
1859	30,432	33,065	2,600
1860	28,136	31,582	3,785
1861	36,503	39,476	9,707
1862	42,838	40,012†	3,094
1863	37,135	40,321	4,765
1864	38,709	40,904	4,000
1865	37,870	40,618‡	4,114
	336,867	351,607	32,075
	£50,530	£52,741	£4,811

Besides money, an extraordinary variety of other gifts was poured into the treasury. Clothing, farm produce, school-books, and endless *et ceteras* accumulated for the annual meeting each year. § If there was building to be done, tradesmen gave their time and farmers their horses. Nothing apparently that could be given was withheld.

It is surprising to read of gifts so various, and confusing in their prodigality; but it is at least as surprising that the mission has been maintained for so little. At the two mission houses and farms there are about 70 people, 48 of them students; at the Refuge farm for the prisoners about 20; about 160 settlers have been sent out to Africa, and those of them who are missionaries are of course entirely dependent on Herrmannsburg; there are about thirty stations—New Herrmannsburg, the oldest, having a population of 109; and these missionaries have been equipped and transported, the ship built and maintained, churches and dwelling-houses erected; upwards of 50,000 acres taken in Africa, and a farm purchased at home; a printing-press set up, and commodious buildings finished for the missionaries in training. To obtain

* Including the building of the ship.

† A deficit covered by a balance in hand.

‡ For 10 months only. And this exclusive of two donations, one of 2,000 thaler, since paid; and a legacy of 2,500, left by a yeoman who had wished to sell his farm and enter the mission-house; but, hindered in that, had bequeathed this sum, payable at the end of last year.

§ Here, for example, is the curious collection for last year:—"Shirts, 720; shifts, 132; children's shirts, 65; frocks, 170; bedticks, 50; pillow-ticks, 40; sheets, 50; pieces of linen, 42; pieces of towelling, 15; linens, 110; towels, 37; pocket-handkerchiefs, 110; neckcloths, 220; aprons, 48; coats, 24; woman's dress, 1; woollen stockings, 800 pair; women's and children's caps, 65 (including 3 golden); a greatcoat, some waistcoats, under-jackets, twine, thread, woollen yarn, sewing needles, knitting needles, steel pens, copy-books, books, cups, plates, thimbles, toys, children's stuff, many sacks of wheat, buckwheat, linseed, and peas; calves, geese, butter, fresh and dried fruit, beef, cabbage, turnips of various sorts, wheaten meal, eggs, sausages, bacon, lard, ham, honey, hay, straw, and firewood.

these results for the money that was spent shows very clearly not only a wise administration, but the advantage of a parochial mission. The official expenditure was reduced to the minimum, and on Mr. Harms' theory there was no expense in collecting funds. Deputations and travelling secretaries were unknown. The missionaries were sent out loaded with affectionate gifts, more like sons leaving home for a new country than so many clergymen at given salaries and fixed outfits; and they were ready and urged to live simply, busily, and roughly, to beware of being fine ladies and gentlemen, and to remember that they had been plain people of the Heath. It would be too much to expect many parishes like that in Hanover; yet the parochial working of our missions might be more developed. It would not only be an economy, but a gain to the simplicity and the spirit of the work. It would require, indeed, men with something of Mr. Harms' temper, his devotion, energy and self-sacrifice. Of men exactly like him the Church has produced few.

He was charged with the entire collection and distribution of the money; he maintained a constant correspondence with all the stations; he superintended much of the education of the missionary students: controlled and planned for the Asylum; edited and wrote most of his *Missionary Magazine*; and watched the printing press. Sometimes for a year together he would thus be chained to his desk twelve hours a day. It was already more than one man's labour; he was secretary, treasurer, principal, committee, and something over. Yet this was merely an addition to the work of pastor that he undertook at his ordination and carried out with unflinching fidelity and pains. His sermons were carefully studied and written in a clear hand, though fifteen to sixteen pages of large octavo in print did not occupy half that space—even unabbreviated—in manuscript. They had a large circulation, for of the two years' that were published the press threw off more than 30,000 copies; and they bear every mark of care, and of accurate, painstaking, faithful teaching. And besides, he found leisure for much reading and for antiquarian pursuits of a nature proverbially tedious. He had never married, he said he was too busy; and it is doubtful if one so energetic and self-consuming would not have felt home ties a burthen; if he would have been satisfied with a wife less actively employed. He had nothing to fall back upon but work; and yet there is a joyous ringing sound in his words, a hearty laughter, a free and quiet humour that almost imply leisure and rest. And they are the more noticeable because his health was indifferent. From the hour of his conversion he scarcely had a day without pain. He was smitten by protracted and most painful sicknesses, so that those who knew him would wonder how it was that a man should suffer so much. The thin, sunken, wasted cheeks, the deep eyes, the firm calm will about the mouth on which there often broke the sweetest smile, the pained look that wore away under the constant enthusiasm, were familiar to all the parish, and they carried a gentle message to every sufferer. No constitution could hold out at such a rate of living, and his friends began to fear that each public appearance would be the last. The tall figure and elastic step were not met so often on the Heath. Then the mission meeting came round last June, and he was wheeled to the church in a chair. He could not climb the pulpit, but preached from the communion table. Preaching there as late as the 5th of November, he sighed, "O Lord Jesus, if I can no longer preach take me from the earth. Of what use can I be, if I can no longer speak of Thee to my brethren?" Soon after, he accompanied a funeral. The next was his own. His death was the first rest he had taken, "dead-tired and dead-faint, an old man of fifty-seven years, but a young man in the fire of his spirit. The last hours of his life were full of unspeakable pains, but his mouth overflowed with prayers. His last prayer was, *Help me, O God, always; make me ready for everlasting joy and felicity. Come, Lord Jesus. I can bear it no more.* Neither his consciousness nor his faith was disturbed for an instant, and as he slept away at last his wish was fulfilled, *O Lord, in pains of death, grant me a quiet countenance. Help me, that when my heart breaks it may break softly, and my life go out like a light, without other woe, quenched in the innocent blood that Thou didst shed for me.*"

"We cannot believe," said his friends, "that our Harms is dead." Herrmannsburg had filled up every year, for two long summer days of mission festival. The people poured by thousands into the streets of the quiet village, a peasant's festival, Harms said; "distinguished and high people did not come, townspeople only a few. There were even few pastors; elsewhere hundreds go; but there will be twenty, or at most thirty, with us." They heard him preach and read his report; they heard the head of the mission-house with his statistics; they sang, and listened to the choir of forty voices, as they lifted up their glorious chorales to accompanying harmony of trumpets blown by the peasant-students; they joined in their fervent liturgy; and after service in and out of church, that lasted from morning till night, the kindly, hospitable village received its guests, and found mysterious room for them all. By daybreak the next morning, the murmur of family worship broke through the street; and in the early sun all the villagers and their guests poured out along some quiet road cleft through the purple heather; and from every farm and by-path a rivulet of people flowed into the stream. Thus they went on, singing their hymns by the way, till in some secluded vale they halted, and till near sunset the time was spent in hearing missionary addresses, varied with psalms and prayers. On these days Harms was especially the moving spirit; every one looked for him—every one felt his presence. On the 17th of last November a greater crowd than ever filled the streets: but no joy streamed from their faces; people moved and met in silence; tears stood in almost every eye. "The darling of the Christian people, the father of his congregation and the mission, the great teacher of the Church was no more. He lay in a little room of the voiceless vicarage; on his face the grave earnestness of death and the peace of God. Neither wife nor children wept about his bier, but his spiritual children took their place. The coffin was borne away covered with flowers and crowns, and burning lights upon it. Then rose the deep psalm, more wept than sung—

'All men that live must also die.'

It was one of his favourites, that he had sung hundreds of times as he followed his own children to the grave. . . . . My brother once said 'We pastor's children have no home on earth. When the father dies, we must leave the house where we were born. But we have another home in our dear church!' So the body lay in this home, and round it stood the thirty preachers, and his mission students, and in and about the church many thousands. Beloved Niemann was present to represent the High Court of the Consistory, and by charge of the royal family to lay upon the coffin five palms and five wreaths from the King and Queen, the Crown Prince, and the Princesses. And then, with solemn words and broken prayers and solemn psalms they buried him. 'A dear heart is stilled, a precious life is over.'"

"What was it," said Niemann, "that made his lips eloquent, that gave his teaching a living sincerity, his words a mighty force, his often eager voice ever the sweetest tone? What was it that flamed in his rebukes, that quickened his entreaties, that breathed in his simple prayers and drew the soul up with him to God? What else than that *to him to live was Christ?* What was it that made his heart the heart of his people, that helped him to share all the sorrow and want and sin of the parish and of every one in it with warm sympathy, that led him after the erring, and made him the most welcome visitor to the sick and afflicted, that helped him to receive with gentle kindness the weak and fallen, that made him seek out the publicans and sinners, that made the doubting and despised cling to him, and the penitent and anxious open their hearts, and gave him to see many a sinner turned from the error of his ways, and many a soul saved from death? What else than that *to him to live was Christ?* What was it that made him work with such self-denial and sacrifice for the kingdom of God, that made him find in it his highest joy, his peace, his all, that helped him to carry it on year by year, day by day, and even hour by hour, without the need of rest, that kept him from forgetting the near in the far, and the far in the near, reaching out to Christians and heathen the same helpful hand, that enabled him to kindle in many a heart the like spirit of sacrifice for the mission work, so that the people builded mission houses with their own hands, and he builded up this parish of Herrmannsburg into an evangelical mission parish? What else than that *to him to live was Christ?* What was it that kept him undaunted by any difficulty, made him fear no want, held him unmoved by mockery, contradiction, contempt, and laughter of the world, made him cleave bravely to his plan through whatever struggle with the powers of darkness, that held together the perishable tabernacle so that he faithfully carried out his manifold work through many trials, and unspeakable afflictions and bodily pains, and never left it till his last breath, and when he lay prostrate would rise again, and run and not be weary, and walk and not faint? It was this, that *to him to live was Christ.*"

W. Fleming Stevenson.

THE HEAD OF THE HOUSE.

A sadder scene can hardly be fancied than that of a young king mounting a throne with scarcely a thought of the responsibility of the office. In spite of the awkwardness and almost absurdity of the act, there was something morally graceful in the modesty of Saul hiding himself among the stuff when the lot fell on him to be king of Israel. In all Solomon's life, there was no incident more beautiful than the scene at Gibeon, when, with his father's great gifts and experience full in his eye, he said to God, "Thou hast made Thy servant king instead of David my father, and I am but a little child. *Give, therefore, thy servant an understanding heart.*" On the other hand, for a man to jump into a throne as carelessly as a boy leaps upon a wall, or a practised horseman vaults into a saddle, betrays a nature fearfully shallow, and shows a sad insensibility to the results that will spring from a good reign on the one hand, or from a wicked, or it may be only a careless, one on the other.

And yet there is nothing more common. In saying this, I am not thinking of the two or three dozen of crowned heads among whom, as the Almanac shows us, the territories of Europe are divided. I am thinking of kings whose name is Legion, although they have none of the insignia of royalty, and although not one in a hundred, perhaps, ever suspects that he occupies a throne. I am thinking of the careless spirit in which so many wield the *domestic* sceptre, and exercise the prerogatives of the Head of a Family. For that is a real kingly office. Whoever becomes the head of a house, becomes a ruler by divine right, and begins a career of sovereignty, limited, no doubt, in its area, and modified in its degree, but not the less real, the effects of which may possibly last through all time and through all eternity. The poorest labourer in the land, who shares the end of a cottage with a wife and children, exercises an influence on comfort and character which can never be traced to its end; either on the one hand fitting and helping them for the part for which God has designed them, enlarging their talents, and wisely guiding them in the application of their energies; or, on the other, destroying their capacity for good, quenching their best aspirations, souring their warm affections, driving them to evil,—perhaps completing their ruin for time and for eternity.

I wonder how many of those who occupy the family-throne have any serious thoughts of this kind. No statistics of Registrars can answer the question, or even throw a gleam of light on it. The gradual manner in which family responsibilities come on people often causes them to be little thought of; and, except in the case of serious natures, the first step, the forming of the marriage-tie, is not connected with much earnest thought. Certainly we have no desire

to do away with the gladsome feelings that throw a rainbow, as it were, round the marriage-altar, and give something of the visible bloom of Eden to one of the few institutions that are left to remind us of its brightness and its bliss. But we do desire very much that the matter were habitually looked at also on its solemn side; that in mounting the family throne men would think more of the power they are assuming to make or to mar, to benefit or to injure, to bless or to curse the members of their domestic circle; would remember that, according as they are left to themselves or helped by God, they will either freeze the hearts, embitter the lives, and ruin the souls of those about them, or help to turn their existence into a long summer day, and make earth, even with all its sorrows and trials, the vestibule of heaven.

For what is there, next to the purity and efficiency of the Christian Church, on which the true welfare and prosperity of a community depend so much, as the *wholesomeness* of the influences at work in our homes? Goldsmith could plausibly enough make light of the influence of civil rulers and their laws on the every-day happiness of men:—

> "How small, of all that human hearts endure,
> That part which laws or kings can cause or cure!"

But he could not have said so of domestic kings and family laws. The human plant can no more than the plants of the garden dispense in early life with the due proportions of light and heat, air and moisture, congenial soil, shelter, and training. One night's frost may inflict irreparable injury on the young rose or geranium, and one fierce blast of passion may leave on a child's nature traces of evil never to be remedied. The hardiest plant, if constantly exposed to bitter winds, will show a stunted growth that will seldom disappear, even if it be transplanted to the richest soil and the finest shelter; and the most promising child, if mismanaged at home, will not often be what it might have been, whatever advantages it may enjoy in after life. In particular cases, neglect or pernicious treatment at home may be compensated for by other things, but not as a general rule. A few children may have physical constitutions strong enough to withstand the cold and damp of constant exposure, even although they be clothed in rags, destitute of regular food, and compelled for want of better accommodation to sleep on stairs or in stables, or wherever they can obtain a casual shelter; but such treatment would be fatal to at least nine children out of ten. Instances are not wanting of young persons, who have been reared in most wretched homes, turning out patterns of goodness and trying to guide in the ways of wisdom the wayward wanderers that should have guided them; but such instances are as rare as they are touching. Usually the damage is irreparable that results to the young from evil or even careless example at home: from the sight of vice or idleness, from the influence of a violent temper, from a spirit that shows no consideration for them, and takes no interest in them, and from the want of all regard to the sanctities of religion and the solemnities of eternity.

These facts are now so generally acknowledged that it is almost superfluous to advert to them. The deep impression they have made is seen in the earnest efforts of Christian philanthropists to enlighten and to guide one of the members of the domestic co-partnery in the duties incumbent on her. Wherever Christian zeal shows her banner, mothers' meetings are at work beneath it. If the excellent ladies by whom these meetings are carried on can succeed by God's blessing in kindling in mothers a sense of their duty as helpers of the head of the house, and as practically entrusted with most of the details of the training of their children, they will confer on them and on the community an inestimable benefit. But amid all that is said and done in these days about mothers, it must not be forgot that it is the man that by divine right is constituted head of the house. It is necessary that the man be reminded of the responsibility that lies on him, and urged to carry it out in all its branches. As husband, as father, and as master, there are duties incumbent on him that cannot be done by deputy. Details, in most instances, may be devolved on others; but the guiding, superintending power should be in the hands where God places the responsibility. I would fain speak a few pointed and earnest words to the heads of families on the momentous office they are called to fill; deeply feeling, as I do so, how far short anything I may write must fall of what is due to the importance of the subject.

I.

I begin with the head of the house in his capacity of Husband. I do not know how it is that there is such a disposition to treat this subject with levity; so much so, that one can hardly set one's self to write gravely upon it without feeling pretty sure of raising a smile. Is there not something vulgar in this disposition—something characteristic of those who look at things in their outer aspects and relations, and have little insight into what is deeper and more refined? In the Bible, at least, and particularly in the New Testament, there is no trace of such a tendency. St. Paul adverts to the husband's duty in the very highest connexion, and elevates it by comparisons and sanctions that in an uninspired writer would seem almost profane. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word; that he might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Our first impression on reading these words probably is, what a magnificent pattern they furnish for a very ordinary duty! Perhaps there is a feeling that the pattern is just rather too fine for the purpose. It looks somewhat as if a painter of village sign-posts were told to make each a copy of some master-piece of Titian or Rubens. But this is only a first impression; when we think what can be the reason for it, we remember the wretched nature of the fellowship that often subsisted in Eastern countries between husband and wife; we remember that often before marriage they knew nothing of each other,—perhaps had never even met; and that their married life was very frequently spent in cold indifference, if not in open hostility and strife. We think, too, how

miserable it is still, when those who are one flesh are anything but one in spirit or affection; and how necessary it is, in order that the Christian home may be what it should be—an abode of all Christian graces, a nursery of all Christian worth and beauty,—that the heads of it, instead of living at variance, should be bound by the warm ties of love to each other. And as want of love is more liable to characterise the husband than the wife, we see the fitness of his being urged to his duty by the presentation of so high a pattern—"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church."

Christianity was evidently designed to introduce a higher style of family life than the world had ever known. And for the accomplishment of this, it throws its sweetening influence into the fountain, and having healed the bitter waters there, it provides for the purity of the streams. And let us mark how emphatically the Apostle brings this out, that the husband's love for his wife must resemble in its quality that of Christ for his Church. That is to say, it must be unselfish; it must be a love that seeks the good of its object. That is the great feature of Christ's love for his Church. Very often man's love is little better than a selfish desire. In such a case, what he regards is his own happiness, not his wife's; he desires her because he thinks she will add to his enjoyment, not from any wish to add to hers. But Christ's love is of quite different quality; He looks away from Himself, He considers her. The great desire of His heart is that it may be well with her; for that purpose, He has sacrificed Himself for her, He has given Himself up to death. For that purpose, He takes the utmost pains with her training, and seeks to have her fitted for the high place she is to fill. It is this love that is presented as the husband's model. Husbands, love your wives with this holy love; ever seeking their real welfare, their true spiritual good; ready to sacrifice your comfort to their benefit; anxious that in casting in their lot with you, their character shall sustain no damage; that in sharing your burdens, their back shall not be broken; that in becoming the partners of your cares the lustre of their spirituality shall not be dimmed; praying that married life may prove to them a school for higher attainments, stronger faith, higher courage, deeper love, greater patience, greater prayerfulness; longing above all things to see them as Christ longs to see his bride—holy and without blemish, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

It is plain, therefore, that no head of a family is doing his duty if in his heart there are no active feelings of this kind towards the partner of his home. And beyond all doubt the expenditure required is one that will bring an ample return. If it be the nature of all human beings to respond in some measure to the influence of love, it is pre-eminently the nature of woman. Her readiness to bear toil and self-denial, if only she have the love of those for whom they are borne, is proverbial. Drudgery ceases to be drudgery, and sacrifice to be sacrifice, if only love overshadows her. What a wonderful change in homes innumerable would result from the active exercise of this spirit on the part of the husband toward the wife! To how many a heart would any expression of sympathy from a long-careless husband come like the breath of spring! What new joys as of Paradise itself would thrill through her being, to hear him express his regret that he had thought of her welfare so little, and his earnest desire in future to consult for her highest good. With what new heart and hope would she spring forward to her routine of duty! And what precious results would flow from this unity of heart to their household. We may well conceive them singing,—

> Now is the winter of our discontent
> Made glorious summer by this sun of love;
> And all the clouds that lowered upon our house
> In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.

II.

The second function of the head of the house, is that of Father. How is he to discharge his duty to his children? How is he to make the group of young persons entrusted to his charge a happy and a holy commonwealth—living in the fear of God, and in favour with all good men?

By far the most important step in this direction will be taken, if he regard his authority over his children as a solemn trust, committed to him by God; if, under this conviction, he exercise the trust as God's deputy or viceroy, ruling his house, as far as possible, in God's own spirit, and making it his great aim in the management of his children not to gratify any mere wish of his own, but to promote the ends which God would accomplish, to make them what God would have them to be.

Does it need to be proved that the father's authority is a trust committed to him by God? Is not the family relation altogether a thing of God's formation? Human beings might each have been created separately, or in full maturity, like the angels, or like Adam and Eve; but by Divine arrangement they come into the world as infants, the very symbols of helplessness and witlessness. What then? Is God chargeable with forming human beings without the strength and the wisdom needed for self-preservation? By no means. His arrangement is, that in place of giving these directly and at once to the children, he gives them for a time *in trust* to the parents. The surplus strength and wisdom of the parents is a trust-fund they are to administer for the benefit of their offspring. As each is placed by God in the parental arms the charge is given—I constitute you my trustees for the rearing of this young life, this seedling of immortality, which I might have placed under my angels in heaven, but which I have chosen to entrust to you, that your hands may work for him, your heart may cherish him, your head may think for him, your eye may watch him, and your faith bear him on its wings to heaven! "Bring up this child for me, and I will pay thee thy wages."

If then the authority of the father is a divine trust, by all means let it be exercised in God's own spirit. Let the Heavenly Father be our pattern and example, and let the mode of rule in his family be the standard in ours. And what is the mode of rule in his family? It is marked by a wonderful com-

bination of two qualities—authority and love. Authority, not merely recommending or advising, but requiring that its will be obeyed; but that authority the very reverse of a selfish despotism—an authority steeped in love, based on the deepest interest in us and the tenderest sympathy, and aiming in every arrangement at our good. So let it be in your parental rule. Let the claim of authority be asserted, especially in the earlier years of your government; but let it not be the despotism of selfishness, let it be the rule of love. Let your children not be forced to submit simply because they are weak and you are strong, and because you are selfishly determined that in your own house your will shall prevail; but let love soften the rigour of law, and smooth the way for its fulfilment; let them have ground for believing that whatever you require of them is determined by a loving regard for their welfare; and as years pass on, let their feelings crystallize into a settled confidence in you, as one who has uniformly tried to avoid whatever would have hurt them, and done everything in your power to promote their good.

If you thus try to exercise your authority in God's spirit you are pretty sure to direct it to God's ends. The selfish objects for which many fathers train their children will be carefully eschewed. You will not rear them in order to their making a figure in the world. You will not make it your avowed wish or your secret aim, that they may become rich, or prosperous, or great. You will not desire simply that they may be useful to yourselves in the occupation which you follow. Your heart will rise to the high end expressed in the well-known words,—"Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him for ever." Your ruling desire will be that they may be truly united to the Son of God, who came to seek and to save the lost; that, through the Holy Spirit, their nature may be renewed, and, rich in all pure feelings and holy desires, they may pursue through life whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; that they may diffuse a blessed fragrance wherever Providence may order their lot; and bequeath to those that follow them the memory of the just, and an example which all good men shall delight to honour.

In the busy times in which our lot is cast, it is neither easy nor possible for many fathers to attend personally to all the details connected with the early training of their children. A great share of this training must, of course, devolve upon the mother. But let not the father infer that he is excused from actively concerning himself in the rearing and training of his family. There are some things that he may do and ought to do, without trenching on the time and strength that are ordinarily taken up in his daily employment. Of these things, perhaps the most important of all is, to give, by his own life and example, a true Christian tone and character to the whole economy of the household. Let him be seen and known in his family as an earnest, faithful follower of the Lord. Let his whole life proclaim that he bows to God's authority, that he believes in Jesus Christ, that he strives daily after conformity to God's will, that his rule of life is to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God. And let there be no visible and glaring inconsistency with his profession. Let him be a true man. Let there never be veiled under the cloak of religion a mean worldly greed, or a low selfish aim. Let there be no lax principles in the daily life, no lack of self-control, no habitual outbreaks of peevishness, no gusts of passion. Let his life be so thoroughly Christian, that if ever his children shall be tempted to disbelief, they shall never be able to get over the argument supplied by his genuine and steadfast piety, by the even tenour of his blameless life, by the holy beauty of his consistent example. Such a man, though he should not come often into close contact with his children, would be a tower of strength on the side of religion; a silent power, like the magnetic pole, that would draw his family with resistless attraction.

But even where a minute charge may not be taken of the training of each child, much may be done in the way of superintending and directing the whole process on the part of others. Many a Christian mother will tell us, that though her husband did not personally do much, he gave her his counsel and support, especially in cases of difficulty, and by this means very greatly strengthened her hands. Anything more blameworthy can hardly be conceived than the conduct of a father who leaves to the mother the entire management of the children, and, instead of counsel and encouragement, gives her nothing but words of impatience when she makes allusion to her difficulties. Let the father be the busiest of men, he is bound to take all the care he can that a right method be followed in the nurture of the family; that their minds be imbued, while yet young and tender, with the great truths and lessons of the Gospel; that their hearts be neither soured by constant chiding, nor relaxed by indiscriminate indulgence; that scope be given to their joyous feelings and sportive tendencies; that their errors be corrected and their wilful faults restrained and punished; that they be trained in the love and practice of all that is good and true, and the cordial hatred of whatever is mean and wicked; that they be warned against the snares and temptations that beset the young, both open and concealed; that they practise the reading of the Bible, and secret prayer; that they reverence God's day, and attend his house; and that, when come to years, they be solemnly dealt with to give themselves to Christ, and bind themselves personally and deliberately in a holy covenant to Him. Whatever of this he may be able to do in person, the Christian head of a family is at the least bound to charge himself with the duty of using his best efforts to have it done by some means.

There is one day in the week that to most fathers is free from ordinary employment. And it is one of the ways in which the purpose of this day may be answered, and happy and hallowed feelings may be associated with it, when it is made a day of affectionate family intercourse, as well as of religious exercise and employment. Of things to be avoided on that day, the straggling and scattering of families should surely be one. Let them spend it, as far as may be, toge-

ther. Let the heads of the family encourage the development of family interest and affection on that day, as well as of those feelings which are more immediately directed to God. Among other things, let there be some simple Bible exercise in which all the family are brought together, and in which all, or almost all, can take a part. Let the father head the procession that moves to the house of God, and be seen sitting there with his family, or alternating with the mother, if both cannot be in church together. Let him see that the sacred day is devoted to its great Divine ends, but take care, at the same time, not to overlay the spirit of cheerfulness that in children pre-eminently is the condition and the expression of happiness. Sundays so spent will be looked back on with a serene and holy satisfaction, as remote as can be conceived from the empty restlessness of those who, careless alike of the claims of God and their duty to their family, devote the day to mere selfish pleasure.

III.

The third function of the head of the house, is that of MASTER. The relation of master and servant is constituted by a voluntary agreement on certain definite points; but, as every one knows, besides what is in the bond a good deal more is required to give it a thoroughly Christian character.

But whatever *is* in the bond, let it be carefully discharged. "Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal;" and never let the reproach go forth against you, "Behold the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them that have reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." There is such inexpressible meanness in the conduct of those who try to effect a miserable saving by starving their servants, or by placing them in apartments or rather holes, hurtful to health and dangerous to life, that we cannot fancy any of our readers in so disgraceful a position.

But most masters expect from their servants a good deal more than is in the bond, and if they would have their expectations fulfilled, they must be prepared to give more, too, on their part. If more is wanted than hired work, more must be given than the hireling's pay. Servants like Eliezer of Damascus are not to be had at a fixed price at the register office. The dollar is not almighty here. I believe it is only under the shade, or rather the sunshine of such natures as those of Abraham and Sarah that such servants as Eliezer are formed or found. A thoughtful, considerate, affectionate man, feeling as much interest in his master's family as if it were his own, delighting to be of service to Isaac, though he had cut him out of the succession to his master's property, and to take steps for continuing the line of the family whose possessions would otherwise have been his own. The Bible gives us not a few glimpses of such servants: Deborah, Rebekah's nurse; the captive maid in Naaman's household that told her mistress of the prophet in Israel; Ebedmelech, the Ethiopian, that pitied Jeremiah, and had him drawn from the dungeon; Onesimus, the Christian slave, once indeed unprofitable, but so changed by God's grace as to become, in St. Paul's words to his master, "profitable to thee and to me." In servants of this type we may see the fruit of high Christian principle. I remember being once told by one who in early life had been a servant in a well-known family, that when her mistress first engaged her, she made a bargain with her to devote so much time to prayer, as the first thing each morning, for, she said, if you are not faithful to your Master in Heaven, you cannot be faithful to me. But further, if servants are desired of a willing, genial, thoughtful character, sympathy must be shown towards them by their employers, and arrangements made for the free development of the legitimate feelings of their nature. Friendly bonds must be woven between master and servant. The master that always speaks to his servants in the cold distant terms of authority can never expect to secure the considerate regard of that servant for himself and his family. When the master's house is but another name for a servant's prison, when no home-feelings can twine round it, when every natural instinct is driven in, when no species of relaxation, however harmless, ever comes to break the monotony of service, how is it possible for the servant's nature to develop freely or healthily? Then there is the danger of an opposite extreme,—masters exercising no moral or social control over their servants, and allowing an almost unlimited license as to hours and relaxations. Happy the household which has found the golden mean! Where, on the part of the masters, there is an unselfish desire for the temporal and spiritual welfare of the servants, and a human interest is felt in them, as partakers of the same nature, and sharers of the same cravings as their employers. Where pains are taken to instruct the ignorant, and enourage the backward. Where the value of their souls is recognised, the value of their character, and the value of their happinesss. Where it is earnestly sought that their contact with the family, be it of longer or of shorter duration, shall not only give them a tasting of sober and steady enjoyment, but shall impart to them principles that give an upward bearing to the whole life, and make the path like the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day.

IV.

Called as the head of the house is to functions so high and so difficult, what can be more incumbent on him than to ask very earnestly from above the grace and the wisdom needed for their right discharge?

Let him survey his work deliberately, and ponder its responsibilities, its dangers, and its privileges. All the three functions have very solemn issues, but let us limit our attention to one. Take the case of a single child. What delicate mechanism is inside that bosom, what harm will be done by unskilful handling, and what good by successful training! Suppose you cross and fret his temper by vexatious interferences, you do more harm, you lay the foundation of more misery through life than if you should dislocate some of his joints and send him limping through life a cripple. Suppose you are too indulgent, and through weakness and want of nerve allow serious faults to grow unchecked, the hurt is more fatal than if his

body should be disfigured with horrible tumours. Suppose that selfishness gets the ascendant in your heart, and your life is governed by the single desire to please yourself. Suppose the world is allowed to fill your soul, and the whole influence of your example engages your child after you in the pursuit of shadows and vanities. Suppose, while you profess religion, your life and temper contradict the profession, and encourage him to nauseate what passes under that holy name. Do you not tremble at the thought of the mischief you may be doing to one you are so bound to love? Do you not feel how solemn a thing it is that you, who are yourself so full of sin and error, should be constituted the guide and guardian of so many besides? How earnest should your pleadings be at the throne of grace, and how firm the hold you take of the promise—"If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not."

And as you should pray for your household, so you should pray with them too. Family worship has ever been recognised as at once the badge and the stronghold of the Christian house. Like every other mode of Divine service, it may be abused or corrupted, and made to present a mere dead form in place of a living spirit. But in its true ideal it is a blessed privilege, and specially helpful to the head of the house. Here the whole family go hand in hand, as it were, to their common Father, and looking up, through Christ, on his reconciled countenance, thank Him for all their mercies; thank Him for their peaceful nights and tranquil days, for health preserved or health restored, for the door of heaven set open, for the beams of coming glory that even now brighten earth's dull path, for Jesus Christ, God's unspeakable gift, and for all the promises that in Him are yea, and in Him amen. Here they go together to lay their hands by faith on the head of the Lamb of God, and to receive the grace and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Here, when encompassed with distress and trouble, they come for relief to their father's bosom; pressed by anxiety, they ask direction; here they remember each other's sorrows and weaknesses or duties; here, separated in body, with oceans rolling between, they meet in spirit; here they commend each other to the eye that neither slumbers nor sleeps; and even when the wings of death are fluttering over their dwelling, they find a joy unspeakable and full of glory. Alas, that so blessed a service should be so rare, especially in the families of the poor! That it is kept up in the more earnest of them, and greatly prized there, shows that if there were but a will, there would be a way of maintaining it in all. What a pagan, nay, worse than pagan aspect the absence of everything of the kind gives to many of the homes of Protestant Britain! The pagan had his household gods, symbols in some shape of his dependence on heaven. But what is there to remind one of heaven in the house where there is neither family Bible nor family altar? It is not likely that, in the absence of these, there will be much of God's Spirit, or that hearts and lives will be so carefully ordered as to show that formal service may be dispensed with there.

I cannot refrain from closing this paper with a hymn of Spitta's. I should like above all that its spirit were left in the reader's heart, and its rhythm in his ears.

I.

O happy house, O home supremely blest,
Where Thou, Lord Jesus Christ, art entertained
As the most welcome and beloved guest,
With true devotion and with love unfeigned,
Where all hearts beat in unison with thine,
Where eyes grow brighter as they look on Thee;
Where all are ready, at the slightest sign,
To do thy will, and do it heartily.

II.

O happy house, where man and wife are one,
Thro' love of Thee, in spirit, heart, and mind,
Together joined by holy bands, which none,
Nor death itself, can sever or unbind;
Where both on Thee unfailingly depend,
In weal and woe, in good and evil days,
And hope with Thee eternity to spend,
In sweet communion and eternal praise.

III.

O happy house, where with the hands of prayer
Parents commit their children to the Friend,
Who, with a more than mother's tender care,
Will watch and keep them safely to the end;
Where they are taught to sit at Jesus' feet,
And listen to the words of life and truth,
And learn to lisp His praise in accents sweet
From early childhood to advancing youth.

IV.

O happy house, where men and maid pursue
Their daily labours as unto the Lord;
Divining only that whate'er they do
May be according to His will and word;
As servants, yet as friends and brethren too,
Their love with deep humility combined;
No less in little than in great things true,
They serve Him gladly with a willing mind.

V.

O happy house, where Thou dost share the weal,
Where none forget Thee, whatsoe'er befall;
O happy house, where Thou the wounds dost heal,
The Healer and the Comforter of all;
Till every one his stated part hath done,
And all at length shall peacefully depart
To the bright realms where Thou thyself art gone,
The Father's house where Thou already art.

W. G. Blaikie.

A WATCHMAN'S GLANCE EASTWARD AND WESTWARD.

WATCHMEN are needed in many kinds of work, and among many classes of workers. In ancient times, and in pastoral countries, the conception was associated chiefly with shepherds and their flocks: in our day it more readily attaches itself to the occupation of soldiers and sailors.

The watch is a first necessity in war. By maintaining it, the weak have often proved victorious; by neglecting it, the strong have often been lost. In 1860, a small army of French and English penetrated to the capital of China, and dictated terms to the Emperor in his own palace. In camp or on march, that handful of skilful warriors were safe as long as they kept watch by night and day; if they had been even once caught off their guard, they would have been swallowed up by the myriads that hung on their skirts, like Pharaoh's army when the Red Sea's water walls collapsed. Such is the situation of the Christian Church—and such the situation of a believing man in the world. The watchful have no cause to fear; but the careless will certainly suffer loss. To be on our guard makes all the Redeemer's strength our own; to be off our guard leaves us exposed to the enemy who goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Satan could never cause a soul to stumble, if he did not surprise a soul asleep.

In like manner, as seamen need to keep a constant outlook for rocks and currents until they enter the gates of the harbour, so Christians, in their individual as well as their corporate capacity, need to watch and pray lest they should drift with some tendency of the age, or be overcome by some sudden strong temptation. No disaster can be compared to the shipwreck of the soul.

The question addressed to the watchman in the vision of the burden of Dumah (Isa. xxi. 11), has reference generally to night—"Watchman, what of the night?" The sense ordinarily attached to the metaphor in its moral application, points to the darkness and consequent danger of night, in contrast with the light and consequent comparative safety of day. This conception is both true and obvious; but the figure contains another equally true, though not so obvious. Assuming the reference which is manifest, I request attention to another which is somewhat veiled.

The night has a larger world than the day. It is only when we limit our view to the surface of this one planet that we associate night with darkness. The night that hides things at hand, reveals things distant; the night that covers earth, opens heaven. Our business with this world must be done in the day-time; but our intercourse with other worlds must be maintained by night. Night accordingly is the astronomer's period of activity; while the labourer who digs among the clods is bending homeward his weary steps for rest, the philosopher who marks the motions of the stars is setting out to his employment on his own appropriate field. The bright sun-light which reveals this earth, conceals the universe.

Astronomy began with shepherds. Their nightly watching while fellow-men were asleep, threw them upon the stars for company. It was when shut out from earth that they became acquainted with heaven. To shepherds watching their flocks by night the heavenly host announced the birth of Jesus.

Strange as the announcement may at first appear, the Sabbath is in this aspect like the night. It veils off for a time things near and earthly that things spiritual and eternal may come into view. Like night, the Sabbath covers up and sets aside the business of this world; while it opens heaven to man's upward gaze, and invites him to examine all its glories.

"Watchman, what of the night?" The night in this question intimates, in one aspect, that dangers are rife around; but it may also be permitted to suggest that the attention of the watchman is called not to things seen and temporal, but to things unseen and eternal. The question does not regard the affairs of time; they may be better observed by day. Watchman, overlooking the immediately surrounding cares, what shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed, lift your eye upward, and cast your eye forward, and tell us, as far as human observation can reach, how it goes with the Kingdom of God in the world.

From the watch-tower let us search the horizon, and mark the objects of interest that lie on it.

Not, indeed, the distant East and paganism. Let Asia and Africa be supposed for the present to lie beneath our horizon. We look to Europe on the one side, and America on the other. Two objects, one on either of these two continents, tower above all others, and attract the observer's view. Two species of slavery, one the bondage of the soul, and the other the bondage of the body, have seemed for a long time to defy God and to destroy men on these continents. Let us look upon them separately and successively as they wage war against the Kingdom of Christ, and mark how He who sits King upon the floods, makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and restrains the remainder thereof. The Papal power oppressing Europe, and the system of slavery that rent America, are, for the past season, the bulkiest objects that lie within the watchman's view.

1. The Papacy. At the present day this is a study of intense interest to a Christian. If the student has no political object to be attained, and no exaggerated alarm to sound, and no foregone conclusion to uphold, he cannot fail to profit by his researches. In presence of this gigantic oppression, two errors diverge in opposite directions, equally foolish and equally fatal, into one or other of which men, according to their several tendencies, are apt to fall. Some dread the Papacy too much, and some too little. The rule which the Scriptures give for keeping the golden mean under personal suffering, might be accommodated to the great apostasy. "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him." Of the public tyranny, as of the private suffering, the rule equally holds good, that we should

neither despise it on the one hand, nor faint before it on the other. We should neither boast as if we could overcome it, nor despair as if it were too strong for God.

God's goings as ruler of the world are in the deep; but to reverent inquirers some of his footprints occasionally appear. Mark them in the leading events of recent history.

In our own day the Papacy has been shaken, its territory circumscribed, and its resources dried up, in such measure as to make tyrants tremble, and persecuted Christians to sing aloud for joy. Italy, although not to any great extent so enlightened as to abandon Popery, has through all its borders thoroughly broken with the government of the Pope. At the Reformation the force that shook the Papacy began in men's souls and wrought outward: the force that shakes it to-day begins externally, among things temporal, but it may please God to employ these rendings on the surface as openings through which the word of life shall find its way to the nation's heart. We wait in hope for the end of the Lord. Meantime it is cause of fervent gratitude to God in every Christian heart, that, with the exception of Venetia and Rome, all Italy is open to the Bible and the Gospel.

More particularly note the recent course and present position of the two great Powers on which Popery has long depended for protection—Austria and France. In modern times the destinies of Europe have been mainly controlled under Providence by five great Powers. Of these, two are mainly Protestant, Britain and Prussia; two are Popish, France and Austria; and one, Russia, is neither Protestant nor Popish. On the political power and influence of the two great so-called Catholic monarchies, the throne of the Pope has been accustomed to lean in its difficulties. But in recent times, when its difficulties were at the height, these two Powers were arrayed against each other in the field of battle. Of these two, the Pope trusted the one, but feared the other. The one that he trusted succumbed; the one that he feared was victorious. The monarchy that has the will to support the Papacy lacks the power; and the monarchy that has the power lacks the will. With Austria the Pope would have been in a protector's arms; with France he has been in some sort in a jailer's hands.

Yet one step farther trace this strange history. The deeper you penetrate into the stratum of Providential sovereignty, the greater wonders will you discover. Two things were done about the same time some fifteen years ago, both at the time deemed the wisest means of strengthening the Papacy. One was the act of France; the other was the act of Austria. The one was the siege and occupation of Rome by the French army; the other was the *Concordat* concluded between the Austrian Government and the Pope. By the one, the Roman patriots were crushed, and the Pope reinstated as their despot; by the other, the vast territories and populations of the Austrian Empire were placed under the heel of the Pope and his cardinals. The privileges of many nations were wrenched away, and Italian priests constituted their virtual lawgivers.

Both secular governments were driving at selfish ends, while they masked their selfishness under the semblance of devotion to the Papacy. France needed the Pope's good will to keep the Gallican Church to its loyalty; and Austria needed the Pope's authority to keep down her subjects, ever bordering on insurrection.

But Ahithophel's counsel has on both sides been turned to foolishness. These two things have greatly contributed to the humiliation of the Pope. The Austrian Government has been so weakened by its base subserviency to the Papacy, that, so far from being able to support its tottering ally, it can hardly stand on its feet. The *Concordat* with Rome, it is well known, has done much to alienate the several nationalities of the Austrian Empire, and to produce the dead lock which for years has weakened its influence and even endangered its existence.* On the other side, Napoleon has turned out by no means a pleasant protector to the Pope. An observation on this point, profound and far-reaching in its nature, has been repeated so often that it has become common property, and I know not to whom we owe it. It is this: Had the Pope been swept away in the tide of the Italian war, sympathy with the unfortunate might have greatly modified, in the hearts of the Roman people, the disgust which his misgovernment was fitted to produce; but, by adding ten years to his lease, Napoleon, without knowing what he did, has afforded the Pope an opportunity, which that potentate has amply occupied, of wearing out and discharging from the heart of his subjects the lingering remnants of hereditary reverence for their priestly king. The blister left rankling for ten years on this spot of Italy, while the rest of her soil is free, will probably do much to widen and deepen the chasm between the Italian children and their self-styled Father.

But while these events that have taken place on the soil of Italy are deeply interesting and instructive, —while they have already told with effect on the spiritual system which has its head at Rome,—we must beware of over-estimating their importance. They

* Two or three years ago I lodged several nights in a small but comfortable hotel in St. Mark's Place, Venice, whose windows commanded a full view of the great square. My landlord was an intelligent German, of Austrian birth and Austrian sympathies. He informed me one afternoon that at a certain hour in the evening a grand display of music would be made in the centre of the square by the bands of the Austrian garrison. My host and I took our places at the open window half an hour before the time. Then the whole square was thronged by Venetians of all ages and all ranks, promenading and listening at times to small groups of volunteer Italian musicians. As the hour for the commencement of the Austrian concert approached, the people disappeared, as if by magic, and the square was left desolate. Into the empty space marched the military musicians, and performed their parts. My host confessed that the people refused to remain within ear-shot of music made by their task-masters. While the brass instruments of the soldiers were belching out their mighty notes, and glancing in the evening light, I pointed to the left, under the piazza of the Doge's Palace, where a row of polished brass guns stood loaded, with their ugly muzzles looking through the iron railing point blank upon the square, and their gunners standing on the alert behind them, remarking that the one set of brass instruments perhaps tended to make the other set sound less harmonious in Venetian ears. My host assented, and volunteered the remark that the Concordat with Rome was a mistake, and had done much to alienate the different nationalities from the Government of the Emperor.—It is announced in the English newspapers that a Monseigneur Paterson—what an odd match between a French ecclesiastical title and a plain English or Scotch patronymic, as bad as the yoking together of an ox and an ass, which was forbidden in the Hebrew polity—has been begging in Vienna for a Romish cathedral in London, and that his Apostolic Majesty has contributed £200—a very pious gift, to be sure; but it is taken out of borrowed money, for his Majesty's outlay exceeds his income.

have done something already ; they may yet do more ; but they will not,—they cannot do all.

The analogy sometimes suggested of a wild beast, when wounded in the head or heart, losing soon the power that he formerly possessed in his extremities, does not in point of fact hold good here. The analogy must be taken not from animal but from vegetable life. The spiritual system of Popery is not a beast, whose members would be paralysed if the head were pierced ; it is rather a plant, such as ivy, that has grown ages ago in a certain spot, and has slowly, steadily sent out branches in all directions, and to a great distance, across hills and dales, until it covers nearly all the land. In process of time people discover that this plant is possessed of noxious properties ; and that it renders the ground almost barren wherever it spreads. The people rise against it, and although it is defended by interested parties, they succeed at last in cutting its original stem quite through. The sufferers, supposing that they are now rid of their persecutor for ever, sing a premature pæan, and stand expecting that the branches will all wither, now that the stem is severed. But, alas ! although all these outspreading branches came from the parent stem, and still continued to have vital connection with it, they also threw out roots at every joint, and these struck down into the earth, so that they are an innumerable host of separate plants, capable of living still on their own roots when their original parent is destroyed. This is the true natural history of Popery as a spiritual system. It came from Rome, and is connected with Rome, but strikes down its roots in Ireland, in England, in Scotland. It lives, a poisonous plant, on the corrupt affections of human hearts, wherever its finds them. The collapse of the Papacy as a visible monarchy in Italy will probably weaken the system throughout all its members, and give us an advantage in the conflict ; but Popery will not be destroyed until the grace of God shall have cast out this, and with it every other unclean spirit, from its home in human hearts.

2. Turning now westward, the American civil war meets and fills the eye, to the exclusion of all others, in the panorama of the past year, like a huge mountain standing on the plain, and touching with its top the sky.

Let the oppressed go free, said God in his Word, and by his providence, to the American States, as loudly and clearly as to the king of Egypt when Israel were captives there. The American taskmasters hardened their hearts like the king of Egypt : and now, after many preliminary plagues, an open sea has closed and overwhelmed a mightier host than that which pursued the fugitive Hebrews. A wail, like that of Rachel for her first-born, has gone up from each American home, for sons and brothers slain. The land has been converted into a place of tears.

Why ? What power moved those mighty hosts ? What was the cause of the war ?

In human breasts, both North and South, many motives moved and twisted and hissed like living serpents : but the cause of causes,—the one true origin of the war,—was slavery. God, who reigns on the throne of the world, would no longer bear ; the decree had gone forth that the foul spot should be wiped from his fair creation. The fears and hopes, the pride and other passions of men, were employed, as the flaming fire and stormy wind are employed as instruments in accomplishing the grand design. We have lived to see the end of the Lord in these commotions. Every bond is broken, and an oppressed race of four millions is this day free.

I am well aware that many in this country said, the North did not go to war in order to give liberty to the slaves ; and that, as their motives were not pure, they did not deserve success. True, the North did not draw the sword to abolish slavery. Matters were arranged by a higher Hand, so as to lay upon the slaveholders a far heavier condemnation. The election of Mr. Lincoln did not mean abolition of slavery ; it meant the permission of slavery and the maintenance of the slaveholder's rights, but the limitation of the system that it should not virtually rule the country and spread into new States. Right well did the leaders of the South know that the election of Mr. Lincoln implied not the abolition of slavery where it existed, but only the prevention of its diffusion into the opening regions of the West. The North did not make war on the South in the cause of the slaves, or in any other cause ; the South rebelled against the lawful government, not because their rights as slaveholders were threatened, but because they saw that they could no longer control the legislature, and so indefinitely extend the area of human bondage. The North took up arms to quell a rebellion, and preserve the integrity of the country. At the beginning of the war, a portion of the North desired to abolish slavery ; but a larger portion desired to maintain it. It was in the progress of the war that the North came to be united in a determination that slavery should wholly and for ever cease. It was *for* slavery that the South went to battle, and that in process of time compelled the North to go to battle *against* it. It was because the South made the support of slavery the central pivot on which their efforts turned, that the North, as the struggle progressed, found themselves under the necessity of making abolition their watchword. This they did as a nation, not from motives of humanity in order to give liberty to the blacks, but from the exigencies of a bloody war, in order to take a position face to face with the adversary. Thus it was the attitude assumed by the South that compelled the North to take their stand on absolute abolition. Had the rebellion been sooner and easier suppressed, the slaves would not have been set free. Thus the slaveholders, by the determination to keep the fetters on, became the instrument of breaking them off. It is not a new thing under the sun. It is the Exodus over again. The tyrant in ancient and modern times alike determines that he will yield nothing ; and that determination it is that in the end strips him of all. It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

"Watchman, what of the night ?" Glad tidings of great joy from the West. Within the year that has passed away, the greatest civil war ever known in the

world has ceased; and with its ceasing a nation of slaves, numbering four millions, goes out free. A great defiling blot is wiped away from this beautiful creation; and especially a stain is washed from the garments of the Christian Church, that marred her beauty and unnerved her arm. Perhaps in the end the greatest profit will accrue to the slaveholders themselves: for they will now be delivered from the fatal bias that led them to the Word of God in search of authority for their own tyranny, and so induced them to pervert it to their own destruction. Ah! if any man will—that is, is disposed in heart to—do His will, he shall know of the doctrine. The poor slaveholders, hardened by a hereditary exercise of an inhuman power, went to the Bible with a bent, and found there what they wished, rather than what they needed. Now they will be free. The emancipation of the masters is as precious as the emancipation of the slaves.

The difficulties are not over: the work is not done. The freed men and their families have suffered much, and in spite of every effort will suffer more ere the waters of that war-flood subside again within the wonted channels; but the difficulties that sprang from emancipation do not prove that slavery should have been let alone. When the gangrened limb is off, the patient is weaker than he was the day before; but now at least you may proceed in hope to apply restoratives. Before, nothing could be done for the negroes. Now everything done for them is a contribution towards raising a nation of downtrodden immortals to their place in the common brotherhood of our kind.

I hope there lingers not amongst us now much of that dubious sort of piety that resents a clear, full reference to emancipation, as unsuitable amongst the themes of the Lord's day, or the holy exercises of the sanctuary. If we suffer from muscular Christianity on one extreme, we suffer as much from sentimental Christianity on the other. Oh for the golden mean! What is the Gospel? Redemption from all evil,—redemption of the whole man, soul and body, and admission into the liberty of God's children. Slavery was man-stealing; it made marriage impossible,—made marriage a mockery; it kept God's Word hidden from human souls, that human bodies might be more docile as beasts of burden; and, to crown all, it impudently appealed to God's Word to sanction that wholesale violation of God's Law—that impious desecration of God's image.

Let those who think this a semi-secular subject, which should be excluded from sacred themes and associations, observe the work and listen to the Word of the Lord Jesus. A woman that had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself, came within his view. He laid his hands on her; and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. When the Jews objected that this was introducing things secular among things sacred, He replied, with a glow upon his words, as if they flowed direct from a hot heart: "Ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo these eighteen years, to be loosed?"

On the whole, the watchman's glance across the world should confirm our faith in God. "The Lord reigneth. Unto the upright light shall arise. He that believeth shall not make haste." Let us possess our souls in patience, and await the end of the Lord.

WILLIAM ARNOT.

REMONSTRANCE.

GOD! I am straiten'd sore,
I cannot bear much more;
Thou mad'st the flesh, and Thou dost know
That overstrain'd may be the bow—
All stringing o'er.

Christ! thou hast left me lone—
Am I not Then thine own?
The *one* sheep in the wilderness,
Thou lovest more—my Christ!—not less—
I am that one.

Though closed the door, I ween,
I'll pass my hand between,
And hold it wide—till Thou
In ruth say, "Come in now
To pastures green."

A. H.

Drawn by E. J. Pinwell. Engraved by Dalziel

"God ! I am straiten d sore,
I cannot bear much more."

THE FIRST ASSURANCE IN THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM.

CHRISTIAN assurance is a humble but firm sense of present acceptance with God in his Son Jesus Christ. Though a doctrine, which does not always receive the consideration it deserves from good and thoughtful men, it is so essentially bound up with our ideas of God and our interpretation of Scripture, it bears so directly on our daily religious life, whether held in sober cheerfulness or in ignorant presumption, in plain truth, it has so much to do with our happiness, our usefulness and our holiness, that on the threshold of a subject which cannot possibly be explained or understood without some reference to it, it may be well for us to try to think out what it really means. For we may regard it either with contempt, or with dislike, or with timidity, or with thankfulness. Those who regard all religious consciousness whatever as a hysterical pietism will of course ignore it as folly, or denounce it as fanaticism. With other arguments, from other standing points, we must approach minds like these. Dislike to it is commonly based on the supposed presumptuousness of venturing to interpret God's hidden purposes, and of taking the keys of the kingdom of heaven out of his hands into our own. Forgiveness, men may say, is not so cheaply, nor so hastily granted. There must be time to test the sincerity and to confirm the repentance. It dilutes the malignity of sin to make pardon too easy. It confers impunity on sinners, if we permit personal feeling to be the guarantee of the favour of God. At the close of life God may possibly reward a long penitence by the vision of his reconciled countenance; but really humbled men will be content to walk softly all their days under the shade of the cross, hoping for mercy when they die.

Those, again, who regard it with timidity, or a kind of softened distrust, mostly so regard it, not from any sense of inherent impossibility in God to forgive instantly or entirely, so much as from a real feeling (deepened, it may be, by a painful and long experience) of the deceitfulness of human nature, the shallowness of human feeling, and the weakness of human strength. It is not that they dishonour God by doubting his mercy, or misrepresent Him through ignorance of his word; but, knowing that they cannot deserve pardon, they fear they may fail to obtain it; confession with the lips is easy, with the heart is hard. Once more there are those who, grounding it on God's express revelation of Himself, both in his word, and in their own moral nature, unhesitatingly, intelligently, joyfully recognise it as the mainspring of their obedience and joy. They are careful indeed to distinguish between the rash religionism that asserts it to be necessary to salvation, and the sober experience that declares it essential to peace. They avoid almost with terror those mischievous exaggerations of it, which confound the deep convictions of the heart to which God has spoken, with the heated and emotional passionateness which dares to say, "I must be saved because I feel to be." Statements like these, by their offensive and revolting irreverence, have grievously caricatured the blessed truth hidden beneath them, and have scared cautious men from the very use of a word which seemed synonymous with antinomianism. It is not too much however to say that Christian assurance, both in the philosophical and Scriptural aspect of it, is one of the most reasonable positions in our theological system; and it rests impregnably on the three-fold foundation of the character of God, the teaching of Christ, and the nature of man.

The character of God, as it is revealed in this Psalm, and as the Saviour revealed it in the parable of the Prodigal Son, is that of a holy and tender Father, who Himself moves us to repentance, that his heart may be once more satisfied with our filial love—who not only accepts our confession, but anticipates it; for He not only welcomed the returning prodigal, but when "he was yet a great way off, saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him." The teaching of Christ is in harmony with the character of God. Though He was wont to make the pardon of sin of more importance than the healing of sickness, it was also his rule to accept at once the sorrow and repentance which He discerned to be genuine; and when He had forgiven men, to tell them so. "Thy sins are forgiven thee," whether to a sinful woman or a fallen apostle, was at once the letter and the spirit of his treatment of penitents. For, once more, He who had made man, knew what was in man. He who had taken upon Him our nature in all its completeness—sin only excepted, well understood how alienation and distrust sadden the soul and weaken it, how confidence and love brace and ennoble it.

Yes, the deepest foundation of Christian assurance is in the person and character of God. It is not so much what we are that we rest on, as what He is. He gives, and we receive. He declares, and we listen. He promises, and we believe. If our hearts deceive us, He is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things; but if we pray not to be deceived, if we love the truth and wish to know it, will He give us over to believe a lie? Indeed, if presumption and irreverence affect the subject at all, may they not be found quite as much in doubting if God means what He says, as in being over hasty to believe it? We do not see what we are doing in dwarfing the Divine perfections, so as to make them fit in with our puny notions, in supposing Him slow to forgive, because through ignorance and suspiciousness we are slow ourselves.

This Twenty-third Psalm is the Old Testament doctrine on this most blessed subject. In revealing the Person of God, in describing his relation to us under an endearing and familiar image, it teaches us to rest the hope of our salvation, not on our own changeful and erring frames and feelings, but on Divine Love. The New Testament tells us of three kinds of assurance: "the full assurance of understanding" (Col. ii. 2); "the full assurance of faith" (Heb. x. 22);

"the full assurance of hope unto the end" (Heb. vi. 11). Though sooner or later they almost imperceptibly blend into each other, there is nevertheless a real distinction between them, and in a logical order they approach and possess the soul. That order is plainly discernible in this Psalm. The last verse is the triumphant expression of the full assurance of hope unto the end: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." The fourth verse is the calm utterance of faith in the very presence of death: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." The first verse is a confession of the first assurance of a believing soul, its starting point in that knowledge of God which alone is eternal life: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

Let us observe here three distinct ideas. The soul's discovery of God. Its discovery of God's personal relation to itself. Its confidence resulting from that discovery.

The discovery of God is the discovery of his name. In a sense God is his name. Here Jehovah calls Himself a shepherd, not for the first time, nor for the last. So Jacob had already called Him on his deathbed: "From thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel" (Gen. xlix. 24). Thus Asaph addresses Him in prayer: "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock" (Ps. lxxx. 1). Zechariah, approaching the advent, applied it to Messiah: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd." In the New Testament, it is the title of the Lord Jesus. Of Himself the Saviour said, "I am the good shepherd." In the Hebrews we read of Him as "the great shepherd of the sheep;" and St. Peter, specially impressed it may be by the figure from having been himself thrice bidden to feed the sheep and the lambs, in one place describes the Lord as "the shepherd and bishop of our souls" (1 Pet. ii. 25); in another as "the chief shepherd" (1 Pet. v. 4).

Now when we think of the confused, ignorant, defective way in which many men think and speak of God, how thankful we should be for this blessed name, on which to repose our own hearts, under which to speak of Him to others. He is, indeed, the Almighty Maker of all things, who can create and destroy. Yet mere sense of power never made a penitent yet. To confine our notion of God to that of a mighty artificer, is to ignore his moral attributes and to place his redeemed creatures on the same level with the earth and the sea and the trees. Doubtless, also, He is a judge, who pulleth down one, and setteth up another. Yet if He is only this, what hope is there for us? sinful men must draw back in terror. The word shepherd draws us "with cords of a man" to one who can save as well as condemn, for it includes *Knowledge*, and *Protection*, and *Provision*, and *Tenderness*.

First, there is individual knowledge. In Europe, where a shepherd rules by fear, not by love, drives his flock in front of him instead of going first himself to show the way, it is hard to appreciate this. In the East it is far otherwise; to borrow the Saviour's words, "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out; and when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice." Then the shepherd must protect his sheep, often at great risk to himself, always with labour and fatigue. In the snowdrifts of winter he must dig them out; in the heats of summer they would die of drought if he did not find them water; in the stormy wind and tempest he leads them under the cover of the sheltering hill. The wolf would come and scatter the sheep, if the shepherd were not ready to lay down his life for them. Provision is another feature in the office of shepherd, which will be more fully considered under another verse; and there is also tenderness. The shepherd knows his sheep, protects them, provides for them, not only because they are his property, and worth so much money, but because he loves them. This idea is beautifully brought out by Isaiah in reference to Christ,—"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young." It has been strikingly observed, that in that wandering, dangerous life, where the shepherd and the sheep pass days and weeks together without seeing any other living creatures than themselves, there springs up a kind of friendship between the man and the brute. The shepherd feels a pitiful love to the dumb helpless creatures whom the Maker of man and beast has given into his hand. The sheep come at last to connect him with their daily food and safety, and in their way look up to him with a dependant grateful affection.

Such then being the office and qualities of a good shepherd, this illustration may help to show us, though in a very imperfect way, what Christ is to his Church. He knows his sheep, every one of them, from the least to the greatest. Each has his own name, each his own place in the family of God. "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." And He protects them. Not however, by securing them immunity from "the changes and chances" of life. It would be but a poor manifestation of Divine wisdom and mercy, to shelter us from that discipline of trial and sorrow by which the elect of God are trained for home. But in the temptations of Satan, whether they be doubts that undermine our faith, or sudden assaults that would take it by storm, or anodynes that send it to sleep, or allurements that enchant it, "the name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe." And He provides for them. The Son of Man who once taught us to say, "Give us day by day our daily bread," now hears that prayer, and Himself answers it from heaven. And as for love! How Christ can love, with all the strength of Godhead, with all the sympathy of manhood, let those try to say who have once felt it, let those believe who desire to know what it can be. The love of God is a boundless ocean, with neither breadth, nor length, nor depth, nor height; and while we timidly stand on the shore, and only suffer the rippling waves to cover our feet, instead of bravely plunging in, and trusting all our life, all our happiness to it, we can know but little of what it must be to saints and angels.

But the verse does not merely say, "The Lord is" a "shepherd," it says, "The Lord is my shepherd." This is a step further in the soul's discovery of God. If, as we have already seen, there are three kinds of assurance, and the assurance of understanding comes first; in this assurance of understanding again, there are two steps or growths of knowledge: one, the abstract discovery of what God is in Himself, the other the actual apprehension of what He is by those who love Him.

Now the former, so far from being necessarily connected with the latter, is often separated from it by a long and painful interval. Like a starving man gazing through a window on a well-spread board, at which he dare not go in to sit down, the soul that seeks God, but has not yet found Him, may appreciate with fatal distinctness the riches of his grace and the counsel of his love for others; and yet through seeing but not believing, may find its own burden only more insupportable than before. It reasons thus: I know what God is in Himself, and what He is to his people, but how can I induce Him to be all that to me? "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the High God." Clearly I must in some way obtain his love, whether by prayers, or alms, or sorrow. Who then shall tell me, when I have wept or prayed enough to pay up in full the purchase-money of my Redeemer's pity? When may I dare to say, as I hear others saying, "Jesus Christ is for me?" When will He say to me, as once He said to another, "Thy sins be forgiven thee?"

It is something indeed to have got so far as this, even to understand Christ's work, and to desire a share in it. Yet such a one only sees men as trees walking; and while looking through a mist at the letter of the Gospel, staggers heavily on under the burden of the law.

The next step, and that which alone completes our knowledge of God, is to say, "The Lord is *my* shepherd. I know both what God is in himself, and what he can be to his people, not from books, nor from hearsay, but simply from what he has himself been to me. I am not reasoning myself into what I ought to feel; I feel from what I possess, and what no man can take from me, for no man gave it to me. The Lord is my shepherd, for he has been a shepherd to me; not from what He has promised, but from what He has performed, I know in whom I have believed. And a blessed truth it is, when God the Holy Ghost writes it on the soul. The Saviour is mine, and I am his: all to me that a shepherd can be to a sheep, all to me that God can be to a creature. He thinks of me, He cares for me, He shelters me, He understands me. He is as much and as really mine as if I were at this moment with Him in heaven, faultless before the presence of his glory."

Once more, as the result of this discovery is the soul's confidence, "I shall not want." The positiveness of this sentence is as striking as its comprehensiveness. It is not the utterance of a prayer, it is the statement of a conviction; while memory unlocks the treasures of past mercy, hope reposes itself on the unchangeableness of God.

And if it is positive, it is "exceeding broad." "I shall not want." The Psalmist, we observe, did not even think it worth while to specify any of the things he was likely to want. Every need of his life seemed absolutely guaranteed to him as he rested under the wing of God. *Security?* "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." *Provision?* "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" *Grace?* "My grace is sufficient for thee." *Love?* That deepest, saddest, most unutterable, most insatiable of all the needs of man! When God can be faint or weary, when He can turn his face from the poor destitute in anger or scorn, when He can grow cold towards those whom He has loved, and redeemed, and called, then our doubts and fears may have some foundation. But to think that God can change, is to deny that He is God. "He hath loved us with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness He hath drawn us."

Blessed, blessed truth of the sufficiency and faithfulness of God, if we would but let it possess our hearts. Whatever our needs, He can supply them, for He is God. He will supply them, for "God is love." Incessant as may be our wants, small and trifling as may be our cares, harassing and anxious, as with the manliest and strongest of us, this daily earthly life must sometimes be, the Son of God is still Son of Man. In his own human nature, glorified indeed, yet human still, human always, "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." "We have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Let us believe, let us believe, and our joy shall be full. Let us honour God by trusting Him entirely.

Let us be as willing to receive as He is willing to bestow. Let us give Him the only thing in the world He cares for; the only thing we have to give Him worth giving; the only thing He will not take by force: for unless given freely it is worthless; the gift that He has Himself first given us, only it does not seem worth our looking at—even the heart; and then, not in a greater willingness on his part to bestow, but in a greater capacity on ours to accept, the Lord will be our shepherd. He will possess what He died to win; we shall be the dwelling-place of God.

Two thoughts more will tolerably complete this part of our subject. Christ is a shepherd for all who wish for Him. Christ is a shepherd for all possible conditions of place, and age, and time.

The former of these truths is good to kindle hope in hearts which have grown sick over the deferred conversion of children or friends, may even possibly stir a movement of faith and repentance in a soul now paralysed by the thought that it is cast away.

It is wonderful how fertile the human heart can be in inventing reasons why God should not save us; it is equally wonderful how the blessed Saviour anticipated all such reasons during his ministry on earth. Is it said, "I am lost?" "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." Is it said, "I can give no reason why God should save me, except that I wish to be saved?" "Ho, every one

that thirsteth, come ye to the waters: and he that hath no money, come ye buy and eat: yea, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price." Is it said, "God requires faith, and to believe is just the one thing I cannot do, for I am full of doubts and difficulties?" "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Is it said, either of one by himself, or by others about him, "There is no fear, no desire, no care about these things in that soul. Would there were—for then he might flee from the wrath to come. But now, how can we hope; what can we do for him?" The answer is, "That soul is redeemed, for Jesus died to save it. Wait and pray." The angel's message to the shepherds at Bethlehem is perhaps the fullest, freest Gospel ever preached to man. Learn it by heart. "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Not a merited, not a purchased, but a *born* Saviour: not only for Jews at Bethlehem, but for all people everywhere: on whom the single claim for mercy is our lost humanity, with whom the only condition is "Come unto me."

And if the Word of God is not sufficient to give confidence—not through any doubting of its truth or blessedness, but through the inability of the soul to appropriate it to its own needs—two points still deserve to be suggested; for we know not "whether shall prosper either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

One of them is a fact, visible before our eyes everywhere, even the Church of God. As an external witness to the historical truth of Christianity, the mere existence of the Church, apart from any explanation of it, has yet to be appreciated at its full value. If Mahometanism is a testimony to the existence of Mahomet, Christianity is a monument to the memory of Christ. Our present object is, however, to consider it, in the person of its faithful and living members, as an evidence of the mercy of God. The Church, in one aspect, is a portion of redeemed humanity saved in Christ for ever; or, in St. Paul's account of it, it is the possession of Christ, already purchased by his blood, and presently to be redeemed from death in the resurrection unto life. And the question to ask is, If we behold here an evident purpose of God to save some, why, my brother, or my sister, should not that purpose extend to you? Why should not you be among those whom God will glorify? Why should you be shut out from the benefits of that Cross and Passion endured for the sins of the whole world? If no one has come from heaven to tell you that you are to be saved, no one has come to anyone else to tell them so. Certainly no one has come to tell you that you are to be lost. Even if you were a heathen, and had only just heard of Christ, that would be no bar to your salvation. Every man and woman on this redeemed earth may plead the Saviour's name with the Father who gave Him, and need not fear to plead in vain.

But to be in the Church of God is to have a special invitation to his mercy; and just as every circumcised Jew was justified in regarding himself as one of the peculiar people, so every baptised Christian may plead the name which is above every name, as the name by which he himself is called. Whatever may be the difficulties of belief, or the diversities of doctrine about holy baptism (and they chiefly spring from the silence of Scripture about the baptism of infants), if we believe anything about it, surely we must believe that it brings us into a nearer relation to God than we were before; that if it pledges us to filial obedience, it pledges Him to fatherly love; that if it is a responsibility, it must also be a privilege; that if it is a reality and not a mockery, it must be a sign of his readiness to save. Now, if any one doubts God's mercy towards him, or towards one He loves, let such a one, with all reverence, but with all simplicity and earnestness, plead this baptism with God. Let him say, "Lord, thou hast begun the work, wilt not Thou finish it? Thou didst look on me in favour, when I could not with my own lips pray to Thee. Now that I ask of Thee thy favour for myself, wilt Thou send me empty away? If I do not deserve thy mercy now, I did not deserve it then. Hast Thou kindled hopes only to disappoint them? Hast Thou taught me to call Thee Father, only to refuse to own me as a child? I ask for thy love and for thy grace, that I may walk humbly with Thee as a son with a parent. Not because I have a right to it, but because Thou hast promised it to them that ask Thee, give me thy free, thy full salvation."

Once more, the briefest glance at this Psalm may satisfy us, that it traces David's history over his entire life: and so far from being the sudden voice of a youthful enthusiasm, is the profound experience of grey hairs.

The Lord Jesus Christ is a friend for life. For all its seasons, whether youth, or manhood, or old age; for all its risings and fallings, its losses and gains, its joys and cares, his brotherly sympathy is ready, and entire and full. To wish to shut Him out of any part of our life, or any possession of our heart, or any crisis in our history, or any secret of our experience, is to grieve Him—is yet more to impoverish ourselves.

And if this is the area of our privilege, it is the condition of our peace. No doubt it is a solemn thing, if we adequately grasp it, to take the Lord Jesus Christ with us wherever we go, to surrender to Him whatever we possess, to consult Him in whatever we do. Yet life will be less frivolous if we try to live it under His eye. It need not be less happy, for He who gave his presence at the marriage feast in Cana recognises and sanctifies all human and innocent joy. "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want:" here is at once our safeguard, our dignity, our gladness. How can we fear anything, how can we miss anything, when God and Christ are ours?

A. W. Thorold.

FLORAL AND BOTANICAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE HOLY LAND.

Sometimes even now the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose. Clouds are rare, welcome like that little one detected from Carmel's top, the harbinger and the pledge of the coming rain, as it rose from the western sea. But when there is a shower, when some straggling thunder-clouds, which have wandered out of their ordinary course, descend on the parched sands in life-giving drops, they pour forth, but do not *waste* "their sweetness on the desert air."

Such a shower it was once our lot to witness in the southern desert. Even after a drought of many months, the desert of Judæa, though sea-like in its vastness and its silence, is by no means without vegetable life. Herbs and shrubs of many species—brown or sandy in colour, dwarf, or rather microscopic in foliage, all inconspicuous and shabby in appearance, but highly aromatic when bruised or crushed—stud the surface, sometimes in groups, sometimes almost in a carpet, but more frequently sparsely scattered. The camels of the Kâabineh and other southern tribes here find abundant pasturage, or rather they browse on the bushes and crop them into dense rounded tufts. The inside of these shrubs soon collects the sand, and gradually forms a cone, which, matted by the fibrous roots, resists the wind, and breaks the sweep of the sand storms. The brightest of all the shrubs, the only one whose colour contrasts with the soil from which it springs, is the *Salicornia* or soap plant, the red and green stems of which afford support to myriads of chalky-white snails, which, clustering in tufts, present the effect of a sheet of snowy bloom. Strangely out of place in so dry and thirsty a land seemed the sea-gulls, which hovered over-head or stalked among the bushes; nor could we account for their presence till we observed that they, recognising the mollusc as their food in the wilderness as well as in the sea, had come to pasture on these desert shell-fish.

But in twenty-four hours after the rain, all this was changed. Tiny cotyledons pushed up from the sand. Bulbs sent out their tall leaves, and scented labiate flowers began to exude, in blue, red, or yellow buds, from the dry twigs of the scrub. Several species of mignonette appeared in straggling tufts, and the air was perfumed with the odour of a sweet stock, with crimped and fringed petals (*Mathiola odoratissima*). Here and there the nibbled and stunted shrubs pushed delicate white or pink papilionaceous blossoms from under the shelter of their bristling prickles, which proclaimed, by their shape, their kindred to our furze and broom, the desert *Astragali*. From under the loosest sand there shot up the long stalks of various species of garlic, which had scarcely breathed the air before they unfolded their flowering tufts, and betrayed by their unmistakeable scent the family to which they belonged. In two or three days more, the bulbs opened their cup-shaped flowers; the saffron alluded to in Cant. iv. 14, a small crocus with its blue petals delicately veined with white, as well as another species closely allied to the familiar yellow crocus of our gardens. It seemed as though the powers of nature in the desert were constantly held in hand, ready to burst forth at the gentlest call in all their vigour. Another week, and all was over. The bulbs were in seed, the shrubs had formed their tiny pods, and the little leaves of the scented stock looked as though they would have drooped, had they not been too stiff.

Here and there, by the rare wells in the desert, a few clumps of palm-trees remain, nourished like the righteous by unseen moisture (Psalm xcii. 12), and recalling the once carefully counted threescore and ten palm-trees of the wells of Elim (Ex. xv. 27). We were told too of another tree sometimes to be found in the rocky dells, but with which we did not ourselves meet, the "*Thuya*," a species of juniper—probably the thyine tree of Rev. xviii. 12, yielding an ebony-like, hard, and odoriferous wood. One bush we did observe, which recalls the expressions of Jeremiah, concerning the "man who maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord": "He shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh" (xvii. 6). Again, "Flee, save your lives, and be like the heath in the wilderness" (xlviii. 6). The Hebrew "'Arad" is exactly represented in the vernacular Arabic, and applied to the savin juniper bush (*Juniperus sabina*), a dwarf species, which occasionally struggles out from between the chinks of the rocks in the desert wadys, gnarled, stunted, and gloomy-looking. In forcible contrast to the shrub of the arid desert, is "the man that trusteth in the Lord. He shall be as a tree planted by the waters" (Jer. xvii. 8.)

As we approach Beersheba we leave the dry chalky plains, strewn with flints, and enter upon rolling downs, with gently rounded hills, which can scarcely claim the epithet of grassy, but still have a greenish hue. In the wide hollows which have been scooped out by rivers long since extinct, the wandering Bedouin have scratched various irregular patches, and sown them with barley, just now (in January) beginning to shoot. The scenery was prairie rather than desert, without a tree, or bush, or one distinctive feature to mark the landscape. But the plants were lovely. We pitched our tents amidst a meadow of mallow, near the wells—to the delight of our horses and mules, but to the evident dissatisfaction of the grumbling camels, who preferred the dried and aromatic herbage of the desert. A natural parterre surrounded us: three or four species of Malva, a bright marigold (*Chrysanthemum coronarium*), the asphodels, the familiar grape hyacinth of our English gardens (*Muscari racemosum*), calendulas, purple scorzoneras, and blue anchusas, scented stocks, and, above all, the small "Star of Bethlehem" (*Ornithogalum Arabicum*), helped to paint this flower-bed of the wilderness. Yet here, too, destruction played its part. The pretty bulbs, and the branching asphodels were not allowed

to seed undisturbed. Many a rough furrow marked where the wild boar out of the forest had been rooting up the fragrant dainty (Psalm lxxx. 13); and many a time did the boar unconcernedly cross our path in this open land, where the absence of cover seemed to render him indifferent to observation.

And now we were crossing the "South Country," or "Negeb" of Judah, a region as distinct in all its physical characters from the desert to its south, as it is from the hill-country to the north. It was the home of the Prophet Amos, the country from which his idioms and illustrations are drawn; and which can only be fully appreciated by keeping clearly before the mind the physical features of this portion of Judæa. It is a pastoral, grassy country in winter and spring, and studded with a profusion of flowers. Besides the crocuses, which continued to increase in number and variety, blue, white, and yellow, there was a lovely little ixia (*Ixolirion montanum*), which we also found peeping from under the edge of the snow on Mount Hermon, a small narcissus, a *Gasteria* (?), several bright star-like *Scillas*, a Frittilaria, an iris, and in abundance, conspicuous by its beauty, the *Tulipa gesneriana* (?). There was also an Eryngium and *Lotus Arabicus*. The grasses, too, were as varied as the flowering plants; but these I will not venture to name. Probably the season was too early for the pheasant's eye (*Adonis*), the ranunculus, and the anemones, which are the true floral glories of Palestine, and which we found everywhere else in the greatest profusion. I must not omit a pretty little creeping plant, *Paronychia argentea*, with silvery trailing runners, conspicuous on every dusty, trodden path, and gathered by the Arabs and dried to serve as a substitute for tea.

Amidst all this profusion of flowers scarcely a single tree varies the outline of the horizon throughout the whole south country. Well might it be marked as an event, when Abraham planted a grove at Beersheba, a clump of terebinths, to afford shade and refreshment at the wells he had digged. Now, not only every tree, but every shrub has long since been uprooted for fuel—a most precious commodity in this bare and open country. Abraham's grove was of terebinths, the real oak of Mamre; and, indeed, in most passages in our version "terebinth," and not "oak," is the correct rendering. A few still remain, preserved by religious feeling, as marking the burial place of some Mohammedan saint or sheikh. Among these is *not* the oak of Abraham at Mamre, which has long since disappeared, and for which a true oak, the ever-green holm oak (*Quercus pseudo-coccifera*), has been substituted. Many a Scripture incident comes vividly back to memory as we rest for our noon-day halt under one of these oaks or terebinths of the south country. Under such a terebinth the Angel of the Lord sat when he came to Ophrah to call Gideon to the deliverance of his nation (Judges vi. 11). Under such an one the man of God made his fatal halt, and was thence led back to Bethel by the lying prophet (1 Kings xiii. 14.). The little pyramid of stones, and the fluttering rags on the gnarled boughs, while they mark the grave of the desert sheikh, remind us that when an honourable resting-place was sought for the bones of Saul, and Jonathan his son, it was under the terebinth in Jabesh (1 Chron. x. 12).

When we began to pass from "the south country" or "Negeb" to "the hill country" (Luke i. 65) marked indeed was the change from easy, smooth tracks, over gently-rolling downs, to rocky, slippery paths, up and down narrow valleys, between rugged hills full of caves. As we saw the little scraps of corn cultivation here and there in the nooks, and our horses sprawled about over the rocks, the question of Amos, himself an inhabitant of the south country, came home to us full of meaning: "Shall horses run upon the rock? Will one plow there with oxen?" (vi. 12.) The plants were rapidly changed. The desert bulbs, the garlics and ixolirion, gave place to the more familiar species of southern Europe. Many bushes were making a vigorous struggle for existence on the scanty soil of the hill sides. The prickly oak, kept down by the continual browsing of the goats to the size of a shrub, was the predominant plant. Here and there were some scattered trees; the terebinth was not unfrequent, the lentisk was very common with its dark foliage; and, more sombre still, the solid-looking boughs of the carob or locust-tree (*Ceratonia siliqua*) occasionally stood out conspicuous above the others, inviting the wayfarer to rest under its dense shade. Under such a tree the Prodigal Son sat and mused over his wasted life, and, as he gnawed its bean-like pods, on which the swine around him were greedily feeding, with the cravings of unsatisfied hunger the pangs of remorse and penitence wrung his soul.

Here and there the myrtle-tree was coming-up instead of the briar (Is. lv. 13), as it did in the days of Nehemiah, when the people went forth to the mount to fetch myrtle-branches to make booths (viii. 15), and its fragrant white blossoms were already beginning to burst forth. The bright red bark of the strawberry-tree (*Arbutus andrachne*) was occasionally conspicuous; and every here and there the yellow blossoms of several species of broom (*Genista*) varied the colouring of the thickets.

Among these hills the ruins of the ancient cities of Judah, desolate and without inhabitants, crowded each other fast and thick; long archways, tunnels and caves, store-pits, walls, and olive-presses, and the adapted dwellings of the ancient Horites or dwellers in caves, overgrown with nettles six feet high (*Urtica pilulifera*), compared with the sting of which our English nettle has a velvet touch. "Thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles in the fortresses thereof." (Is. xxxiv. 13.) "The pleasant places for their silver, nettles shall possess them." (Hos. ix. 6.)

The ground carpet of the hill country, wherever not absolutely choked, is in early spring most lovely and varied. From among the roots of every bush, from out of every chink and crevice in the rocks, often with the greater part of its tubes protruding and exposed, peers forth the lovely Cyclamen latifolium, with its tufts of recurved blossom of every shade of hue, from purest white to deepest lilac and purple. Varying in colour, in size and form of leaf, and in habit of growth, the Palestine cyclamen has been divided into

many species, but which, I believe, are mere varieties from situation and soil. Next in abundance were the anemones, lilac, white, and red, most generally a brilliant scarlet (*Anemone coronaria*), the plant which, as the most brilliant, the most conspicuous in spring, and the most universally-spread of all the floral treasures of the Holy Land, has been with reason taken to be the "Lily of the Field" of our Lord's discourse. Certainly if in such wondrous richness of bloom any one plant can claim pre-eminence, it would be the anemone, the most natural for our blessed Lord to pluck and seize upon as an illustration, whether walking in the fields or sitting on the hill side. Almost a rival of the anemone in brilliancy, though less common and smaller, was the scarlet *Ranunculus asiaticus;* and in the open, the large pheasant's-eye (*Adonis palestina*). All these abound round the Holy City, not least on the Mount of Olives.

Cultivation changes, but not to any great degree, the character of the wild flowers. The bulbs become scarcer in the olive-yards and vineyards of Hebron and Bethlehem, with the exception of the slender and graceful *Gladiolus segetum* and *Byzantinus*, and the beautiful *Iris caucasica;* but annuals are infinitely more abundant, and those travellers who have only visited Judæa and central Palestine at the ordinary season of April and May can have little idea of the brilliancy of the olive-yards and bare hill-sides in February. Most conspicuous are the various flaxes or linums, yellow, white, blue, and red, especially the pink *L. sibthorpianum* and the yellow *L. flavum*. Very beautiful and very abundant, but very transient in its glory, was a little pink lychnis, which spread a glowing sheet of rose under the shade of the olive-trees for a week, and then passed away; a delicate soap wort (*Saponaria vaccaria*), pimpernels, red, yellow, and blue, opening in large tufts to welcome the noon-day sun, pinks (*Dianthus* and *Silene*), both genera in great variety of species, though not sufficiently crowded to give a character to the botany.

The olive is still the true wealth of the hill country, and is more or less cultivated from Hebron to the roots of Lebanon, "A land of oil olive" (Deut. viii. 8); but in order to secure a full and regular harvest, it is necessary to dig but *not* to crop the soil in which it grows, a maxim which is often neglected by the present inhabitants, while a heavy tax per tree discourages the extension of its cultivation. It is often said to be a gloomy tree, but in early spring the pale blue sheen of its foliage in the sunlight, dappled with its tiny blossoms, is most pleasing and refreshing. It is forty years in reaching maturity, and has a power of renewing its youth by forming fresh wood, and as it were, a new stem within its decayed and hollow trunk, which renders it probably the most long-lived of trees, and makes the tradition that the celebrated olive-trees in the garden of Gethsemane have survived the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, far from improbable. They are the most venerable-looking trees in the land, and resemble those of the old olive-yards near Carthage, which there is not the slightest reason for suspecting to have been ever renewed by man since the destruction of the Roman power in Africa.

Unlike the olive, the vine has not retained its ancient pre-eminence in the land. This arises partly from the greater care required in its cultivation, and chiefly from the prohibition of wine among the Moslems. The blessing of Judah was "Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's coat unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: his eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk" (Gen. xlix. 11, 12); but now "the boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it" (Psalm lxxx. 13). Few are the vineyards that lingera mong the ruined terraces of the Judæan hills. There are a few, and these are rapidly increasing in the environs of Jerusalem; many about Bethlehem, where a delicious white wine is made by the Christian inhabitants, and a few among the Christian villages of the passes of Benjamin and Ephraim. Elsewhere the cultivation of the vine is scarcely to be noticed, till we reach the slopes of Hermon and Lebanon. But one spot of patriarchal memory yet retains its ancient features. We read that the spies sent by Moses "came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff" (Numb. xiii. 23). Still the fruitful valley of Eshcol is devoted to the cultivation of the vine, and its branches are of extraordinary size. This great bulk and weight of the individual branches is partly artificial, caused by pruning and thinning, and partly a peculiarity of the Syrian vine. The grapes of Eshcol, being now the property of Moslems, are used for making sweet syrups and raisins, instead of for wine; and the ancient wine vats and presses may be seen disused, hewn out of the rocks by the way side.

With the vineyard is generally combined the fig-tree, which, though rarely having exclusive plots devoted to it, is planted everywhere in the corners, pieces of waste, or over the walls (where its shade is not only grateful, but valuable), or against the terrace walls. To sit every man under his fig-tree not only conveyed the idea of peace, security, and protection, but the large leaves and dense foliage render its shade among the most effectual of the trees of the East. The first fig-trees we met with on our entrance from the south, and indeed the first trees of any kind, were a group of fig-trees overhanging and concealing a well at Tell Hhora, not far from Beersheba. The celebrated well of Gennesaret, Ain et Tin, derives its name from its fig-tree; and what wanderer from the far West cannot recal his many noontide halts by the wayside well or pool, under the fig-tree's shade?

The mulberry is one of the few plants the cultivation of which has increased since Scripture times, owing to the introduction of the silkworm. In the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and alongside the track to Nablous, the mulberry now mingles with the vine and the fig-tree, the least graceful, but commercially the most important of all; and in the Lebanon it is the staple support of the industrious mountaineers. It is only once mentioned in Scripture, and the appropriateness of the translation has been justly called in question (2 Sam. v. 23). Its fruit is so poor and insipid, that before the introduction of silk-culture the tree could be of little value.

The same botanical features mark the whole central country till we reach the plain of Esdraelon. All is fresh and green in December and January, bright and spangled in February and March, rich and golden in April, scorched, withered, burnt by June. Of ferns there are very few south of the Lebanon. But who that has visited the pools of Solomon, or the pool of Siloam, can forget the tresses of maidenhair fern, *Adiantum capillus-veneris*, which festoon the moist sides of every well and cave? In many a niche of the rocks, a little tuft of the ceterach (*C. officinarum*) may be detected with brown and cottony fronds, and in a few of the more shady valleys we gathered the dwarf *Cheilanthes fragrans*. The place of ferns in the dry climate of Palestine is supplied by many wall plants, some of which have been supposed to be the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; though the weight of argument seems to incline to the caper plant, which is rare in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. These wall plants abound particularly about the enclosure of the Haram, the ancient Temple area, and among them a small blossoming ranunculus (*R. myriophyllus*), a mignonette (*Reseda suffruticosa*), *Hyoscyamus aureus*, very common, *Anchusa italica*, and many boraginous plants. Several species of Onosma were very beautiful, and few of our cultivated species could surpass these and the labiates in beauty, during the short period of their flowering.

When from Jerusalem we descend to Jericho, "the city of palm-trees," a very different flora meets us. Our climate and productions are more completely changed than in the journey from England to Italy. During the first part of the ride across the bleak wilderness of Judæa, the characteristic plants are the leguminous, especially the astragali, the mints and thymes, the borages, and the labiates. No shrubs exist, unless the little *Poterium spinosum* deserves the name. The perfume of the thymes and the hum of the bees remind us that we are in a land "flowing with honey," in that very wilderness where John the Baptist fed on locusts and wild honey. The prevailing type of insect life is still the *orthopterous*, or locust tribe. Locusts and grasshoppers with wings of every colour—red, blue, green, yellow, brown and white, start up at every step, and with their harsh grill almost drown the soothing hum of the bees. The common wild bee of the wilderness is the same as the domesticated species, *Apis ligustica*, and very closely allied to our hive bee. The aromatic desert herbs supply it with abundant material for its stores, and many of the Bedouin earn their subsistence by hunting the wild bees' nests in the rocks, and selling the honey in Jerusalem and Jaffa. "With honey out of the stony rock would I have satisfied thee."

When the deep valley of the Jordan has once been reached, 1300 feet below the sea level, as Jerusalem is 1780 above it, all is changed. True, the palm-tree from which Jericho derived its name and wealth (Deut. xxxiv. 3), waves no more its feathery crown over the plains. We found but one lingering clump several miles further down. There are no straggling balsam-trees in the wild and thorny tangle to recall the memories of the rich gardens of Herod and Cleopatra, or perhaps of Solomon himself. "I am come into my garden. . . I have gathered my myrrh with my balsam" (Cant. v. 1). The former cultivation of the sorghum or sugar-cane ("Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money:" Is. xliii. 24) yielded a princely revenue to the crusading knights of Jerusalem, and its importance is yet attested by the ruined pile of sugar mills; but no sweet cane springs up by the water courses among the brakes of bamboos. Yet the vegetation is still exuberant, fed by the copious and never-failing supplies from the Prophets' Fountain, which percolate through the plain in little artificial rills for several miles. The blessing of Elisha has healed the waters unto this day—"Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land" (2 Kings ii. 21).

Where Herod's city stood on the road to Jerusalem was once an avenue of palms and sycamores (*Ficus sycamorus*), and we found two aged sycamore fig-trees in the ravine to the south of the city, in illustration of the Gospel narrative when our Redeemer halted under the sycamore-tree and bade Zaccheus come down and receive him at his house. The sycamore or sycamine fig-tree is very different from our sycamore, and is a near relative of the Banyan-tree of India, very easy to climb, with large forked lateral branches, a true fig-tree, but bearing a worthless fruit, insipid and woody. Such were those figs in the second basket in the Prophet Jeremiah's vision, which he pronounced to be "very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad" (xxiv. 2); apt emblems of the rejected Zedekiah and his people.

The most abundant trees were the small Jujube tree (*Ziziphus Spina-Christi*) or thorn tree, the Nubk of the Arabs, and the fine large variety or Dôm-tree. It derives its botanical name from the tradition that of its boughs was plaited the crown of thorns. The fruit is a bright yellow berry, of which the crop is enormous and long-continued, of a pleasant subacid flavour, the food of Arabs, dormice, and birds, which congregate here in myriads. The foliage of these trees was often varied by large tufts of the parasitic *Loranthus indicus*, the bright and tropical-looking blossoms of which hung in crimson festoons from the topmost boughs of the thorn-trees. The wild olive (*Elæagnus angustifolius*), and more abundantly the false balsam-tree, *Balanites ægyptiaca*, by their deep green foliage pleasantly relieved the paler hue of the thorn-trees. From the large olive-like fruit of the latter, the Zukkûm of the natives, an oil is extracted and sold to the pilgrims as the Balm of Gilead. The castor-oil plant (*Ricinus officinalis*) flourishes by the side of the stream, and becomes a goodly shrub. The false Sodom apple (*Solanum sanctum*), with blue potato-like blossom, and bright yellow fruit balls on its prickly stem, together covered the ground and mingled its thorns with the spring *Paliurus aculeatus*. The pretty *Vitex agnus castus* united with the gorgeous oleander (the true "willow by the water courses" of Scripture) to form a perfect tangle in the moister ground, the winter quarters of many a little

bird familiar to our English gardens in summer, warblers, whitethroats, and nightingales, which here made acquaintance with the sun-birds and the bulbuls of the tropics.

When from the oasis of Jericho we turn our steps towards the mountain behind, known as the Mount of Temptation, we are at once in a tropical desert. Here we found a very singular and local plant, the rose of Jericho; not, however, that alluded to in in Ecclus. xxiv. 14, "I was as a rose plant in Jericho," but the *Anastatica hierochuntina*, a tiny ligneous cruciferous plant, with leaves and blossoms so inconspicuous that it is scarcely possible at first sight to recognise it among the sand, but which possesses the curious quality, when plunged into water, of expanding and opening its petals months after it has been gathered. In the clefts of the rocks here we gathered for the first time the true hyssop (*Capparis ægyptiaca*) in blossom. Nothing can be in more startling contrast with the scorched and scathed rocks to which it clings, than the brilliant green hue of its thick foliage and the delicate pink of its large but fragile blossoms. It may well, from its pure colour and appearance, as well as from its being a plant of the Sinaitic desert, be the hyssop of Moses in the law, and that to which, springing out of the wall, the botanical knowledge of Solomon extended; but it scarcely seems, from its form and fleshy foliage, appropriate as the hyssop on which the sponge was placed and offered to our Lord during his crucifixion. Any other plant used in purification, as, for instance, the rue, might have been so termed.

When, from Jericho, we ride down to the Jordan, we find among the trees on its banks several which occur incidentally in Scripture story, as the tall poplar (*Populus Euphratica*); not one of our species, but similar to them (Gen. xxx. 37); most luxuriant willows (*Salix octandra*), not, however, the willow of Scripture, which is the oleander; and, commonest of all, the tamarisk-tree, not mentioned in Holy Writ, but very characteristic of the banks of the southern Jordan, as well as of the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea. All the species are very graceful when in flower, their waving catkins covering as with a gauzy veil the deep green foliage beneath.

When, from the Jordan, we penetrate to the recesses of Engedi and to the south end of the Dead Sea, we still find new and unfamiliar flowers mingled with some well known in story, but rarely seen by the ordinary traveller. Thus, at Engedi, besides the scattered tamarisk-trees, were many gnarled old acacias, the true *seyal* or shittimwood of the desert, the traditionary burning bush, as being the only timber tree of Sinai, and the undoubted material of the tabernacle in the wilderness. The seyal is a weird-looking tree, yet, when its blossom covers the "yellow-haired acacia," not without a certain beauty; but its form and growth seem always to tell of a hard struggle for life against unkindly fortunes. Here, too, for the first time we met with the Osher, or true Sodom apple (*Calotropis procera*), a shrub rather than a tree, of the Asclepiad family, with bark light and thick as cork, wrinkled and furrowed, and huge glossy leaves, from which, when broken or punctured, a flow of acrid milk was discharged. The blossoms are like a small magnolia, and the fruit, which it bore at the same time, like an orange in shape and size, of a golden yellow, soft to the touch, but if ripe, cracking like a puff-ball when slightly pressed, and containing only a long thread of seeds on a half-open pod, winged with a tuft of silky filaments.

The bright green hyssop clung to the cliffs above, and the colocynth, the wild gourd of 2 Kings iv. 40, straggled over the gravel near the shore. Its tendrils run along for many yards, and the fruit looks like a ripe melon, tempting both in appearance and odour. Nothing could be more natural to one not familiar with the plant than to make the mistake of Elisha's servant, and to gather it as a melon. This colocynth still exists about the plain of Jordan, near Gilgal, but was scarcely likely to be known by a man from the upper country. Of the vineyards of Engedi nothing remains save the arid and calcined terraces, with the cemented cisterns and water-courses; and even the camphire recorded by Solomon—"My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi" (Cant. i. 14)—is all but extinct. In one or two sheltered nooks remain a few bushes of this pretty shrub, with branches of pinkish white blossom shedding a pungent aromatic perfume around. To botanists it is well known by the name of *Lawsonia alba*, but many readers of the Canticles may not be aware that the camphire of Scripture is identical with the "henna" of oriental commerce, the indispensable requisite of the toilet of the harem, with which every lady, old or young, paints her eyebrows and fingers. "Though thou rentest thy face (Hebr. eyes) with painting, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair" (Jer. iv. 30).

But the most attractive shrub (at least at Christmastide) which Engedi produces is the graceful retem (*Retama monosperma*), a near relative of our brooms, with long pendant branches of small pink flowers, and minute foliage, growing sometimes to the height of ten or twelve feet. This is the tree mentioned in 1 Kings xix. 5, as the juniper (rothem), under which Elijah lay and slept in the wilderness. Of old, as now, it was considered to yield the best charcoal ("Sharp arrows of the mighty, with hot burning coals"—lit. "coals of retem": Ps. cxx. 4); and its bark can be used to support life in times of extremity, whence Job speaks of those who cut up mallows by the bushes and juniper roots (roots of retem) for their meat as the most miserable of the outcasts.

It was at Engedi, also, that we first found the *Salvadora persica*, a tropical tree, which, because it bears a pungent seed, has been by some set down as the mustard-tree of our Lord's parable. But it is a tree exclusively in Palestine confined to the hot seething recesses round the Dead Sea; it never could grow in the upper country, and could not have been familiar to the people of the land. The mustard of our Lord's parable must have been a *common* plant, and it must have been a garden herb. It is therefore wholly unnecessary to travel beyond the common mustard (*Sinapis nigra*), which at a later period of the year we saw overrunning the fields of the country, just as the wild mustard overspreads our corn-fields in

England. There is not a word in the New Testament about the birds building their nests in the mustard-tree, only that they "lodge" or perch in it, which they certainly do in the common mustard—there a much larger and more vigorous plant than here.

The flora of the south end of the Dead Sea is different again from that of its western shores. But on all sides of it the soap plant (*Salicornia fruticosa*) and salsolas of two species abounds; alluded to in Jerem. ii. 22: "Though thou take thee much sope, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord;" and by Malachi, "He is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's sope" (iii. 2.) The Bedouin burn it for alkali or soap, as kelp used to be burnt on the Scottish coasts; and it is interesting to note that its Arabic name is "kali," from which of course our "alkali" originates.

The ground carpet which is in its full glory in January, introduces us at once to the flora of Arabia, and of Nubia. We found eighty-two species in blossom in that month, and with the exception of a few weeds of almost world-wide distribution, none of them were European; but mostly Nubian, or Abyssinian, with a few Indian stragglers. In fact, just such a flora as we should expect in Arabia, lying between Africa and India; but geographically much nearer to the former. Richer still, but not varied in its shrubs and flowers, was the wide strip of watered land on the south-east of the Dead Sea, the "Ghor es Safieh," which has scarcely ever been penetrated by travellers, and where we saw butterflies of Nubian type, sipping the floral sweets in mid-winter, under a glowing sun, while sunbirds warbled, and thousands of Indian turtle-doves filled the air with their soothing murmurs. This region was the southern "Nimrim" of Moab (Isaiah xv. 6; Jer. xlviii. 34), beyond the furthest boundaries of Judah, with a climate as seductive, luxurious, and enervating as that of the northern Shittim at the other extremity of the sea. But this region is scarcely referred to in Holy Writ, beyond the allusions mentioned above to the verdure, the freshness, and the abundant waters of Nimrim. Let their "waters be cut off," and the herbage must wither and the plain be as desolate as the salt region, the lifeless Arabah to the south. While the Jordan valley is thus enjoying its floral summer, the mountain regions of Lebanon and Hermon are buried in snow; and Carmel, the glory of Israel, is bare and desolate. Each of these regions possesses a distinctive botanical character, and may be explored at different periods of the year; and it is to these districts especially that we must look for the flowers, and still more for the trees and shrubs, alluded to in Scripture. But for the present we must postpone plucking the almond of Carmel, roaming under the oaks of Bashan, or climbing to the cedar of Lebanon.

H. B. Tristram.

NOTES FOR READERS OUT OF THE WAY.

In the effort to stamp out both the Fenian conspiracy and the cattle-plague with which England has been so much occupied during the winter and spring, it has become more and more apparent that each of these phenomena has a moral as well as a physical aspect, and that both of these aspects must be attended to, if the evils are to be effectually cured. In regard to Fenianism, it is becoming more clear that very little progress is made towards real victory, even by the arrest and punishment of all suspected or troublesome persons. A fact remains behind—more ominous than all Fenian organisations and risings—that even when they have left their native country, and risen to prosperity in a far-away land, Irishmen continue to cherish the most active hatred to the dominant classes in Ireland, and deem it wise and patriotic to contribute their money, to risk their freedom, and to peril their lives and those of their countrymen at home, in the endeavour to emancipate them from thraldom. The origin of this feeling, the causes, real or imaginary, to which it is due, and the manner in which it is to be dealt with, form the real problem of the Fenian conspiracy. Whether anything effectual will be done towards sweetening the breath of Irish society; whether the measures that may be proposed, while meant to conciliate, may not in the end increase the evil; or whether, the immediate danger being removed, the whole subject will not drop out of sight and out of mind, to be brought up, half-a-generation hence, in some far more aggravated form, are questions which every well-wisher of that interesting land is now anxiously putting, and which may well increase the fervour of our prayers for the Divine wisdom to guide those who are entrusted with the destinies of Erin.

In spite of Professor Tyndall, Mr. Cranbrook, and other masters of modern thought, the serious mind of the country has deliberately gravitated to the conclusion that there are moral elements so connected with the cattle-plague as to make a solemn and earnest appeal to the Heavenly Father the fit duty of his children in their time of perplexity and need. Account for the Rinderpest as we may, the Christian instinct of the nation has recognised in it one of those dark shadows which sin casts upon our world, and under which the evil fruits of sin rush up, with a force and rapidity that appal us. Agricultural possessions have generally been counted so much more certain than those of commerce, that the temptation to hold one's self independent of Providence has been peculiarly strong in the case of those whose wealth is in the solid soil. Here is a lesson that agricultural as well as commercial riches may take to themselves wings and flee away, and that no class in the community can be exempted from the obligation to pray meekly and humbly, "Give us this day our daily bread." If any should be disposed to fix the guilt that has called for this chastisement on the agri-

cultural class alone, the principle that "if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it" comes in to correct the limitation. The Christian part of the nation has been regarding the cattle-plague in this light, in the exercises of humiliation and prayer that have been held in connexion with it. They have been trying to look on it as a national reproof and chastisement for abounding sin; and endeavouring to cherish the feeling, that it is of far more essential moment that the sins that have rendered it necessary should be forsaken than that the calamity should pass away if the sinful spirit remain.

The critical spirit of the age, so severe on every institution that rests in any considerable measure on traditional grounds, is ever apt to be excited against the sermons of the present day. Dean Ramsay, mainly through a single fact brought out in two recent lectures on preaching, has been the unwitting occasion of reviving the complaints which "Habitans in Sicco" and others used to urge so strongly three or four years ago. According to the calculations of Dean Ramsay, nearly four millions of sermons are preached annually from British pulpits. The fact has set some persons to speculate on the amazing disproportion between the labour applied and the results achieved by this extraordinary discharge of preaching artillery. It seems to be taken for granted that because there is a great amount of labour wasted in poor, feeble, inefficient sermons, the whole system must be essentially at fault. In such representations, little or no allowance is made for the nature of the case, or the difficulty of securing the results to which preaching is directed. It is impossible to secure that all preachers shall be efficient, or even to tell in every case when a preacher is efficient, and when he is not so. It is unfair to put preaching in the category of a mechanical craft, and to judge of it accordingly. Preaching is the chief means of awakening men to the true glory of their being, of bringing them to God, and of creating and renewing the spirit of faith and love; of reverential regard for the unseen; of self-control, self-improvement, philanthropy, and many kindred graces, that would have little or no influence without it. It is necessarily a somewhat indefinite art. That on the whole, in spite of all its defects, it succeeds better in achieving these results than anything else could, would probably be best seen if it were to be discontinued for a twelvemonth, and the Sunday evening lecturers of St. Martin's Hall were to occupy all the pulpits. The remarkable thing is, that notwithstanding all the sermons that church-going people hear as a matter of course, they are still capable of relishing more. Additional lectures announced, especially when they bear on topics that come home to the business and the bosom, command large assemblages. We may point to the instances of lectures recently delivered in Edinburgh and Glasgow, on some of the sceptical tendencies of the day. The lesson should not be lost on preachers, that the more their discourses are thus brought home to actual thoughts and feelings the more interest will they excite. Even in Berlin, notoriously a non-church-going city, such lectures are well attended. Under the auspices of the Evangelical Society a course is now going on in Berlin on such subjects as these:—Modern Infidel Views and Divine Revelation; the Nobility and the Church; the Liberal Tendencies in our Era; Inspiration; the Trinity; Romanism and Protestantism. As yet, at least, there is not much sign that the popularity or the power of the pulpit is to be numbered among the things that have passed away.

Efforts on behalf of the poor of London continue to be made, but great difficulty is felt in getting machinery brought to bear on existing evils, at all commensurate with their fearful magnitude. Among the Bills introduced into Parliament, one by Mr. Villiers provides for the relief of the casual poor; one by Mr. Childers proposes to enable the Public Works Commissioners to make advances towards the erection of houses for the working classes; and one by Mr. McCullagh Torrens has the same provision, but makes the erection of new houses compulsory when they are plainly required. Meanwhile, fresh glimpses are given of the moral and religious state of some districts where the working classes cluster. The Rev. J. McCrie, a missionary in connexion with Mr. Brock's congregation at Bloomsbury, lately observed: "In the district of one missionary, comprising but little over 100 houses, there were, among others, 350 fallen women. There were also eight public-houses, the value of which was measured by the poverty of the people. In the case of one, 17,000*l.* was paid by an incoming to the outgoing tenant on transfer. Almost in a ring fence about Seven Dials, where he (Mr. Mc C.) was accustomed to preach in the open air, to congregations as attentive as the present meeting, there were twenty-seven public-houses, whose annual takings were estimated at 46,000*l.* The social degradation and cruelty which the missionaries had to confront were fearful beyond description. Yet even among such as these the Gospel—not secularism or Sunday oratorios—was proving (as he showed by examples) the power of God unto Salvation. Yes! St. Giles's was changing and improving every day; old St. Giles's was ceasing to exist, and new St. Giles's was beginning to come."

A journal of some note in France, the "Etudes Religieuses, Historiques, et Litteraires," edited by the Fathers of the Company of Jesus, has been giving its readers some curious information respecting the movements of Dr. Pusey, and other friends of union with the Romish Church. The editors (according to the Paris correspondent of the *Guardian*) doubt whether, as they have been assured, that eminent "plenipotentiary of peace" has really at his back the majority of the Anglican Episcopate and the most considerable part of the English Church; nor do they regard the advances made towards communion with the Eastern Church as any indication of an advance to Rome. A correspondent of the "Etudes" in England dwells on the eminent services Dr. Pusey has rendered for the salvation of souls, especially by causing millions of heeetical infants to be purified, by real baptism, from the original taint of sin, and to become legions of angels in heaven. This correspondent thinks the present movement

much more hopeful than the timid one of 1840, as "the re-establishment of [Roman] Catholic sacerdotal ornaments" in so many churches in England is expressive of "a complete profession of faith on the the eucharistic sacrifice." In a second paper the editors speak more despondingly, having regard to the severe judgment passed on the "Eirenikon" by the "Month," and confessing that the conversion *en masse* of the English Church would be "only short of a miracle, a real *coup d'état* of Providence." The correspondent in England thinks that the great difficulty in the way of the conversion of the Church is the hold which the Queen, Parliament, and ecclesiastical tribunals possess over it, and the low esteem in which baptism and ordination have been held. He regards Anglican baptism and ordination as null and void, and quotes the remark of a converted Anglican clergyman, who said of himself that "he was no more a priest than a horse." Dr. Pusey is held to be in error in separating the popular religious belief of the Church of Rome from its dogmatic teaching. Even the doctrine of Liguori that "by the intercession of the Virgin we may obtain every grace necessary to avoid evil and do good," is founded, it is said, "on the most solid theology." It is hoped by these people that Dr. Pusey will see his error in attributing to the Church views which are only the exaggerations of a few pious writers, and give up "that pretended popular system" which Dr. Newman has refuted in his recent letter. It is affirmed that Dr. Pusey's most earnest wish is, that Rome would speak out, and give the olive branch to eager Anglicans. It would appear that Rome is quite willing to give them the olive branch, and everything else, if only these Anglicans would accept her terms of "unqualified submission."

The readers of the SUNDAY MAGAZINE are familiar with the marvellous charitable establishments that have sprung into existence and prosperity at Laforce, in France, under the cherishing hand of that hero of faith and devotion, M. John Bost. (See Vol. I., p. 711.) Called some twenty years ago to be the pastor of a handful of godly people, who were virtually thrust out of the communion of the Reformed Protestant Church by the intrusion of a rationalist minister, M. Bost has made his little church the nucleus around which no fewer than five great charitable institutions have been gathered, La Famille Evangelique, Bethesda, Siloé, Eben-ezer and Bethel; where "the daughters of females of bad character, incurables, the infirm, the blind, the sick blind, the idiot, the imbecile, the epileptic from all parts of France and Switzerland," have received a kind and most Christian treatment. The labours of M. Bost in collecting funds for the erection and yearly support of these institutions, where more than 200 unfortunate beings find a home and Christian nurture, form one of the most interesting records of modern Christian enterprise. The time has now come when these institutions must be recognised by the State. All M. Bost's best friends are of this opinion. This is necessary, in order to have the title-deeds of the property rightly constituted according to the law of France. But in carrying out this arrangement for the charitable institutions, the chapel must be put on a separate footing, and in order to do this, the existing chapel is to be turned into dormitories, infirmaries and schools, and a new chapel of much larger size and of peculiar construction is to be built. It will be fitted up in such a way as to allow all the patients—the insane and epileptic included, to worship in it. Six apartments, separate from the body of the chapel, are to be prepared for them. They will see and hear the pastor, and join, says M. Bost, in singing praises to the Lord who made when on earth the sick, the poor, the lunatics, the objects of his tender care. The chapel is to cost £1500, and will hold 1000 persons. M. Bost has issued an appeal for £500, to which we cannot doubt the friends and admirers of his charities will most readily respond.

The year 1867, as our readers know, is proposed to be signalised at Paris by a Universal Exhibition. The commissioners have made a proposal of a gratifying kind, for recognising the efforts of missionary societies, in connexion with this exhibition. They have offered to the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, under the charge of their committee, to grant accommodation for a general exhibition connected with all the Protestant Missionary Societies in Europe and America. The proposal is that the different Societies send all they deem calculated to give an idea of the religious, intellectual, and social condition of the nations among whom they labour; native implements, weapons, dress, and produce, both in agriculture and industry, before and since the introduction of Christianity; imitations, on a reduced scale, of their pristine and present dwellings; translations of the Bible, books, tracts; journals printed in the stations; works published by missionaries, especially on travels and philology; specimens of the writing of native converts in their respective languages, and those of Europe which they have learned; idols, and all sorts of curiosities; specimens which may throw light on points of natural history, &c. These proposals have been made to us (says the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society) in the most liberal spirit, and we hope they will meet with the approval of your committee. A precious opportunity is offered to Protestantism to show itself to the world in its missionary character, that cannot fail to create a most favourable impression on its behalf, and will be especially beneficial to visitors coming from the southern countries of Europe, and in general to the fractions of the Latin race who have hitherto remained ignorant of what we do for the spreading of the Gospel in the world. Although the room be common to all the Societies, and one general inscription on the entrance blend them together, the name of each Society shall be affixed to the part of the boards assigned to it. It is expected that the French Government will make arrangements with all steam companies to lessen as much as possible the costs of conveyance for all the exhibitors.

The approach of the time stipulated for the evacua-

tion of Rome by the French garrison excites increasing, though in many instances suppressed, interest in the results by which that step will be followed. The belief prevails in many influential quarters that when the French leave there will be no conflict, because all classes at Rome will unite in seeking annexation to the kingdom of Italy. The speech of the leader of the advanced opposition, M. Jules Favre, in the French Chamber, on the Roman question, is said to have made a deep impression. Its conclusion is striking. In answer to the question, Whence came the regeneration of the Pagan world? (of whose despotism and degradation he had given a striking picture) he said:—"From a God born poor and in a manger, and twelve poor fishermen who taught his doctrine, but who had to aid them neither fleets, nor armies, nor capital, nor material agents, nor anything save the light of truth reflected from their own souls. Christianity, be assured, gentlemen, has entered upon its philanthropic phase, and is only strengthening itself by the light of science. Instead of barring the way to this development, open the door wide that it may make a new compact of alliance with the age; that they may be reconciled to each other, that the age may profit by the moral power of Christianity, and Christianity by the material power of the age, after first raising it to its own level. If such be your faith, as it is mine, humiliate it not by subjecting it to formalities which are in flagrant contradiction to it; offend not God by the supposition that his eternal doctrines can be subordinate to the errors and incidental passions of his creatures."

Whatever other effects the Roman question may have, it seems to be opening the eyes of many to the spiritual character of true Christianity, and its essential glory as a heavenly power, doing its work by the divine force of truth, love, and purity. Even the first Napoleon, in his conflict with the Pope, caught glimpses of this truth, although it seems to have produced in him but little fruit. The nineteenth volume of his correspondence, lately issued, shows the ideas he had on the subject when he made up his mind, in 1809, to overthrow the Pope's temporal authority. Although it was to serve his own ambitious projects that he caught at the idea of the spirituality of Christ's kingdom, he expresses himself on the subject with great point and force. In a letter to his Foreign Minister he says:—"Jesus Christ, born of the race of David, did not desire to be a king. The founders of our religion during centuries were not kings. There is no doctor of the Church, no historian of good faith, who will not admit that the temporal power of the Popes has been fatal to religion. 'My kingdom is not of this world,' said Jesus Christ; and by that doctrine He for ever condemned all blending of religious interests and worldly ambition. The interests of religion and those of the people of France, of Germany, and of Italy equally compel his Majesty to put an end to this ridiculous temporal power—the feeble remains of the extravagances of the Gregories, &c., who pretend to reign over kings, to give away crowns, and to have the direction of the affairs of the earth as well as those of Heaven." Again, writing to the Bishops of France on the 13th of July, he says, with a fling at Protestants and Calvinists, that shows how exclusively political his stand-point was:—"Our Lord Jesus Christ, though sprung from the race of David, did not desire a temporal reign; on the contrary, He desired that Cæsar should be obeyed in the administration of worldly affairs. He was animated only by one great object—the redemption and salvation of souls. As the inheritor of the power of Cæsar, we are resolved to maintain the independence of our throne and the integrity of our rights. We will persevere in the great work of the re-establishment of religion. We will encircle its ministers with the respect which only we can give them. We will listen to their voice in all that relates to things spiritual and to conscience. . . . We shall not be turned aside from the great object we aim at, and which we have in great part attained—the re-establishment of the altars of our religion—by disposing us to believe that its principles are incompatible, as the Greeks, the English Protestants, and Calvinists have pretended, with the independence of thrones and nations. God has enlightened us sufficiently to be on our guard against sharing such errors; our heart and those of our subjects feel no such fear. We know that those who would make the eternal interest of our conscience and of spiritual affairs depend on that of a perishable temporal authority, are strangers to the charity, the spirit, and the religion of Him who has said, 'My empire is not of this world.'"

If the present Napoleon shares these sentiments, it is likely enough that the destruction of the temporal power would be followed by special efforts on his part, as on the part of the Roman Catholic sovereigns, to uphold the Church in its spiritual interests and influence. For the direct work of the Gospel, therefore, it is evident that little reliance is to be placed on any political changes that may occur at Rome. We turn with deeper interest than ever to the efforts of the Waldenses and other Evangelical bodies to scatter Bibles and diffuse the truth as it is in Jesus throughout Italy. On behalf of the Waldenses, a strong effort has been making to establish auxiliary societies in this country, for supplying them steadily and liberally with the means of carrying on their work. Dr. Revel, M. Prochet, and Dr. Stewart of Leghorn, have been prosecuting their object in Scotland with great success; when they go south to England, it is to be hoped they will be received with not less enthusiasm.

The great missionary societies seem to be passing through a financial crisis. The necessity of curtailing their operations has most reluctantly been pressed upon some of them. It is not that the receipts have become less, but the limit of expansion seems to have been reached in regard to spontaneous contributions, but not in regard to operations. Most of the committees are issuing appeals, in the hope of realising such an addition before the close of their financial years as shall avert the calamity of curtailment. The Wesleyan Missionary Society have issued an appeal for fifteen thousand extra pounds, and have had the gratification, as soon as their wants were made known, of

receiving a third part of the whole, or 5000*l.*, from a single lady. But the fact that the revenue is not spontaneously increasing with the increasing operations of the great societies, is an instructive one. It cannot be pretended that the limit of ability to contribute is reached, especially when the country is in such a prosperous state. It seems as if the time had come when it is necessary to indoctrinate the Christian community with the principle of systematic beneficence. The separation of a specific portion of the income from ordinary uses, and its solemn dedication to the Lord, for the service of his cause and the relief of his poor, if systematically and generally practised, while it would vastly increase the revenue of philanthropic societies, would react with most beneficial effect on the givers, deepening their feeling of responsibility, and teaching them, in all their spendings, to have more regard to the will of God.

An interesting narrative occurs in the "Church Missionary Intelligencer" of a missionary tour in the interior of the province of Fuh-kien, in south-eastern China, by the Rev. J. R. Wolfe. In that province every town and village are at present open to the Gospel, and Mr. Wolfe, accompanied by a Christian merchant, a colporteur, and some coolies, spent a month lately in exploring a part of it. The whole journey, with the exception of seventeen miles, was performed on foot, and the travellers passed through two "Fu," cities, fourteen large towns, and countless villages of from 800 to 3000 population. They were the first Europeans that had ever been seen by the natives, at least in the northern part of the province. At every village the entire population turned out to look at them. Labourers in the distant fields would leave their implements, and run to see them, and woodcutters on the cliffs would rush down to meet them by some by-path. The children often screamed, and fled at the approach of the "barbarian ghosts." Their eyes and noses struck the natives most. They frequently ventured to touch their noses and examine their eyes closely. Their dress, too, excited much curiosity, but after a time they became so accustomed to the treatment, that they would fall asleep while the natives were handling their clothes. On the whole, the country presented a high appearance of prosperity and civilisation. The temples of Confucius were very elaborate, large sums of money being often expended on their adornment. Idols and idolatrous shrines and altars met them at every turn, reminding them of the remark of the satirist, that "in Athens it was easier to find a god than a man." The scenery is often very fine, and at a distance the towns look like celestial paradises; but on closer inspection, the awful filth effectually breaks the enchantment.

At the town of Kang-chia, they witnessed a gorgeous procession. It was in honour of a great idol in the town, and consisted of men and boys. Some were beating drums and gongs, which made a confused noise; others played a sort of fife. In the centre of the procession, borne on men's shoulders, was a large boiled hog, tastefully decorated with flowers. Immediately behind the hog was borne, in like manner, a boiled goat, and after the goat a cooked fowl. These were to form an offering to the idol, in order to appease his wrath. The missionary tried to turn the occasion to account by telling of the true God, and Jesus Christ the Saviour, and distributing Bibles and tracts. In one place, when speaking to the people of the ill effects of opium smoking, they invariably turned round and said, "Then why do you bring it to us, and even compel our emperor to allow it into the kingdom? Go, talk to your own people, and tell them of their crime." Mr. Wolfe set out with the intention of leaving one copy of the New Testament in every town and village through which he passed, but the number of villages proved to be ten times more than the number of Testaments he had with him. In so rapid a tour, he could do little more than scatter a few handfuls of seed by the way side; but his narrative shows plainly what vast multitudes of immortal beings in that district are accessible to the missionary, and increases the regret which all good men must feel that the means and the men are so inadequate to the vast area that needs to be supplied with the Gospel.

Among the books that have lately appeared, we notice first the "Boyle Lecture for 1865," which has for its subject the Conversion of the Northern Nations to Christianity. The Lecturer is the Rev. Charles Merivale, well known in the literary world as the author of an elaborate and able work, in seven volumes, on the History of the Romans under the Empire. The present volume is a continuation of the Boyle Lecture of the preceding year, the subject of which was the Conversion of the Roman Empire. The subject is treated from a philosophical point of view, and if one opened the book in the hope of finding interesting details of the way in which the Gospel spread among the Goths or Huns, one would be quite disappointed. The object of Mr. Merivale is very similar to that of Mr. Gladstone in his late address to the students of Edinburgh; it is to trace a providential preparation for the Gospel both among the Romans, and the Northern nations. He holds that for long ages, God in his wonderful providence, was making ready a people for Christianity, and that to a large extent this was done by keeping alive among them certain of the great truths of that primitive revelation which God is believed to have made to the first men,—such as the existence of God, the evil of sin, and the responsibility of man. When Christianity was made known among some of the pagan nations, it caught hold of them, as it were, by these truths, on which it threw a flood of new light; while at the same time it irevealed to them truths respecting grace, atonement, sanctification and eternal life which were entirely new. In the case of the northern nations, Mr. Merivale finds a groundwork for Christian doctrines in several of their characteristic beliefs. Another preparation for their conversion lay in certain events that occurred before the final irruption of the barbarians into Rome. Long before that, many of them had been brought to Rome as prisoners, and had made sport for their conquerors in the gladiatorial fights of the amphitheatre. Some had been employed in military ser-

vice, and many of both had probably come into contact with earnest Christians, and had wafted to their distant homes tidings of a body of people whose warm love was such a contrast to the usual harshness and heartlessness of their masters. The persecutions of the early ages had driven many Roman Christians for shelter among the barbarians, who had thus the opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with a people of so remarkable a spirit. Then when the barbarians did rush upon the empire, they were often met, not by the sword and spear of the warrior, but by bands of Christian men, exposing themselves defenceless to their arms. "From realm to realm, from city to city, we see the bishop marching with his clergy, singing psalms, addressing invocations, arresting the inundation, slaying the plague. Sometimes he prays, sometimes he adjures, sometimes he offers the example of holy martyrdom. And so he conquers his conquerors." The rush of the barbarians seemed to many Christians to presage the end of the world; and nothing could have been more beautiful than the manner in which the chaos gave way, the storm was changed into a calm, and the barbarians themselves came to sit at the feet of Jesus.

"Some Words for God" is the not very well chosen title under which the Rev. H. P. Liddon publishes a volume of Oxford University sermons, preached chiefly during the years 1863—5. Mr. Liddon's is a name that has already become famous in his own circle, and that bids fair to become famous over a much wider area. The Bampton Lecturer for the present year, and one of the most influential men among Oxford students, his writings claim a special interest. This volume of sermons is one of remarkable ability and suitableness for the times. The sermons are to a large extent religious essays, but written with an earnest practical tone that establishes their claim to the former epithet. Here and there a certain tinge of sacramentarianism indicates the author's ecclesiastical leanings, but the great articles of the Christian faith are stated with a faithfulness and vindicated with a power that make us feel thankful that such a voice is heard and loved in Oxford. The fairness with which Mr. Liddon treats his opponents is conspicuous in every page. His frankness in admitting the dangers of high education in general, and the defects of Oxford training in particular, is equally remarkable. Yet, when unfolding how "the Son of God loved me and gave himself for me," he stands on the old ground, on which saints and martyrs have stood from the beginning, and vindicates "the substitution of Christ for the guilty sinner the ground of the satisfaction which Christ has made on the cross for human sin."

In "Little Foxes," Mrs. Beecher Stowe gives us a series of lively little homilies on "The Insignificant *Little* Habits which mar domestic happiness." Papa, it seems, was in the habit of giving his young folks a course of evening readings every winter; and somewhat to the consternation of his family, he one day announced his intention of preaching them a course of household sermons. The doubt of the young folks whether this was the right way to entertain them was somewhat relieved, when he announced his text, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes." Whether it be right to rank foxes among clean beasts, may be a question; but like Noah's clean beasts in the ark, the little foxes are here in a group of seven. These are: 1. Fault-finding; 2. Irritability; 3. Repression; 4. Self-will; 5. Intolerance; 6. Discourteousness; 7. Exactingness. Mrs. Standfast is an excellent woman, but little fox No. 1 has made fearful havoc of her grapes. She is perpetually finding fault—servants, children, husband, all are constantly in the wrong. The Rev. Mr. X. is the victim of fox No. 2. In the pulpit he appears with the face of an angel; he soars away into regions of exalted devotion where his people can but faintly gaze after him; he tells them of the victory that overcometh the world, of an unmoved faith that fears no evil, of a serenity of love that no outward event can ruffle; and all look after him and wonder, and wish they could so soar. All except his poor wife, who knows that all this, following as it does a fortnight's incessant work, involves an unnatural excitement of his brain and nerves that will cause a painful reaction. She knows that he who spoke so beautifully of the peace of a soul made perfect, will not be able to bear the cry of his baby, or the pattering feet of the poor little X.'s, who must be sent

> "Anywhere, anywhere
> Out of his sight;"

he who discoursed so devoutly of perfect trust in God will be nervous about his butcher's bill, sure of going to ruin, because both ends of the salary don't meet; and he who could so admiringly tell of the silence of Jesus under provocation, will but too often speak unadvisedly with his lips.

In the field of Christian missions, there is an interesting book by the late Mrs. Mullens—"Faith and Victory; a Story of the Progress of Christianity in Bengal." The story was written rather for the Hindus than for the English; but Mrs. Mullens thought that what might be useful in instructing the one, might also be of service in interesting the other in the condition of their oriental brothers and sisters. It is a history of a Hindu family, one of whose members was converted to Christ, and it is designed to show the tremendous difficulties in the way of the reception of the truth, arising from the social habits and feelings of the people, as well as from causes of more general influence. A Brahmin has four sons, to all of whom, except the first, he gives a good English education. The first grows up a bigoted Hindu. The second is inwardly pretty much of an unbeliever, though outwardly adhering to Hinduism. The third is attracted by the truth, and ultimately becomes a Christian; the fourth wavers. The interest of the story chiefly centres in the third son. He has a friend who has been converted to Christianity; from him he gets a copy of the New Testament, which he reads with deep interest; he is convinced of its truth; leaves home, and goes to a missionary. His father is in a fearful rage, and with his other relatives, tries every means of turning him from his purpose—first, persuasion; then, law; thirdly, force. On the eve of his baptism, he is car-

ried off and hid. His eldest brother is commissioned to administer a poison that shall make him an idiot. This plan is frustrated by the grandmother, who has a regard for the youth, and some sympathy with his Christian tendencies. Instead of the poisoned sherbet, she administers a draught which for twelve hours produces an insensibility that looks like death. Under the influence of this, he is supposed to be dead. His eldest brother comes to bury him. In the midst of the funeral rites, he recovers, and starts up, terrifying all, and driving his brother clean mad. In the confusion that ensues, he makes his escape. Like his brother, he had been early married; the wives of all, and several other women, lived together, and a part of the story is occupied with the description of their social life and habits. After his recovery, the grandmother asks him about Christ, and when she dies she is heard praying to Jesus. His own wife becomes anxious about the truth, and desirous of rejoining her husband. This she at last accomplishes. They both throw in their lot with the Christians, and the book ends by contrasting the blessed life of their Christian home with the miseries of a Hindu domestic establishment. The pictures of Hindu life are exceedingly instructive; and the book is well fitted to give a vivid conception of the habits of the people, and of the terrible and often tragical struggles through which it is often necessary for the inquirer to wrestle, on his way to Christ.

Lord Kinloch, one of the judges of the Court of Session, who has already given the public a volume of religious verse and one of prose, has added to the list a book entitled "Studies for Sunday Evenings." They are a collection of lay sermons on practical subjects, not remarkable for great depth or power, but fresh and interesting, as the contributions of an independent, earnest, pious mind, on the most vital subjects of religious interest. Conservative in his leanings, and verifying the old judgments in most of his conclusions, Lord Kinloch at the same time claims a freedom of opinion on some points that shows that he has not slavishly endorsed established tenets. His volume will be greatly prized by earnest readers, and by publishing it the learned author has laid the Christian public under a fresh obligation.

"The Rev. Father Pius, a Sp. Sancto Passionist," has written the life of one of the modern saints and miracle-workers of the Church of Rome—Father Ignatius of St. Paul, as he was called. The Hon. and Rev. George Spencer, son of the Earl Spencer who was First Lord of the Admiralty in the time of Nelson's victories, became a convert to Roman Catholic views some thirty-five years ago, swinging like a pendulum in full motion from the extreme of worldliness on the one hand, to the extreme of asceticism on the other. His entrance into holy orders seems to have been effected without any preparatory study; and when he obtained charge of the parish of Brington, his fame as a hunter and a waltzer appears to have suffered no abatement, while his profuse and indiscriminate charities brought him a great share of popular favour. Impulsive, unsettled, and probably unsatisfied, he was induced, at the instigation of a boy of seventeen, to join the Church of Rome; and then he became a member of the order of the Passionists, subjecting himself to the most constant and rigorous privations, and begging his way from place to place. His special function was to pray for the conversion of England to the Catholic faith; and at one time he was in great hopes that through the aid of the Emperors of France and Austria this object would be accomplished; but he does not seem to have been able to persuade these monarchs to get their bishops to make the clergy pray for it. According to his biographer, Father Ignatius had the gift of miracles; but this was not very remarkable, for many priests possess it too. This poor devotee, whose zeal and self-sacrifice, under enlightened auspices, might have made him an honour to Christ's Church and a blessing to his country, was found dead at the roadside two years ago, on his way to the house of his brother-pervert, Mr. Monteith, of Carstairs.

Drawn by R. Barnes.

"PUT THAT TABLE DOWN DIRECTLY!"

ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BY THE VICAR.

XVI.

One little matter I forgot to mention as having been talked about between Dr. Duncan and myself that same evening. I happened to refer to Old Rogers.

"What a fine old fellow that is!" said Dr. Duncan.

"Indeed he is," I answered. "He is a great comfort and help to me. I don't think anybody but myself has an idea what there is in that old man."

"The people in the village don't quite like him, though, I find. He is too ready to be down upon them when he sees things going amiss. The fact is, they are afraid of him."

"Something as the Jews were afraid of John the Baptist, because he was an honest man, and spoke not merely his own mind, but the mind of God in it."

"Just so. I believe you're quite right. Do you know, the other day, happening to go into Weir's shop, to get him to do a job for me, I found him and Old Rogers at close quarters in an argument. I could not well understand the drift of it, not having been present at the beginning, but I soon saw that, keen as Weir was, and far surpassing Rogers in correctness of speech, and precision as well, the old sailor carried too heavy metal for the carpenter. It evidently annoyed Weir; but such was the good humour of Rogers, that he could not, for very shame, lose his temper, the old man's smile again and again compelling a response on the thin cheeks of the other."

"I know how he would talk exactly," I returned. "He has a kind of loving banter with him, if you will allow me the expression, that is irresistible to any man with a heart in his bosom. I am very glad to hear there is anything like communion begun between them. Weir will get good from him."

"My man-of-all-work is going to leave me. I wonder if the old man would take his place."

"I do not know whether he is fit for it. But of one thing you may be sure—if Old Rogers does not honestly believe he is fit for it, he will not take it. And he will tell you why, too."

"Of that, however, I think I may be a better judge than he. There is nothing to which a good sailor cannot turn his hand, whatever he may think himself. You see, Mr. Walton, it is not like a routine trade. Things are never twice the same at sea. The sailor has a thousand chances of using his judgment, if he has any to use; and that Old Rogers has in no common degree. So I should have no fear of him. If he won't let me steer him, you must put your hand to the tiller for me."

"I will do what I can," I answered; "for nothing would please me more than to see him in your service. It would be much better for him, and his wife, too, than living by uncertain jobs as he does now."

The result of it all was, that Old Rogers consented to try for a month; but when the end of the month came, nothing was said on either side, and the old man remained. And I could see several little new comforts about the cottage, in consequence of the regularity of his wages.

Now I must report another occurrence in regular sequence.

To my surprise, and, I must confess, not a little to my discomposure, when I rose in the reading-desk on the day after this dinner with Dr. Duncan, I saw that the Hall-pew was full. Miss Oldcastle was there for the first time, and, by her side, the gentleman whom the day before I had encountered on horseback. He sat carelessly, easily, contentedly—indifferently; for, although I never that morning looked up from my prayer-book, except involuntarily in the changes of posture, I could not help seeing that he was always behind the rest of the congregation, as if he had no idea of what was coming next, or did not care to conform. Gladly would I, that day, have shunned the necessity of preaching that was laid upon me. "But," I said to myself, "shall the work given me to do, fare ill because of the perturbation of my spirit? No harm is done, though I suffer; but much harm if one tone fails of its force because I suffer." I therefore prayed God to help me; and feeling the right, because I felt the need, of looking to Him for aid, I cast my care upon Him, kept my thoughts strenuously away from that which discomposed me, and never turned my eyes towards the Hall-pew from the moment I entered the pulpit. And partly, I presume, from the freedom given by the sense of irresponsibility for the result, I being weak and God strong, I preached, I think, a better sermon than I had ever preached before. But when I got into the vestry I found that I could scarcely stand for trembling; and I must have looked ill, for when my attendant came in he got me a glass of wine without even asking me if I would have it, although it was not my custom to take any there. But there was one of my congregation that morning who suffered more than I did from the presence of one of those who filled the Hall-pew.

I recovered in a few moments from my weakness, but, altogether disinclined to face any of my congregation, went out at my vestry-door, and home through the shrubbery—a path I seldom used, because it had a separatist look about it. When I got to my study, I threw myself on a couch, and fell fast asleep. How often in trouble have I had to thank God for sleep as for one of his best gifts! And how often when I have awaked refreshed and calm, have I thought of poor Sir Philip Sidney, who, dying slowly and patiently in the prime of life and health, was sorely troubled in his mind to know how he had offended God, because, having prayed earnestly for sleep, no sleep came in answer to his cry!

I woke just in time for my afternoon service; and the inward peace in which I found my heart was to myself a marvel and a delight. I felt almost as if I was walk-

ing in a blessed dream come from a world of serener air than this of ours. I found, after I was already in the reading-desk, that I was a few minutes early; and while, with bowed head, I was simply living in the consciousness of the presence of a supreme quiet, the first low notes of the organ broke upon my stillness with the sense of a deeper delight. Never before had I felt, as I felt that afternoon, the triumph of contemplation in Handel's rendering of "I know that my Redeemer liveth." And I felt how through it all ran a cold silvery quiver of sadness, like the light in the east after the sun is gone down, which would have been pain, but for the golden glow of the west, which looks after the light of the world with a patient waiting.—Before the music ceased, it had crossed my mind that I had never before heard that organ utter itself in the language of Handel. But I had no time to think more about it just then, for I rose to read the words of our Lord, "I will arise and go to my Father."

There was no one in the Hall-pew; indeed, it was a rare occurrence if anyone was there in the afternoon.

But for all the quietness of my mind during that evening service, I felt ill before I went to bed, and awoke in the morning with a headache, which increased along with other signs of perturbation of the system, until I thought it better to send for Dr. Duncan. I have not yet got so imbecile as to suppose that a history of the following six weeks would be interesting to my readers—for during so long did I suffer from low fever; and more weeks passed, during which I was unable to meet my flock. Thanks to the care of Mr. Brownrigg, a clever young man in priest's orders, who was living at Addicehead while waiting for a curacy, kindly undertook my duty for me, and thus relieved me of all anxiety about supplying my place.

XVII.

But I cannot express equal satisfaction in regard to everything that Mr. Brownrigg took upon his own responsibility, as my reader will see. He, and another farmer, his neighbour, had been so often re-elected churchwardens that at last they seemed to have gained a prescriptive right to the office, and the form of election fell into disuse; so much so, that after Mr. Summer's death, which took place some year and a half before I became Vicar of Marshmallows, Mr. Brownrigg continued to exercise the duty in his own single person, and nothing had as yet been said about the election of a colleague. So little seemed to fall to the duty of the churchwarden that I regarded the neglect as a trifle, and was remiss in setting it right. I had, therefore, to suffer, as was just. Indeed, Mr. Brownrigg was not the man to have power in his hands unchecked.

I had so far recovered that I was able to rise about noon and go into my study, though I was very weak, and had not yet been out, when one morning Mrs. Pearson came into the room and said,—

"Please, sir, here's young Thomas Weir in a great way about something, and insisting upon seeing you, if you possibly can."

I had as yet seen very few of my friends, except the Doctor, and those only for two or three minutes; but although I did not feel very fit for seeing anybody just then, I could not but yield to his desire, confident there must be a good reason for it, and so told Mrs. Pearson to show him in.

"Oh, sir, I know you would be vexed if you hadn't been told," he exclaimed, "and I am sure you will not be angry with me for troubling you."

"What is the matter, Tom?" I said. "I assure you I shall not be angry with you."

"There's Farmer Brownrigg, at this very moment, taking away Mr. Templeton's table because he wont pay the church-rate."

"What church-rate?" I cried, starting up from the sofa. "I never heard of a church-rate."

Now before I go farther, it is necessary to explain some things. One day before I was taken ill, I had had a little talk with Mr. Brownrigg about some repairs of the church which were necessary, and must be done before another winter. I confess I was rather pleased; for I wanted my people to feel that the church was their property, and that it was their privilege, if they could regard it as a blessing to have the church, to keep it in decent order and repair. So I said, in a by-the-by way, to my churchwarden, "We must call a vestry before long, and have this looked to." Now my predecessor had left everything of the kind to his churchwardens; and the inhabitants from their side had likewise left the whole affair to the churchwardens. But Mr. Brownrigg, who, I must say, had taken more pains than might have been expected of him to make himself acquainted with the legalities of his office, did not fail to call a vestry, to which, as usual, no one had responded; whereupon he imposed a rate according to his own unaided judgment. This, I believe, he did during my illness with the notion of pleasing me by the discovery that the repairs had been effected according to my mind. Nor did any one of my congregation throw the least difficulty in the churchwarden's way.—And now I must refer to another circumstance in the history of my parish.

I think I have already alluded to the fact that there were dissenters in Marshmallows. There was a little chapel down a lane leading from the main street of the village, in which there was service three times every Sunday. People came to it from many parts of the parish, amongst whom were the families of two or three farmers of substance, while the village and its neighbourhood contributed a portion of the poorest of the inhabitants. A year or two before I came, their minister died, and they had chosen another, a very worthy man, of considerable erudition, but of extreme views, as I heard, upon insignificant points, and moved by a great dislike to national churches and episcopacy. This, I say, is what I had made out about him from what I had heard. My reader will very probably be inclined to ask, "But why, with principles such as yours, should you have only hearsay to go upon? Why did you not make the honest man's acquaintance? In such a small place, men should not keep each other at arm's length." And any reader who says so, will say right. All I have to suggest for myself is simply a certain shyness, for which I cannot entirely account,

but which was partly made up of fear to intrude, or of being supposed to arrogate to myself the right of making advances, partly of a dread lest we should not be able to get on together, and so the attempt should result in something unpleasantly awkward. I daresay, likewise, that the natural *shelliness* of the English had something to do with it. At all events, I had not made his acquaintance.

Mr. Templeton, then, had refused, as a point of conscience, to pay the church-rate when the collector went round to demand it; had been summoned before a magistrate in consequence; had suffered a default; and, proceedings being pushed from the first in all the pride of Mr. Brownrigg's legality, had on this very day been visited by the churchwarden, accompanied by a broker from the neighbouring town of Addicehead, and at the very time when I was hearing of the fact was suffering distraint of his goods. The porcine head of the churchwarden was not there by accident, nor without significance.

But I did not wait to understand all this now. It was enough for me that Tom bore witness to the fact that at that moment proceedings were thus driven to extremity. I rang the bell for my boots, and, to the open-mouthed dismay of Mrs. Pearson, left the vicarage leaning on Tom's arm. But such was the commotion in my mind, that I had become quite unconscious of illness or even feebleness. Hurrying on in more terror than I can well express lest I should be too late, I reached Mr. Templeton's house just as a small mahogany table was being hoisted into a spring-cart which stood at the door. Breathless with haste, I was yet able to call out,—

"Put that table down directly."

At the same moment Mr. Brownrigg appeared from within the door. He approached with the self-satisfied look of a man who has done his duty, and is proud of it. I think he had not heard me.

"You see I'm prompt, Mr. Walton," he said. "But, bless my soul, how ill you look!"

Without answering him—for I was more angry with him than I ought to have been—I repeated,—

"Put that table down, I tell you."

They did so.

"Now," I said, "carry it back into the house."

"Why, sir," interposed Mr. Brownrigg, "it's all right."

"Yes," I said, "as right as the devil would have it."

"I assure you, sir, I have done everything according to law."

"I'm not so sure of that. I believe I had the right to be chairman at the vestry-meeting; but, instead of even letting me know, you took advantage of my illness to hurry on matters to this shameful and wicked excess."

I did the poor man wrong in this, for I believe he had hurried things really to please me. His face had lengthened considerably by this time, and its rubicund hue declined.

"I did not think you would stand upon ceremony about it, sir. You never seemed to care for business."

"If you talk about legality, so will I. Certainly, *you* don't stand upon ceremony."

"I didn't expect you would turn against your own churchwarden in the execution of his duty, sir," he said, in an offended tone. "It's bad enough to have a meetin'-house in the place, without one's own parson siding with t'other parson as won't pay a lawful church-rate."

"I would have paid the church-rate for the whole parish ten times over before such a thing should have happened. I feel so disgraced, I am ashamed to look Mr. Templeton in the face. Carry that table into the house again, directly."

"It's my property, now," interposed the broker. "I've bought it of the churchwarden, and paid for it."

I turned to Mr. Brownrigg.

"How much did he give you for it?" I asked.

"Ten shillings," returned he, sulkily, and muttered something about returning a part of it.

"Ten shillings!" I exclaimed; "for a table that cost two or three pounds, I daresay.—What do you expect to sell it for?"

"That's my business," answered the broker.

I pulled out my purse, and threw a sovereign on the table, saying,—

"*Cent. per cent.* will be, I think, profit enough even on such a transaction."

"I did not offer you the table," returned the broker. "I am not bound to sell except I please, and at my own price."

"Possibly. But I tell you the whole affair is illegal. And if you carry away that table, I shall see what the law will do for me. I assure you I will prosecute you myself. You take up that sovereign, or I will. It will go to pay counsel, I give you my word, if you do not take it to quench strife."

I stretched out my hand. But the broker was before me. Without another word, he pocketed the money, jumped into his cart with his man, and drove off, leaving the churchwarden and the parson standing at the door of the dissenting minister with his mahogany table on the path between them.

"Now, Mr. Brownrigg," I said, "lend me a hand to carry this table in again."

He yielded, not graciously,—that could not be expected—but in silence.

"Oh! sir," interposed young Tom, who had stood by during the dispute, "let me take it. You're not able to lift it."

"Nonsense! Tom. Keep away," I said. "It is all the reparation I can make."

And so Mr. Brownrigg and I blundered into the little parlour with our burden—not a great one, but I began to find myself failing.

Mr. Templeton sat in a Windsor chair in the middle of the room. Evidently the table had been carried away from before him, leaving his position uncovered. The floor was strewed with the books which had lain upon it. He sat reading an old folio, as if nothing had happened. But when we entered he rose.

He was a man of middle size, about forty, with short black hair and overhanging bushy eyebrows. His mouth indicated great firmness, not unmingled

with sweetness, and even with humour. He smiled as he rose, but looked embarrassed, glancing first at the table, then at me, and then at Mr. Brownrigg, as if begging somebody to tell him what to say. But I did not leave him a moment in this perplexity.

"Mr. Templeton," I said, quitting the table, and holding out my hand, "I beg your pardon for myself and my friend here, my churchwarden"—Mr. Brownrigg gave a grunt—"that you should have been annoyed like this. I have——"

Mr. Templeton interrupted me.

"I assure you it was a matter of conscience with me," he said. "On no other ground—"

"I know it, I know it," I said, interrupting him in my turn. "I beg your pardon; and I have done my best to make amends for it. Offences must come, you know, Mr. Templeton; but I trust I have not incurred the woe that follows upon them by means of whom they come, for I knew nothing of it, and indeed was too ill——"

Here my strength left me altogether, and I sat down. The room began to whirl round me, and I remember nothing more till I knew that I was lying on a couch, with Mrs. Templeton bathing my forehead, and Mr. Templeton trying to get something into my mouth with a spoon.

Ashamed to find myself in such circumstances, I tried to rise; but Mr. Templeton, laying his hand on mine, said—

"My dear sir, add to your kindness this day by letting my wife and me minister to you."

Now, was not that a courteous speech? He went on—

"Mr. Brownrigg has gone for Dr. Duncan, and will be back in a few moments. I beg you will not exert yourself."

I yielded and lay still. Dr. Duncan came. His carriage followed, and I was taken home. Before we started, I said to Mr. Brownrigg—for I could not rest till I had said it—

"Mr. Brownrigg, I spoke in heat when I came up to you, and I am sure I did you wrong. I am certain you had no improper motive in not making me acquainted with your proceedings. You meant no harm to me. But you did very wrong towards Mr. Templeton. I will try to show you that when I am well again; but——"

"But you mustn't talk more now," said Dr. Duncan.

So I shook hands with Mr. Brownrigg, and we parted. I fear, from what I know of my churchwarden, that he went home with the conviction that he had done perfectly right; and that the parson had made an apology for finding fault with a churchwarden who was doing his best to uphold the dignity of Church and State. But perhaps I may be doing him wrong again.

I went home to a week more of bed, and a lengthened process of recovery; during which many were the kind inquiries made after me by my friends, and amongst them by Mr. Templeton.

And here I may as well sketch the result of that strange introduction to the dissenting minister.

After I was tolerably well again, I received a friendly letter from him one day expostulating with me on the inconsistency of my remaining within the pale of the *Established Church*. The gist of the letter lay in these words:—

"I confess it perplexes me to understand how to reconcile your Christian and friendly behaviour to one whom most of your brethren would consider as much beneath their notice as inferior to them in social position, with your remaining the minister of a church in which such enormities as you employed your private influence to counteract in my case are not only possible, but certainly lawful, and recognized by most of its members as likewise expedient."

To this I replied:—

"My dear Sir,—I do not like writing letters, especially on subjects of importance. There are a thousand chances of misunderstanding. Whereas, in a personal interview, there is a possibility of controversy being hallowed by communion. Come and dine with me to-morrow, at any hour convenient to you, and make my apologies to Mrs. Templeton for not inviting her with you, on the ground that we want to have a long talk with each other without the distracting influence which even her presence would unavoidably occasion.

"I am, &c. &c."

He accepted my invitation at once. During dinner we talked away, not upon indifferent, but upon the most interesting subjects—connected with the poor, and parish-work, and the influence of the higher upon the lower classes of society. At length we sat down on opposite sides of the fire; and as soon as Mrs. Pearson had shut the door, I said,—

"You ask me, Mr. Templeton, in your very kind letter——" and here I put my hand in my pocket to find it.

"I asked you," interposed Mr. Templeton, "how you could belong to a church which authorizes things of which you yourself so heartily disapprove."

"And I answer you," I returned, "that just to such a church our Lord belonged."

"I do not quite understand you."

"Our Lord belonged to the Jewish Church."

"But ours is His church."

"Yes. But principles remain the same. I speak of Him as belonging to a church. His conduct would be the same in the same circumstances, whatever church he belonged to, because He would always do right. I want, if you will allow me, to show you the principle upon which He acted with regard to churchrates."

"Certainly. I beg your pardon for interrupting you."

"The Pharisees demanded a tribute, which, it is allowed, was for the support of the temple and its worship. Our Lord did not refuse to acknowledge their authority, notwithstanding the many ways in which they had degraded the religious observances of the Jewish Church. He acknowledged himself a child of the church, but said that, as a child, He ought to

have been left to contribute as He pleased to the support of its ordinances, and not to be compelled after such a fashion."

"There I have you," exclaimed Mr. Templeton. "He said they were wrong to make the tribute, or church-rate, if it really was such, compulsory."

"I grant it: it is entirely wrong, a very unchristian proceeding. But our Lord did not therefore desert the church, as you would have me do. *He paid the money*, lest he should offend. And not having it of his own, He had to ask his Father for it; or, what came to the same thing, make a servant of his Father, namely, a fish in the sea of Galilee, bring him the money. And there I have *you*, Mr. Templeton. It is wrong to compel, and wrong to refuse, the payment of a church-rate. I do not say equally wrong: it is much worse to compel than to refuse."

"You are very generous," returned Mr. Templeton. "May I hope that you will do me the credit to believe that if I saw clearly that they were the same thing, I would not hesitate a moment to follow our Lord's example."

"I believe it perfectly. Therefore, however we may differ, we are in reality at no strife."

"But is there not this difference, that our Lord was, as you say, a child of the Jewish Church, which was indubitably established by God? Now, if I cannot conscientiously belong to the so-called English Church, why should I have to pay church-rate or tribute?"

"Shall I tell you the argument the English Church might then use? The Church might say, 'Then you are a stranger, and no child; therefore, like the kings of the earth, we *may* take tribute of you.' So you see it would come to this, that dissenters alone should be *compelled* to pay church-rates."

We both laughed at this pushing of the argument to illegitimate conclusions. Then I resumed:

"But the real argument is, that not for such faults should we separate from each other; not for such faults, or any faults, so long as it is the repository of the truth, should you separate from the church."

"I will yield the point when you can show me the same ground for believing the Church of England *the National Church*, appointed such by God, that I can show you, and you know already, for receiving the Jewish Church as the appointment of God."

"That would involve a long argument, upon which, though I have little doubt upon the matter myself, I cannot say I am prepared to enter at this moment. Meantime, I would just ask you whether you are not sufficiently a child of the Church of England, having received from it a thousand influences for good, if in no other way, yet through your fathers, to find it no great hardship, and not very unreasonable, to pay a trifle to keep in repair one of the tabernacles in which our forefathers worshipped together, if, as I hope you will allow, in some imperfect measure God is worshipped, and the truth is preached in it?"

"Most willingly would I pay the money. I object simply because the rate is compulsory."

"And therein you have our Lord's example to the contrary."

A silence followed; for I had to deal with an honest man, who was thinking. I resumed:—

"A thousand difficulties will no doubt come up to be considered in the matter. Do not suppose I am anxious to convince you. I believe that our Father, our Elder Brother, and the Spirit that proceedeth from them, is teaching you, as I believe I too am being taught by the same. Why then should I be anxious to convince you of anything? Will you not in his good time come to see what He would have you see? I am relieved to speak my mind, knowing He would have us speak our mind to each other; but I do not want to proselytize. If you change your mind, you will probably do so on different grounds from any I give you, on grounds which show themselves in the course of your own search after the foundations of truth in regard perhaps to some other question altogether."

Again a silence followed. Then Mr. Templeton spoke:—

"Don't think I am satisfied," he said, "because I don't choose to say anything more till I have thought about it. I think you are wrong in your conclusions about the church, though surely you are right in thinking we ought to have patience with each other. And now tell me true, Mr. Walton,—I'm a blunt kind of man, descended from an old Puritan, one of Cromwell's Ironsides, I believe, and I haven't been to a university like you, but I'm no fool either, I hope, —don't be offended at my question: wouldn't you be glad to see me forced to leave your parish now?"

I began to speak, but he went on.

"Don't you regard me as an interloper now—one who has no right to speak because he does not belong to the church?"

"God forbid!" I answered. "If a word of mine would make you leave my parish to-morrow, I dare not say it. I do not want to incur the rebuke of our Lord—for surely the words 'Forbid him not' involved some rebuke. Would it not be a fearful thing that one soul, because of a deed of mine, should receive a less portion of elevation or comfort in his journey towards his home? Are there not countless modes of saying the truth? You have some of them. I hope I have some. People will hear you who will not hear me. Preach to them in the name and love of God, Mr. Templeton. Speak that you do know, and testify that you have seen. You and I will help each other, in proportion as we serve the Master. I only say that in separating from us you are in effect, and by your conduct, saying to us, 'Do not preach, for you follow not with us.' I will not be guilty of that towards you. Your fathers did the church no end of good by leaving it. But it is time to unite now."

Once more followed a silence.

"If people could only meet, and look each other in the face," said Mr. Templeton at length, "they might find there was not such a gulf between them as they had fancied."

And so we parted.

Now I do not write all this for the sake of the church-rate question. I write it to commemorate the spirit in which Mr. Templeton met me. For it is of consequence that two men who love their Master should recognize each that the other does so, and

thereupon, if not before, should cease to be estranged because of difference of opinion, which surely, inevitable as offence, does not involve the same denunciation of woe.

After this Mr. Templeton and I found some opportunities of helping each other. And many a time ere his death we consulted together about things that befell. Once he came to me about a legal difficulty in connection with the deed of trust of his chapel; and although I could not help him myself, I directed him to such help as was thorough and cost him nothing.

I need not say he never became a churchman, or that I never expected he would. All his memories of a religious childhood, all the sources of the influences which had refined and elevated him, were surrounded with other associations than those of the church and her forms. The church was his grandmother, not his mother, and he had not made any acquaintance with her till comparatively late in life.

But while I do not say that his intellectual objections to the Church were less strong than they had been, I am sure that his feelings were moderated, even changed towards her. And though this may seem of no consequence to one who loves the church more than the brotherhood, it does not seem of little consequence to me who love the church because of the brotherhood of which it is the type and the restorer.

It was long before another church-rate was levied in Marshmallows. And when the circumstance did take place, no one dreamed of calling on Mr. Templeton for his share in it. But, having heard of it, he called himself upon the churchwarden—Mr. Brownrigg still—and offered the money cheerfully. *And Mr. Brownrigg refused to take it till he had consulted me!* I told him to call on Mr. Templeton, and say he would be much obliged to him for his contribution, and give him a receipt for it.

XVIII.

Perhaps my reader may be sufficiently interested in the person, who, having once begun to tell his story, may possibly have allowed his feelings, in concert with the comfortable confidence afforded by the mask of namelessness, to run away with his pen, and so have babbled of himself more than he ought—may be sufficiently interested, I say, in my mental condition, to cast a speculative thought upon the state of my mind, during my illness, with regard to Miss Oldcastle and the stranger who was her mother's guest at the Hall. Possibly, being by nature gifted, as I have certainly discovered, with more of hope than is usually mingled with the other elements composing the temperament of humanity, I did not suffer quite so much as some would have suffered during such an illness. But I have reason to fear that when I was lightheaded from fever, which was a not uncommon occurrence, especially in the early mornings during the worst of my illness—when Mrs. Pearson had to sit up with me, and sometimes an old woman of the village who was generally called in upon such occasions—I may have talked a good deal of nonsense about Miss Oldcastle. For I remember that I was haunted with visions of magnificent conventual ruins which I had discovered and which, no one seeming to care about them but myself, I was left to wander through at my own lonely will. Would I could see with the waking eye such a grandeur of Gothic arches and "long-drawn aisles" as then arose upon my sick sense! Within was a labyrinth of passages in the walls, and "long sounding corridors," and sudden galleries, whence I looked down into the great church aching with silence. Through these I was ever wandering, ever discovering new rooms, new galleries, new marvels of architecture; ever disappointed and ever dissatisfied, because I knew that in one room somewhere in the forgotten mysteries of the pile sat Ethelwyn reading, never lifting those sea-blue eyes of hers from the great volume on her knee, reading every word, slowly turning leaf after leaf; knew that she would sit there reading, till, one by one, every leaf in the huge volume was turned, and she came to the last and read it from top to bottom—down to the *finis* and the urn with a weeping-willow over it; when she would close the book with a sigh, lay it down on the floor, rise and walk slowly away, and leave the glorious ruin dead to me as it had so long been to every one else; knew that if I did not find her before that terrible last page was read, I should never find her at all; but have to go wandering alone all my life through those dreary galleries and corridors, with one hope only left—that I might yet before I died find the "palace-chamber far apart," and see the read and forsaken volume lying on the floor where she had left it, and the chair beside it upon which she had sat so long waiting for some one in vain.

And perhaps to words spoken under these impressions may partly be attributed the fact, which I knew nothing of till long afterwards, that the people of the village began to couple my name with that of Miss Oldcastle.

When all this vanished from me in the returning wave of health that spread through my weary brain, I was yet left anxious and thoughtful. There was no one from whom I could ask any information about the family at the Hall, so that I was just driven to the best thing—to try to cast my care upon Him who cared for my care. How often do we look upon God as our last and feeblest resource! We go to Him because we have nowhere else to go. And then we learn that the storms of life have driven us, not upon the rocks, but into the desired haven; that we have been compelled, as to the last remaining, so to the best, the only, the central help, the causing cause of all the helps to which we had turned aside as nearer and better.

One day when, having considerably recovered from my second attack, I was sitting reading in my study, who should be announced but my friend Judy!

"Oh, dear Mr. Walton, I am so sorry you have been so ill!" exclaimed the impulsive girl, taking my hand in both of hers, and sitting down beside me. "I haven't had a chance of coming to see you before; though we've always managed—I mean auntie and I—to hear about you. I would have come to nurse you, but it was no use thinking of it."

I smiled as I thanked her.

"Ah! you think because I'm such a tom-boy, that I couldn't nurse you. I only wish I had had a chance of letting you see. I am so sorry for you!"

"But I'm nearly well now, Judy, and I have been taken good care of."

"By that frumpy old thing, Mrs. Pearson, and—"

"Mrs. Pearson is a very kind woman, and an excellent nurse," I said; but she would not heed me.

"And that awful old witch, Mother Goose. She was enough to give you bad dreams all night as she sat by you."

"I didn't dream about Mother Goose, as you call her, Judy, I assure you. But now I want to hear how everybody is at the Hall."

"What, grannie, and the white wolf, and all?"

"As many as you please to tell me about."

"Well, grannie is gracious to everybody but auntie."

"Why isn't she gracious to auntie?"

"I don't know. I only guess."

"Is your visitor gone?"

"Yes, long ago. Do you know, I think grannie wants auntie to marry him, and auntie doesn't quite like it? But he's very nice. He's so funny! He'll be back again soon, I daresay. I don't *quite* like him—not so well as you by a whole half, Mr. Walton. I wish you would marry auntie; but that would never do. It would drive grannie out of her wits."

To stop the strange girl, and hide some confusion, I said:

"Now tell me about the rest of them."

"Sarah comes next. She's as white and as wolfy as ever. Mr. Walton, I hate that woman. She walks like a cat. I am sure she is bad."

"Did you ever think, Judy, what an awful thing it is to be bad? If you did, I think you would be so sorry for her, you could not hate her."

At the same time, knowing what I knew now, and remembering that impressions can date from farther back than the memory can reach, I was not surprised to hear that Judy hated Sarah, though I could not believe that in such a child the hatred was of the most deadly description.

"I am afraid I must go on hating in the meantime," said Judy. "I wish some one would marry auntie and turn Sarah away. But that couldn't be, so long as grannie lives."

"How is Mr. Stoddart?"

"There now! That's one of the things auntie said I was to be sure to tell you."

"Then your aunt knew you were coming to see me?"

"Oh, yes, I told her. Not grannie, you know. —You mustn't let it out."

"I shall be careful. How is Mr. Stoddart, then?"

"Not well at all. He was taken ill before you, and has been in bed and by the fireside ever since. Auntie doesn't know what to do with him, he is so out of spirits."

"If to-morrow is fine, I shall go and see him."

"Thank you. I believe that's just what auntie wanted. He won't like it at first, I daresay. But he'll come to, and you'll do him good. You do everybody good you come near."

"I wish that were true, Judy. I fear it is not. What good did I ever do you, Judy?"

"Do me!" she exclaimed, apparently half angry at the question. "Don't you know I have been an altered character ever since I knew you?"

And here the odd creature laughed, leaving me in absolute ignorance of how to interpret her. But presently her eyes grew clearer, and I could see the slow film of a tear gathering.

"Mr. Walton," she said, "I *have* been trying not to be selfish. You have done me that much good."

"I am very glad, Judy. Don't forget who can do you *all* good. There is One who can not only show you what is right, but can make you able to do and be what is right. You don't know how much you have got to learn yet, Judy; but there is that one Teacher ever ready to teach if you will only ask Him."

Judy did not answer, but sat looking fixedly at the carpet. She was thinking, though, I saw.

"Who has played the organ, Judy, since your uncle was taken ill?" I asked, at length.

"Why, auntie, to be sure. Didn't you hear?"

"No," I answered, turning almost sick at the idea of having been away from church for so many Sundays while she was giving voice and expression to the dear asthmatic old pipes. And I did feel very ready to murmur, like a spoilt child that had not had his way. Think of *her* there, and me here!

"Then," I said to myself at last, "it must have been she that played '*I know that my Redeemer liveth*,' that last time I was in church! And instead of thanking God for that, here I am murmuring that He did not give me more! And this child has just been telling me that I have taught her to try not to be selfish. Certainly I should be ashamed of myself."

"When was your uncle taken ill?"

"I don't exactly remember. But you will come and see him to-morrow? And then we shall see you too. For we are always in and out of his room just now."

"I will come if Dr. Duncan will let me. Perhaps he will take me in his carriage."

"No, no. Don't you come with him. Uncle can't bear doctors. He never was ill in his life before, and he behaves to Dr. Duncan just as if he had made him ill. I wish I could send the carriage for you. But I can't, you know."

"Never mind, Judy. I shall manage somehow. —What is the name of the gentleman who was staying with you?"

"Don't you know? Captain George Everard. He would change his name to Oldcastle, you know."

What a foolish pain, like a spear-thrust, they sent through me—those words spoken in such a taken-for-granted way!

"He's a relation—on grannie's side mostly, I believe. But I never could understand the explanation. What makes it harder is, that all the husbands and wives in our family, for a hundred and fifty years, have been more or less of cousins, or half cousins, or second or third cousins. Captain Everard has what grandmamma calls a neat little property of his own from his mother, somewhere in Northumberland; for he *is* only a third son, one of a class grannie does not in general feel very friendly to, I assure you, Mr. Walton. But his second brother is dead, and the

eldest something the worse for the wear, as grannie says; so that the Captain comes just within sight of the coronet of an old uncle who ought to have been dead long ago. Just the match for auntie!"

"But you say auntie doesn't like him."

"Oh! but you know that doesn't matter," returned Judy, with bitterness. "What will grannie care for that? It's nothing to anybody but auntie, and she must get used to it. Nobody makes anything of her."

It was only after she had gone that I thought how astounding it would have been to me to hear a girl of her age show such an acquaintance with worldliness and scheming, had I not been personally so much concerned about one of the objects of her remarks. She certainly was a strange girl. But strange as she was it was a satisfaction to think that the aunt had such a friend and ally in her wild niece. Evidently she had inherited her father's fearlessness; and if only it should turn out that she had likewise inherited her mother's firmness, she might render the best possible service to her aunt against the oppression of her wilful mother.

"How were you able to get here to-day?" I asked, as she rose to go.

"Grannie is in London, and the wolf is with her. Auntie wouldn't leave uncle."

"They have been a good deal in London of late, have they not?"

"Yes. They say it's about money of auntie's. But I don't understand. *I* think it's that grannie wants to make the captain marry her; for they sometimes see him when they go to London."

XIX.

The following day being very fine, I walked to Oldcastle Hall. I remember well how much slower I was forced to walk than I was willing. I found to my relief that Mrs. Oldcastle had not yet returned. I was shown at once to Mr. Stoddart's library. There I found the two ladies in attendance upon him. He was seated by a splendid fire, for the autumn days were now chilly on the shady side, in the most luxurious of easy-chairs, with his furred feet buried in the long hair of the hearthrug. He looked worn and peevish. All the placidity of his countenance had vanished. The smooth expanse of his forehead was drawn into fifty wrinkles, like a sea over which the fretting wind has been blowing all night. Nor was it only suffering that his face expressed. He looked like a man who strongly suspected that he was ill-used.

After salutation,—

"You are well off, Mr. Stoddart," I said, "to have two such nurses."

"They are very kind," sighed the patient.

"You would recommend Mrs. Pearson and Mother Goose instead, would you not, Mr. Walton?" said Judy, her grey eyes sparkling with fun.

"Judy, be quiet," said the invalid, languidly and yet sharply.

Judy reddened and was silent.

"I am sorry to find you so unwell," I said.

"Yes; I am very ill," he returned.

Aunt and niece rose and left the room quietly.

"Do you suffer much, Mr. Stoddart?"

"Much weariness worse than pain. I could welcome death."

"I do not think, from what Dr. Duncan says of you, that there is reason to apprehend more than a lingering illness," I said—to try him, I confess.

"I hope not indeed," he exclaimed angrily, sitting up in his chair. "What right has Dr. Duncan to talk of me so?"

"To a friend, you know," I returned, apologetically, "who is much interested in your welfare."

"Yes, of course. So is the doctor. A sick man belongs to you both by prescription."

"For my part, I would rather talk about religion to a whole man than a sick man. A sick man is not a *whole* man. He is but part of a man, as it were, for the time, and it is not so easy to tell what he can take."

"Thank you. I am obliged to you for my new position in the social scale. Of the tailor species, I suppose."

I could not help wishing he were as far up as any man that does such needful honest work.

"My dear sir, I beg your pardon. I meant only a glance at the peculiar relation of the words *whole* and *heal*."

"I do not find etymology interesting at present."

"Not seated in such a library as this?"

"No; I am ill.

Satisfied that, ill as he was, he might be better if he would, I resolved to make another trial.

"Do you remember how Ligarius, in *Julius Cæsar*, discards his sickness?—

> 'I am not sick, if Brutus have in hand
> Any exploit worthy the name of honour.'"

"I want to be well because I don't like to be ill. But what there is in this foggy, swampy world worth being well for I'm sure I haven't found out yet."

"If you have not, it must be because you have never tried to find out. But I'm not going to attack you when you are not able to defend yourself. We shall find a better time for that. But can't I do something for you? Would you like me to read to you for half an hour?"

"No, thank you. The girls tire me out with reading to me. I hate the very sound of their voices."

"I have got to-day's *Times* in my pocket."

"I've heard all the news already."

"Then I think I shall only bore you if I stay."

He made me no answer. I rose. He let me take his hand, and returned my good morning as if there was nothing good in the world, least of all this same morning.

I found the ladies in the outer room. Judy was on her knees on the floor occupied with a long row of books. How they had got there I wondered; but soon learned the secret which I had asked in vain of the butler on my first visit—namely, how Mr. Stoddart reached the volumes arranged immediately under the ceiling, in shelves, as my reader may remember, that looked like beams radiating from the centre. For Judy rose from the floor, and proceeded to put in motion a mechanical arrangement concealed in one of

the divisions of the book-shelves along the wall ; and I now saw that there were strong cords reaching from the ceiling, and attached to the shelf or rather long box sideways open which contained the books.

"Do take care, Judy," said Ethelwyn. "You know it is very venturous of you to let that shelf down, when uncle is as jealous of his books as a hen of her chickens. I oughtn't to have let you touch the cords."

"You couldn't help it, auntie dear ; for I had the shelf half-way down before you saw me," returned Judy, proceeding to raise the books to their usual position under the ceiling.

But in another moment, either from Judy's awkwardness, or from the gradual decay and final fracture of some cord, down came the whole shelf with a thundering noise, and the books were scattered hither and thither in confusion about the floor. Ethelwyn was gazing in dismay, and Judy had built up her face into a defiant look, when the door of the inner room opened and Mr. Stoddart appeared. His brow was already flushed ; but when he saw the condition of his idols (for the lust of the eye had its full share in his regard for his books), he broke out in a passion to which he could not have given way but for the weak state of his health.

"How *dare* you ?" he said, with terrible emphasis on the word *dare*. "Judy, I beg you will not again show yourself in my apartment till I send for you."

"And then," said Judy, leaving the room, "I am not in the least likely to be otherwise engaged."

"I am very sorry, uncle," began Miss Oldcastle.

But Mr. Stoddart had already retreated and banged the door behind him. So Miss Oldcastle and I were left standing together amid the ruins.

She glanced at me with a distressed look. I smiled. She smiled in return.

"I assure you," she said, "uncle is not a bit like himself."

"And I fear in trying to rouse him, I have done him no good,—only made him more irritable," I said. "But he will be sorry when he comes to himself, and so we must take the reversion of his repentance now, and think nothing more of the matter than if he had already said he was sorry. Besides, when books are in the case, I, for one, must not be too hard upon my unfortunate neighbour."

"Thank you, Mr. Walton. I am so much obliged to you for taking my uncle's part. He has been very good to me ; and that dear Judy is provoking sometimes. I am afraid I help to spoil her ; but you would hardly believe how good she really is, and what a comfort she is to me—with all her waywardness."

"I think I understand Judy," I replied ; "and I shall be more mistaken than I am willing to confess I have ever been before, if she does not turn out a very fine woman. The marvel to me is that with all the various influences amongst which she is placed here, she is not really, not seriously, spoiled after all. I assure you I have the greatest regard for, as well as confidence in, my friend Judy."

Ethelwyn—Miss Oldcastle, I should say—gave me such a pleased look that I was well recompensed—if justice should ever talk of recompense—for my defence of her niece."

"Will you come with me ?" she said ; "for I fear our talk may continue to annoy Mr. Stoddart. His hearing is acute at all times, and has been excessively so since his illness."

"I am at your service," I returned, and followed her from the room.

"Are you still as fond of the old quarry as you used to be, Miss Oldcastle ?" I said, as we caught a glimpse of it from the window of a long passage we were going through.

"I think I am. I go there most days. I have not been to-day, though. Would you like to go down ?"

"Very much," I said.

"Ah ! I forgot, though. You must not go : it is not a fit place for an invalid."

"I cannot call myself an invalid now."

"Your face, I am sorry to say, contradicts your words."

And she looked so kindly at me, that I almost broke out into thanks for the mere look.

"And indeed," she went on, "it is too damp down there, not to speak of the stairs."

By this time we had reached the little room in which I was received the first time I visited the Hall. There we found Judy.

"If you are not too tired already, I should like to show you my little study. It has, I think, a better view than any other room in the house."

"I shall be delighted, I replied.

"Come, Judy," said her aunt.

"You don't want me, I am sure, auntie."

"I do, Judy, really. You mustn't be cross to us because uncle has been cross to you. Uncle is not well, you know, and isn't a bit like himself ; and you know you should not have meddled with his machinery."

And Miss Oldcastle put her arm round Judy, and kissed her. Whereupon Judy jumped from her seat, threw her book down, and ran to one of the several doors that opened from the room. This disclosed a little staircase, almost like a ladder, only that it wound about, up which we climbed, and reached a charming little room, whose window looked down upon the Bishop's Basin, glimmering slaty through the tops of the trees between. It was panelled in small panels of dark oak, like the room below, but with more of carving. Consequently it was sombre, and its sombreness was unrelieved by any mirror. I gazed about me with a kind of awe. I would gladly have carried away the remembrance of every thing and its shadow. Just opposite the window was a small space of brightness formed by the backs of nicely-bound books. Seeing that these attracted my eye—

"Those are almost all gifts from my uncle," said Miss Oldcastle. "He is really very kind, and you will not think of him as you have seen him to-day?"

"Indeed I will not," I replied.

My eye fell upon a small pianoforte.

"Do sit down," said Miss Oldcastle.—"You have been very ill, and I could do nothing for you who have been so kind to me."

She spoke as if she had wanted to say this.

"I only wish I had a chance of doing anything for you," I said, as I took a chair in the window. "But if I had done all I ever could hope to do, you have repaid me long ago, I think."

"How? I do not know what you mean, Mr. Walton. I have never done you the least service."

"Tell me first, did you play the organ in church that afternoon when—after—before I was taken ill—I mean the same day you had—a friend with you in the pew in the morning?"

I daresay my voice was as irregular as my construction. I just ventured one glance. Her face was flushed. But she answered me at once.

"I did."

"Then I am in your debt more than you know or I can tell you."

"Why, if that is all, I have played the organ every Sunday since uncle was taken ill," she said, smiling.

"I know that now. And I am very glad I did not know it till I was better able to bear the disappointment. But it is only for what I heard that I mean now to acknowledge my obligation. Tell me, Miss Oldcastle,—what is the most precious gift one person can give another?"

She hesitated; and I, fearing to embarrass her, answered for her.

"It must be something imperishable,—something which in its own nature *is*. If, instead of a gem, or even of a flower, we could cast the gift of a lovely thought into the heart of a friend, that would be giving as the angels, I suppose, must give. But you did more and better for me than that. I had been troubled all the morning; and you made me know that my Redeemer liveth. I did not know you were playing, mind, though I felt a difference. You gave me more trust in God; and what other gift so great could one give? I think that last impression, just as I was taken ill, must have helped me through my illness? Often when I was most oppressed, '*I know that my Redeemer liveth*' would rise up in the troubled air of my mind; and sung by a voice which, though I never heard you sing, I never questioned to be yours."

She turned her face towards me: those sea-blue eyes were full of tears.

"I was troubled myself," she said, with a faltering voice, "when I sang—I mean played—that. I am so glad it did somebody good! I fear it did not do me much.—I will sing it to you now, if you like."

And she rose to get the music. But that instant Judy, who, I then found, had left the room, bounded into it, with the exclamation,—

"Auntie, auntie! here's grannie!"

Miss Oldcastle turned pale. I confess I felt embarrassed, as if I had been caught in something underhand.

"Is she come in?" asked Miss Oldcastle, trying to speak with indifference.

"She is just at the door,—must be getting out of the fly now. What *shall* we do?"

"What *do* you mean, Judy?" said her aunt.

"Well you know, auntie, as well as I do, that grannie will look as black as a thunder-cloud to find Mr. Walton here; and if she doesn't speak as loud, it will only be because she can't. *I* don't care for myself, but you know on whose head the storm will fall. Do, dear Mr. Walton, come down the back-stair. Then she won't be a bit the wiser. I'll manage it all."

Here was a dilemma for me; either to bring suffering on that lovely creature, to save whom I would have borne any pain, or to creep out of the house as if I were and ought to be ashamed of myself. I believe that had I been in any other relation to my fellows, I would have resolved at once to lay myself open to the peculiarly unpleasant reproach of sneaking out of the house, rather than that she should innocently suffer for my being innocently there. But I was a clergyman; and I felt, more than I had ever felt before, that therefore I could not risk even the appearance of what was mean. Miss Oldcastle, however, did not leave it to me to settle the matter. All that I have just written had but flashed through my mind when she said:—

"Judy, for shame to propose such a thing to Mr. Walton! I am very sorry that he may chance to have an unpleasant meeting with mamma; but we can't help it. Come, Judy, we will show Mr. Walton out together."

"It wasn't for Mr. Walton's sake," returned Judy, pouting. "You are very troublesome, auntie dear. Mr. Walton, she is so hard to take care of! and she's worse since you came. I shall have to give her up some day. Do be generous, Mr. Walton, and take my side—that is, auntie's."

"I am afraid, Judy, I must thank your aunt for taking the part of my duty against my inclination. But this kindness, at least," I said to Miss Oldcastle, "I can never hope to return."

It was a stupid speech, but I could not be annoyed that I had made it.

"All obligations are not burdens to be got rid of, are they?" she replied, with a sweet smile on such a pale troubled face, that I was more moved for her, deliberately handing her over to the torture for the truth's sake, than I care definitely to confess.

Thereupon, Miss Oldcastle led the way down the stairs, I followed, and Judy brought up the rear. The affair was not so bad as it might have been, inasmuch as, meeting the mistress of the house in no penetralia of the same, I insisted on going out alone, and only met Mrs. Oldcastle in the hall. She held out no hand to greet me. I bowed, and said I was sorry to find Mr. Stoddart so far from well.

"I fear he is far from well," she returned; "certainly in my opinion too ill to receive visitors."

So saying, she bowed and passed on. I turned and walked out, not ill-pleased, as my readers will believe, with my visit.

From that day I recovered rapidly, and the next Sunday had the pleasure of preaching to my flock; Mr. Aikin, the gentleman already mentioned as taking my place, kindly reading prayers for me. I took for my subject one of our Lord's miracles of healing, I forget which now, and tried to show my people that all healing and all kinds of healing came as certainly

and only from his hand as those instances in which He put forth his bodily hand and touched the diseased, and told them to be whole.

And as they left the church the organ played, "*Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God.*"

I tried hard to prevent my new feelings from so filling my mind as to make me fail of my duty towards my flock. I said to myself, "Let me be the more gentle, the more honourable, the more tender, towards these my brothers and sisters, forasmuch as they are her brothers and sisters too." I wanted to do my work the better that I loved her.

Thus week after week passed, with little that I can remember worthy of record. I seldom saw Miss Oldcastle, and during this period never alone. True, she played the organ still, for Mr. Stoddart continued too unwell to resume his ministry of sound, but I never made any attempt to see her as she came to or went from the organ-loft. I felt that I ought not, or at least that it was better not, lest an interview should trouble my mind, and so interfere with my work, which, if my calling meant anything real, was a consideration of vital import. But one thing I could not help noting—that she seemed, by some intuition, to know the music I liked best; and great help she often gave me by so uplifting my heart upon the billows of the organ harmony, that my thinking became free and harmonious, and I spoke, as far as my own feeling was concerned, like one upheld on the unseen wings of ministering cherubim. How it might be to those who heard me, or what the value of the utterance in itself might he, I cannot tell. I only speak of my own feelings, I say.

Does my reader wonder why I did not yet make any further attempt to gain favour in the lady's eyes? He will see, if he will think for a moment. First of all, I could not venture until she had seen more of me; and how to enjoy more of her society while her mother was so unfriendly, both from instinctive dislike to me, and because of the offence I had given her more than once, I did not know; for I feared that to call oftener might only occasion measures upon her part to prevent me from seeing her daughter at all; and I could not tell how far such measures might expedite the event I most dreaded, or add to the discomfort to which Miss Oldcastle was already so much exposed. Meantime I heard nothing of Captain Everard; and the comfort that flowed from such a negative source was yet of a very positive character. At the same time—will my reader understand me?—I was in some measure deterred from making further advances by the doubt whether her favour for Captain Everard might not be greater than Judy had represented it. I had always shrunk, I can hardly say with invincible dislike, for I had never tried to conquer it, from rivalry of every kind: it was, somehow, contrary to my nature. Besides, Miss Oldcastle was likely to be rich some day—apparently had money of her own even now; and was it a weakness? was it not a weakness?—I cannot tell—I writhed at the thought of being supposed to marry for money, and being made the object of such remarks as, "Ah! you see! That's the way with the clergy! They talk about poverty and faith, pretending to despise riches and to trust in God; but just put money in their way, and what chance will a poor girl have beside a rich one! It's all very well in the pulpit. It's their business to talk so. But does one of them believe it? or, at least, act upon it?" I think I may be a little excused for the sense of creeping cold that passed over me at the thought of such remarks as these, accompanied by compressed lips and down-drawn corners of the mouth, and reiterated nods of the head of *knowingness*. But I mention this only as a repressing influence, to which I certainly should not have been such a fool as to yield, had I seen the way otherwise clear. For a man by showing how to use money, or rather simply by using money aright, may do more good than by refusing to possess it, if it comes to him in an entirely honourable way, that is, in such a case as mine, merely as an accident of his history. But I was glad to feel pretty sure that if I should be so blessed as to marry Miss Oldcastle—which at the time whereof I now write, seemed far too gorgeous a castle in the clouds ever to descend to the earth for me to enter it—the *poor* of my own people would be those most likely to understand my position and feelings, and least likely to impute to me worldly motives, as paltry as they are vulgar, and altogether unworthy of a true man.

So the time went on. I called once or twice on Mr. Stoddart, and found him, as I thought, better. But he would not allow that he was. Dr. Duncan said he was better, and would be better still, if he would only believe it and exert himself. He continued in the same strangely irritable humour.

XX.

Winter came apace. When we look towards winter from the last borders of autumn, it seems as if we could not encounter it, and as if it never would go over. So does threatened trouble of any kind seem to us as we look forward upon its miry ways from the last borders of the pleasant greensward on which we have hitherto been walking. But not only do both run their course, but each has its own alleviations, its own pleasures; and very marvellously does the healthy mind fit itself to the new circumstances; while to those who will bravely take up their burden and bear it, asking no more questions than just, "Is this my burden?" a thousand ministrations of nature and life will come with gentle comfortings. Across a dark verdureless field will blow a wind through the heart of the winter which will wake in the patient mind not a memory merely, but a prophecy of the spring, with a glimmer of crocus, or snowdrop, or primrose; and across the waste of tired endeavour will a gentle hope, coming he knows not whence, breathe springlike upon the heart of the man around whom life looks waste and dreary. Well do I remember a friend of mine telling me once—he was then a labourer in the field of literature, who had not yet begun to earn his penny a day, though he worked hard—telling me how once, when a hope that had kept him active for months was suddenly quenched—a book refused on which he had spent a passion of labour—the weight of money that must be

paid and could not be had, pressing him down like the coffin-lid that had lately covered the *only* friend to whom he could have gone confidently for aid—telling me, I say, how he stood at the corner of a London street, with the rain dripping black from the brim of his hat, the dreariest of atmospheres about him in the closing afternoon of the City, when the rich men were going home, and the poor men who worked for them were longing to follow; and how across this waste came energy and hope into his bosom, swelling thenceforth with courage to fight and yield no ear to suggested failure. And the story would not be complete—though it is for the fact of the arrival of unexpected and apparently unfounded *hope* that I tell it—if I did not add, that, in the morning, his wife gave him a letter which their common trouble of yesterday had made her forget, and which had lain with its black border all night in the darkness unopened, waiting to tell him how the vanished friend had not forgotten him on her death-bed, but had left him enough to take him out of all those difficulties, and give him strength and time to do far better work than the book which had failed of birth.—Some of my readers may doubt whether I am more than "a wandering voice," but whatever I am, or may be thought to be, my friend's story is true.

And all this has come out of the winter that I, in the retrospect of my history, am looking forward to. It came, with its fogs, and dripping boughs, and sodden paths, and rotting leaves, and rains, and sky of weary grey; but also with its fierce red suns, shining aslant upon sheets of manna-like hoarfrost, and delicate ice-films over prisoned waters, and those white falling chaoses of perfect forms called snow-storms—those confusions confounded of infinite symmetries.

And when the hard frost came, it brought a friend to my door. It was Mr. Stoddart.

He entered my room with something of the countenance Naaman must have borne, after his flesh had come again like unto the flesh of a little child. He did not look ashamed, but his pale face looked humble and distressed. Its somewhat self-satisfied placidity had vanished, and instead of the diffused geniality which was its usual expression, it now showed traces of feeling as well as plain signs of suffering. I gave him as warm a welcome as I could, and having seated him comfortably by the fire, and found that he would take no refreshment, began to chat about the day's news, for I had just been reading the newspaper. But he showed no interest beyond what the merest politeness required. I would try something else.

"The cold weather, which makes so many invalids creep into bed, seems to have brought you out into the air, Mr. Stoddart," I said.

"It has revived me, certainly."

"Indeed, one must believe that winter and cold are as beneficent, though not so genial, as summer and its warmth. Winter kills many a disease and many a noxious influence. And what is it to have the fresh green leaves of spring instead of the everlasting brown of some countries which have no winter!"

I talked thus, hoping to rouse him to conversation, and I was successful.

"I feel just as if I were coming out of a winter. Don't you think illness is a kind of human winter?"

"Certainly—more or less stormy. With some a winter of snow and hail and piercing winds; with others of black frosts and creeping fogs, with now and then a glimmer of the sun."

"The last is more like mine. I feel as if I had been in a wet hole in the earth."

"And many a man," I went on, "the foliage of whose character had been turning brown and seared and dry, rattling rather than rustling in the faint hot wind of even fortunes, has come out of the winter of a weary illness with the fresh delicate buds of a new life bursting from the sun-dried bark."

"I wish it would be so with me. I know you mean me. But I don't feel my green leaves coming."

"Facts are not always indicated by feelings."

"Indeed, I hope not; nor yet feelings indicated by facts."

"I do not quite understand you."

"Well, Mr. Walton, I will explain myself. I have come to tell you how sorry and ashamed I am that I behaved so badly to you every time you came to see me."

"Oh, nonsense!" I said. "It was your illness, not you."

"At least, my dear sir, the facts of my behaviour did not really represent my feelings towards you."

"I know that as well as you do. Don't say another word about it. You had the best excuse for being cross: I should have had none for being offended."

"It was only the outside of me."

"Yes, yes; I acknowledge it heartily."

"But that does not settle the matter between me and myself, Mr. Walton; although, by your goodness, it settles it between me and you. It is humiliating to think that illness should so completely 'overcrow' me, that I am no more myself—lose my hold, in fact, of what I call *me*—so that I am almost driven to doubt my personal identity."

"You are fond of theories, Mr. Stoddart—perhaps a little too much so."

"Perhaps."

"Will you listen to one of mine?"

"With pleasure."

"It seems to me sometimes—I know it is a partial representation—as if life were a conflict between the inner force of the spirit, which lies in its faith in the unseen—and the outer force of the world, which lies in the pressure of everything it has to show us. The material, operating upon our senses, is always asserting its existence; and if our inner life is not equally vigorous, we shall be moved, urged, what is called actuated, from without, whereas all our activity ought to be from within. But sickness not only overwhelms the mind, but, vitiating all the channels of the senses, causes them to represent things as they are not, of which misrepresentations the presence, persistency, and iteration seduce the man to act from false suggestions instead of from what he knows and believes."

"Well, I understand all that. But what use am I to make of your theory?"

"I am delighted, Mr. Stoddart, to hear you put the question. That is always the point.—The inward holy garrison, that of faith, which holds by the truth, by sacred facts, and not by appearances, must be strengthened and nourished and upheld, and so enabled to resist the onset of the powers without. A friend's remonstrance may appear an unkindness—a friend's jest an unfeelingness—a friend's visit an intrusion; nay, to come to higher things, during a mere headache it will appear as if there was no truth in the world, no reality but that of pain anywhere, and nothing to be desired but deliverance from it. But all such impressions caused from without—for, remember, the body and its innermost experiences are only *outside of the man*—have to be met by the inner confidence of the spirit, resting in God, and resisting every impulse to act according to that which *appears to it* instead of that which *it believes*. Hence, Faith is thus allegorically represented: but I had better give you Spenser's description of her.—Here is the 'Fairy Queen':—

> 'She was arrayed all in lily white,
> And in her right hand bore a cup of gold,
> With wine and water filled up to the height,
> In which a serpent did himself enfold,
> That horror made to all that did behold;
> But she no whit did change her constant mood.'

This serpent stands for the dire perplexity of things about us, at which yet Faith will not blench, acting according to what she believes, and not what shows itself to her by impression and appearance."

"I admit all that you say," returned Mr. Stoddart. "But still the practical conclusion—which I understand to be, that the inward garrison must be fortified—is considerably incomplete unless we buttress it with the final *How*. How is it to be fortified? For,

> 'I have as much of this in art as you,
> But yet my nature could not bear it so.'

(You see I read Shakspere as well as you, Mr. Walton). I daresay, from a certain inclination to take the opposite side, and a certain dislike to the dogmatism of the clergy—I speak generally—I may have appeared to you indifferent, but I assure you that I have laboured much to withdraw my mind from the influence of money, and ambition, and pleasure, and to turn it to the contemplation of spiritual things. Yet on the first attack of a depressing illness I cease to be a gentleman, I am rude to ladies who do their best and kindest to serve me, and I talk to the friend who comes to cheer and comfort me as if he were an idle vagrant who wanted to sell me a worthless book with the recommendation of the pretence that he wrote it himself. Now that I am in my right mind, I am ashamed of myself, ashamed that it should be possible for me to behave so, and humiliated yet besides that I have no ground of assurance that, should my illness return to-morrow, I should not behave in the same manner the day after. I want to be *always* in my right mind. When I am not, I know I am not, and yet yield to the appearance of being."

"I understand perfectly what you mean, for I fancy I know a little more of illness than you do. Shall I tell you where I think the fault of your self-training lies?"

"That is just what I want. The things which it pleased me to contemplate when I was well, gave me no pleasure when I was ill. Nothing seemed the same."

"If we were always in a right mood, there would be no room for the exercise of the will. We should go by our mood and inclination only. But that is by the bye.—Where you have been wrong is—that you have sought to influence your feelings only by thought and argument with yourself, and not also by contact with your fellows. Besides the ladies of whom you have spoken, I think you have hardly a friend in this neighbourhood but myself. One friend cannot afford you half experience enough to teach you the relations of life and of human needs. At best, under such circumstances, you can only have right theories: practice for realizing them in yourself is nowhere. It is no more possible for a man in the present day to retire from his fellows into the cave of his religion, and thereby leave the world of his own faults and follies behind, than it was possible for the eremites of old to get close to God in virtue of declining the duties which their very birth of human father and mother laid upon them. I do not deny that you and the eremite may both come *nearer* to God, in virtue of whatever is true in your desires and your worship; 'but if a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?'—which surely means to imply at least that to love our neighbour is a great help towards loving God. How this love is to come about without intercourse, I do not see. And how without this love we are to bear up from within against the thousand irritations to which, especially in sickness, our unavoidable relations with humanity will expose us, I cannot tell either."

"But," returned Mr. Stoddart, "I had had a true regard for you, and some friendly communication with you. If human intercourse were what is required in my case, how should I fail just with respect to the only man with whom I had held such intercourse?"

"Because the relations in which you stood with me were those of the individual, not of the race. You like me, because I am fortunate enough to please you—to be a gentleman, I hope—to be a man of some education, and capable of understanding, or at least docile enough to try to understand, what you tell me of your plans and pursuits. But you do not feel any relation to me on the ground of my humanity—that God made me, and therefore I am your brother. It is not because we grow out of the same stem, but merely because my leaf is a little like your own, that you draw to me. Our Lord took on Him the nature of man: you will only regard your individual attractions. Disturb your liking, and your love vanishes."

"You are severe."

"I don't mean really vanishes, but disappears for the time. Yet you will confess you have to wait till, somehow, you know not how, it comes back again—of itself, as it were."

"Yes, I confess. To my sorrow, I find it so."

"Let me tell you the truth, Mr. Stoddart. You seem to me to have been hitherto only a dilettante or amateur in spiritual matters. Do not imagine I mean a hypocrite. Very far from it. The word *amateur* itself suggests a real interest, though it may be of a superficial nature. But in religion one must be *all there*. You seem to me to have taken much interest in unusual forms of theory, and in mystical speculations, to which in themselves I make no objection. But to be content with those, instead of knowing God himself, or to substitute a general amateur friendship towards the race for the love of your neighbour, is a mockery which will always manifest itself to an honest mind like yours in such failure and disappointment in your own character as you are now lamenting, if not indeed in some mode far more alarming, because gross and terrible."

"Am I to understand you, then, that intercourse with one's neighbours ought to take the place of meditation?"

"By no means: but ought to go side by side with it, if you would have at once a healthy mind to judge and the means of either verifying your speculations or discovering their falsehood."

"But where am I to find such friends besides yourself with whom to hold spiritual communion?"

"It is the communion of spiritual deeds, deeds of justice, of mercy, of humility—the kind word, the cup of cold water, the visitation in sickness, the lending of money—not spiritual conference or talk, that I mean: the latter will come of itself where it is natural. You would soon find that it is not only to those whose spiritual windows are of the same shape as your own that you are neighbour: There is one poor man in my congregation who knows more—practically, I mean, too—of spirituality of mind than any of us. Perhaps you could not teach him much, but he could teach you. At all events, our neighbours are just those round about us. And the most ignorant man in a little place like Marshmallows, one like you with leisure ought to know and understand, and have some good influence upon: he is your brother whom you are bound to care for and elevate—I do not mean socially, but really, in himself—if it be possible. You ought at least to get into some simple human relation with him, as you would with the youngest and most ignorant of your brothers and sisters born of the same father and mother; approaching him, not with pompous lecturing or fault-finding, still less with that abomination called condescension, but with the humble service of the elder to the younger, in whatever they may be helped by you without injury to them. Never was there a more injurious mistake than that it is the business of the clergy only to have the care of souls."

"But that would be endless. It would leave me no time for myself."

"Would that be no time for yourself spent in leading a noble, Christian life; in verifying the words of our Lord by doing them; in building your house on the rock of action instead of the sands of theory; in widening your own being by entering into the nature, thoughts, feelings, even fancies of those around you? In such intercourse you would find health radiating into your own bosom; healing sympathies springing up in the most barren acquaintance; channels opened for the in-rush of truth into your own mind; and opportunities afforded for the exercise of that self-discipline, the lack of which led to the failures which you now bemoan. Soon then would you have cause to wonder how much some of your speculations had fallen into the background, simply because the truth, showing itself grandly true, had so filled and occupied your mind that it left no room for anxiety about such questions as, while secured in the interest all reality gives, were yet dwarfed by the side of it. Nothing, I repeat, so much as humble ministration to your neighbours, will help you to that perfect love of God which casteth out fear; nothing but the love of God—that God revealed in Christ—will make you able to love your neighbour aright; and the Spirit of God, which alone gives might for any good, will by these loves, which are life, strengthen you at last to believe in the light even in the midst of darkness; to hold the resolution formed in health when sickness has altered the appearance of everything around you; and to feel tenderly towards your fellow, even when you yourself are plunged in dejection or racked with pain.—But," I said, "I fear I have transgressed the bounds of all propriety by enlarging upon this matter as I have done. I can only say I have spoken in proportion to my feeling of its weight and truth."

"I thank you heartily," returned Mr. Stoddart, rising. "And I promise you at least to think over what you have been saying.—I hope to be in my old place in the organ-loft next Sunday."

So he was. And Miss Oldcastle was in the pew with her mother. Nor did she go any more to Addicehead to church.

THE CRY OF THE WEARY.

BY AN EAST-END BLACKSMITH.

SPIRIT OF MERCY! bow thine head,
Thy pinions light stretch forth;
Descending from thy native skies,
Come, visit me on earth.

I have been mourning long for thee,
To see thee hither turn;
If thou wilt come, come *near* to me,
I can no longer mourn.

My weariness shall pass away,
Nor leave a fear behind;
In walking with the Lamb of God
Unbroken rest I find.

And pleasures true shall bloom for me,
Like blossoms fresh and gay;
For me shall living fountains gush
Along the peaceful way.

Come, then, sweet Spirit, hear and come;
Come, Jesus, come to me;
And when Thou bid'st me rise from earth,
Let me come safe to Thee. E. C.

OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS; OR, METHODS TO DO GOOD.

BY THE EDITOR.

VII.—PERSEVERANCE IN WELL-DOING.

ACTIVITY, as much as anything, and more than most things else, is that which distinguishes life from death. How still, as well as solemn, the chamber of the dead! Death has been called a long sleep, and sleep a short death; and they resemble each other much—sleep, with eyelids closed, the ears shut, the lips sealed, and a countenance calm, unimpassioned, without one trace of the griefs, and fears, and cares that lie buried in temporary oblivion, simulating death. Yet the heaving chest; though subdued, the audible and measured breathing; though faint, the living colour on the cheek; and the warm touch, so different from death's icy hand and marble brow, bespeak functions active amid repose; and show how life never rests, and wears in sleep but the mask of death. Things inanimate—as dead bodies, stones and metals, earth, air, and water—are passive. On the other hand, all animate are active creatures; as well the insect that flits in its play from flower to flower, as the angels that, speeding forth on God's high errands, fly from heaven to earth, or from world to world. So closely associated, and indeed inseparable, are the ideas of activity and life, that we at once conclude what is inactive to be inanimate—the bird that, dropping to the gun, lies motionless; the soldier who, with ball through head or heart, springs into the air, and falling on the ground, never more moves a limb; the dying man that, sinking back on his pillow, heaves one long sigh, and breathes and stirs no more. We pronounce these dead without a moment's hesitation. There may be the appearance of life but certainly not its presence, where there is no activity; as they rightly concluded who, sailing in Arctic seas, fell in with a ship, for long years imprisoned in the ice, and looked in its cabin on a strange, appalling, weird-like scene. Fifty years had come and gone since living voice or step had sounded there, yet all the crew were there. They lay in couches on the floor, each attired in the dress and presenting the form and flesh of life; while their captain sat by the cabin table, pen in hand, and the log spread out before him. The spectators of so strange a sight, with mingled feelings of doubt and terror, shouted; but no response came back. Nor crew nor captain stirred. All were dead, and had been corpses for half-a-century—the frosts that killed, preserving them. Life-like as he looked who bent over the table with a pen in his fingers and the paper before him, in which, the last survivor, he had

recorded their sufferings, he also was dead; as they knew on seeing him sit unmoved by their shouts; his eyes retaining their glassy stare, and his form its fixed and frozen posture.

The activity that thus marks all other kinds of life is characteristic of the Christian's. Sometimes distinguished by heroic daring, and prodigal of noble deeds, at all times it is a life of doing; is so even when, feeble as an infant, the believer lies helpless on a Saviour's bosom, and living chiefly on the milk of promises, is able to do little else than express his wants in prayers and plaintive cries. And, as the spiritual, like the natural, life advances in course of time to maturity, this activity goes on to complete development. It so increases by increase of grace that, with a heart which beats more and more true to the love of God, with feet that walk, hands that work, and a tongue that speaks in his service, the Christian, once a babe, grows into a man in Christ; his model He who, in contrast to him that walketh about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, went about continually doing good. For, while doing, or activity, characterises all life, "doing good," or "well-doing," is the peculiar character of the Christian's life. The "well-doing" of earth is what heaven shall greet with its own "Well done;"—"Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." And what an inspiring and powerful incentive does this, with many things else, present to persevere in grace; to "be careful to maintain good works," and again to quote the words of the apostle, "not to be weary in well doing?"

In regard to the duty of not being weary in well-doing, I remark that, although there is not much difference in sound, there is a great difference in sense, between being wearied *in* a work and wearied *of* it. Of this difference sick rooms often supply examples. The nurse who moves about there by day with professional coolness, when the house is still at night, nor sound breaks the silence, but the beating of the clock and the feverish breathing of her charge, drops asleep, weary of the tedium of watching. Not so the mother, trembling for a life that is trembling in the balance—all her cares, anxieties, and thoughts, save in the prayers she sends off to heaven, shut up within the narrow space of that chamber's walls. Her sunken eye, and pallid cheek, and feeble step bespeaking exhaustion, have awoke other's fears for her; but, strong in love that is deaf to remonstrance, she refuses to leave her post; and if, heavy with grief and care, her drooping eyelids close, it is because she is wearied *with* watching, not weary *of* it; on the contrary, racked with anxiety, she fights with sleep, and starts from its short, broken slumbers at the poor sufferer's faintest cry, or feeblest moan.

Amid other scenes—those of war, for example—the same distinction presents itself. Animated by no ambition, no love of country, no spirit of daring enterprise, this soldier gets tired of the long marches, the ill-requited hazards and hardships of the campaign. Seizing the first opportunity to leave, he returns home to enjoy inglorious ease, and hear birds rather than bullets whistle. Another, his companion both at school and in the ranks of war, returns also in course of time to their native village; but his sleeve is empty, and he wears grey hairs on his head as well as medals on his breast. Wearied, not of, but in, the war for liberty, he left his gallant comrades with reluctance, and eyes which filled with tears as he took a long, last look of the colours that, rent and riddled, waved above him in many a hard-contested field. In these men we see the well-marked difference between being wearied *in* a work and weary *of* it.

To take an example from sacred story, we see it in two persons there—the one a prominent, the other a pre-eminent character; the one a type, the other the great antitype; both, though unlike in these things, like in this—that they lie buried in the arms of sleep. Look at the prophet Jonah, and at Jesus! Weary not merely in, but of, a service which called him to endure hardships that he disliked and face dangers in Nineveh that he greatly dreaded, Jonah thought to put the sea between him and these; and not these only, but God also. For this purpose, he took ship and fled—a deserter from his post. Exhausted with anxiety of mind and toil of body, the fugitive falls asleep; nor, though the tempest roared, and the ship reeled and pitched and plunged amid the stormy billows, wakes till a rough hand shakes him, and a voice cries in his alarmed ear, "Arise, oh thou that sleepest, and call upon thy God!" From that sea turn to another—swept by as fierce a storm, lashed into as angry waves. Caught in the sudden tempest, a solitary boat is tearing its way there, on the lake of Galilee. The crew are pulling for their lives. In vain the struggle! Wave after wave breaks over them, filling their bark. They bale, but she is ready to founder. A few moments more, and, but that they carried Jesus, these, like other fishermen, had found a grave where they were wont to find their bread. And, ere the Master rises to rebuke the tempest, and bid the waves be still, how is he employed? He sleeps; sleeps stretched on a hard bench, beneath a boat-cloak, with the sea breaking over his prostrate form, amid the blaze of lightning, peals of thunder, and the loud uproar of angry elements—sleeps like an infant rocked in its cradle, or warmly nestled in a mother's breast. Nights passed in prayer, and days spent in preaching or in incessant labours of benevolence, have exhausted his frame, drying up all his strength; and there Jesus lies in calm, deep sleep, a wonderful example—the most wonderful the world has seen—of one wearied, not *of*, but *in*, his Father's business.

In regard to this well-doing in which Christ's followers desire and try to live, it is quite different from the "well-to-do" and "well-doing" of the world, as it uses and understands these expressions. They present examples of that abuse of language which, with other sins of his day, Isaiah so strongly condemned. In that remarkable chapter where he denounces Covetousness, saying, "Woe unto them that join house to house, and add field to field"—denounces Intemperance, saying, "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night till wine inflame them; that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink," the prophet thunders out his woe against

another great, if not greater evil. Addressing men who play with conscience and poison the fountains of truth, who bedizen the cheek of vice, and throw the robe of an angel over the form of a fiend, "Woe," says Isaiah, "unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." Every age, present or remote, has sought in this way to gloze over sin. For example, sceptics and infidels —as if all who believe in God's word were enslaved— claim to be "Free Thinkers;" again, the vile seducer is only described as "loose" who, under the mask of affection, steals in her virtue woman's most precious jewel, and tramples on her bleeding heart; again, they are merely said to live "fast" who wreck their fortunes, ruin their hapless children, impair their constitution, precipitate their death, drown their senses and damn their souls with drink; again, "unfortunate" is the mild term applied to her who, like a night wolf, prowls the streets for prey, and whose den, in the judgment of Solomon, and the bitter experience of her victims, is "the way to hell;" again, the duellists, who went out to settle a petty quarrel with loaded pistols, and shoot each other dead, were said to engage in "an affair of honour;" and, but some few years ago, "the domestic institution" was the soft and gentle term applied to that wide-spread, gigantic, infamous, infernal slavery, from the stain, the burning shame, and bitter curse of which America has only escaped by years of war, at the cost of millions of money and rivers of human blood. Here is a misapplication of terms nearly as gross. "Calling evil good, putting light for darkness and bitter for sweet," those who grow rich, no matter how—who, turning a deaf ear to every holy and humane appeal, to the claims of widows, the cries of orphans, the miseries of a world that perishes in ignorance and sin, heap up wealth, are said to be "well-to-do" in the world; at market and on change, are spoken of as "doing well." A "well doing" and "well-to-do" this, that shall meet no "Well done" from the Judge of all, at the last day and on the great white throne. Blessed award, it is reserved for such as have modelled their lives on His who, beginning life in a borrowed cradle and closing it in a borrowed grave, spent its years in hard toil and yet harder poverty—envying the foxes their holes and the birds of the air their nests!

A busy, useful, holy life, and none other, is a life of well-doing; is a noble life, though passed in a cottage; is a happy one, though its path be rough and thorny. In a world where there is much to do, it allots little time for self-enjoyments, and no time for sinful ones. Filled up with the duties of home and business, with the paramount interests of eternity and of our souls, with good deeds done to others, and the claims they have on our help, its days, instead of walking on leaden feet, seem to fly on eagles' wings —the busiest life appearing all too idle, and the longest proving all too short for the work we have to do. Like a toil-worn labourer, weary in though not of his work, the Christian may sometimes wish it were concluded, and long for sun-set that he might leave the field to go home—his the desire of the Psalmist, Oh, that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest! Yet toiling and enduring, bearing others' burdens along with his own, living not for himself, regarding every day as lost which is not marked by some good got or done, and regarding himself as the steward of God's bounty—not a lord but a labourer in the vineyard, that man, though he may be weary *in*, will not be weary *of* well-doing. Such a life was Paul's—he declared himself ready gladly to spend and to be spent for Christ. Such a life was Dorcas'—she employed her fingers making clothes for the poor, and, unlike many who die leaving none to miss them, had a crowd of widows to weep by her bier. Such a life was Job's, who, while humbling himself in the dust before God, stood erect before the world, in these noble terms to describe and justify his character, "When the ear heard me then it blessed me, and when the eye saw me it gave witness to me, because I delivered the poor that cried, the fatherless, and him that had none to help him; the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness and it clothed me; my judgment was as a robe and diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame; I was a father to the poor." And, obscuring all others, as does the sun the stars, by its superior lustre, such a life was His who, our pattern and propitiation both, calls us by his example, as by his word, to well-doing—saying, as he points to the crown glittering on the top of a cross, If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself daily, take up his cross, and follow me.

Christ's followers, though weary of, are to persevere in their work, watch, and warfare — persevere to the end; like Gideon and his three hundred men, though "faint, yet pursuing." If, for the sake of illustration, we select the last of these three grand branches of Christian duty, the warfare, namely, where could we find a better pattern than his case supplies? Whether the overwhelming numbers of the enemy, or the extraordinary means of their defeat is considered, the victory which he and his band achieved, and followed up with unsparing slaughter, is one of the most remarkable on record. God's foes and his, the Midianites and Amalekites, we are told, "lay along in the Valley of Jezreel, like grasshoppers for multitude—their camels without number, as the sand on the sea-side for multitude." Inspired of God, Gideon steps from the threshing-floor to summon his countrymen to arms; and, peasants leaving the plough in the furrow, shepherds their flocks on the hill, fishermen their boats by the shore, the bridegroom the marriage festival, and orphans their father's bier, they crowd to his standard. Two and thirty thousand men muster to the bloody fight; and on vantage ground, in some mountain gorge, what might not such an army accomplish with every man resolved to do or to die, to conquer or to perish? But, when the chaff is blown away, the thirty-two are reduced to ten thousand; and these again to no more than three hundred men. "If thou art afraid," said the Lord to Gideon—nor great wonder he should be with such odds against him — "go with thy servant down to the host and hear what they say."

With noiseless foot, wrapped in the cloud of night, he steals on the camp, and, listening, hears two soldiers talking—one tells how he dreamt that a barley cake came tumbling into the host, and, strange result, overturned a tent; a dream his comrade interprets, saying, "This is nothing else than the sword of Gideon, for into his hand God hath delivered Midian and all the host. Hailing the happy omen, Gideon stealthily withdraws, and, breasting the hill with light heart, rushes in among his little band to cry, "Arise! the Lord hath delivered the host of Midian into your hand!" They spring to their feet; and each man with a sword by his thigh, a trumpet in one hand and in the other a pitcher with a burning lamp within, they follow their leader—his only order this, As I do, so shall ye do! It is the middle watch; and the mighty host, whose camp they silently encircle, lies buried in slumber. Each man holds his breath; silent and motionless he listens, and, bending forward, peers through the gloom for the expected signal. Suddenly Gideon's trumpet, blown loud and clear, rings through the silence, and a lamp —for he has broken his pitcher—flashes on the darkness of night. Lost in astonishment, the sentinels stop on their round; but ere they have time to raise the alarm, hundreds of lights are flashing, hundreds of trumpets sounding: and on all sides the air is rent with shouts and this wild battle cry, "The sword of the Lord and Gideon!" Springing to their feet and rushing from their tents, the whole host is panic-struck; and, mistaking friends for foes in the darkness and confusion, men grapple with their neighbours, and draw their swords to bury them in each other's bosoms. The uproar grows wilder and wilder; the carnage rages fiercer and fiercer; Gideon and his men, the while, standing by to see the salvation of God. The host destroys itself. God wins the victory; and they who struck no blow reap the fruit—Gideon's only part being to put the broken, bleeding fugitives to the sword, and hang on their rear, "faint, yet pursuing."

The part we have to act in the Christian warfare is similar to this; and similar to this should be the way we do it. Gideon's followers were first reduced from two-and-thirty to ten thousand, and again reduced to three hundred; these being made spectators rather than actors in the bloody drama, that they might not say, Mine own hand hath saved me! Such is the story of the Cross. There, like Gideon and his men on the midnight plains of Jezreel, we stood by to see the salvation of our God—Satan, the enemy of our souls, bruised under the conqueror's heel. Jesus, not we, won that great victory. We struck no blow, we had no hand in it whatever; yet like those who hung on the rear of Midian, slaughtering their flying foes, we have a part to act—our part this, to complete, if I may say so, the work which Christ began; to destroy every vestige of life in the serpent whose head he crushed; to expel sin wholly from our hearts and our habits, as Gideon expelled its enemies out of the land of Israel.

He who is converted, believes, and is thereby savingly united to Christ, has still, to use the words of Nehemiah, "a great work to do." We enter then on a harder task than Gideon's. His enemies, paralysed with terror, flying like a flock of sheep that barking dogs pursue, fell without an attempt at resistance. Not so does Satan yield. He makes desperate efforts to rally his scattered forces, and recover the ground he has lost. By no means easily expelled, he lurks in our habits and hides in the recesses of our hearts. Now a cunning serpent and now a roaring lion, at one time with devilish craft he proposes terms of peace, and at another, seeking not to deceive, but to cast us into despair, he comes forth, boastful as Goliath, to defy the armies of the living God. And even when he flies, as the apostle assures us he will do if we resist him, he flies like the ancient Parthians—fighting all the while, and with the fiery darts he shoots, putting the believer's peace in jeopardy, and making his armour ring. Having self to conquer, with a carnal heart to crucify, evil passions to subdue, and habits to break off which age and indulgence have fostered into a second nature, our part of the work, instead of being finished, may be said to begin at the period of conversion. Nor is any sin,—though flesh and blood plead for it, saying: It is but a little one,—to be spared. "Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood!" In this holy war there is to be no truce proclaimed, nor quarter given. Whoso nameth the name of the Lord is to depart from all iniquity; to cast out all sin. No easy work! I know a weed which, more than any other that infests the ground, gardeners and husbandmen find it troublesome to extirpate. Shooting its long, knotted fibres under the surface, spreading in all soils, whether rich or poor, with unexampled rapidity, it survives being crushed beneath the heel, or cut into morsels with the spade; and, tenacious of life, springs again if the smallest portion of its root has been left in the ground. Such is sin. It is very hard to destroy: yet must be wholly rooted out of the life and out of the heart, since, if we do not kill sin, sin will kill us.

Now, God's people ought never to forget that this perseverance in well-doing, whatever department of the Christian life they be engaged in, they cannot maintain without drawing constantly on the grace of God. The wick which is left to burn without a due supply of oil soon burns dim; and, going out, leaves the house to darkness. Constant cropping exhausts the most fertile soil, nor do reapers long gather harvests from its bosom unless it be fed with manures, or allowed to rest. And who does not know that the amount of work to be obtained out of either men or horses, depends on the quality and quantity of their food. Indeed, Wellington used to say that victories were won not so much by him or others who led the troops to battle, as by the Commissariat—those who were charged with finding provisions for the army; and history relates how the fate of one great battle was determined by one good meal—victory remaining with those who had broken their fast before they went into action.

Called to resist the devil, to overcome the world, and, what is more difficult than either, or perhaps than both, to crucify the flesh; called to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, and, what is yet more difficult, to "stand still and see the salva-

tion of God ;" called in life's active duties to do his will, and, what often proves more difficult, under sore bereavements and heavy trials to bear it—our only hope, and all-sufficient help is in the Spirit of God. Unless constantly supplied with grace the brightest light will burn dim ; all spiritual vigour will decay ; and, like soil the husbandman scourges with constant cropping nor nourishes with manure, the soul will soon have to cry, "My leanness, my leanness !" So there is no saving so bad as that which grudges time for seeking those divine supplies which we obtain in the use of prayer, of the Bible, and of those other channels through which they are wont to flow. There are bad savings. Humble life affords examples of them in those who, leaving venerable parents to poverty or public alms, save money to buy gaudy dresses ; and the higher walks of life, also, in such as, refusing the claims of charity and religion, hoard up riches for children to waste on vanity or their vices ; but of all savings the worst is time saved for the business or pleasures of life off that which should be given to communion with God, the Bible, and prayer, in the morning or at the close of the day. How can he escape wounds who rushes into battle without taking time to put his armour on ? To win the fight, a man must gird on his weapons ; to draw sweet music from an instrument, he must tune its strings ; nor can a labourer endure the tear and wear of work, if he neglects his food,—unless he supplies the waste of bone and muscle with nutritious meals. The soul, not less than the body, wants its necessary food.

A most important truth ! To overlook it—but that the covenant of grace is well-ordered in all things and sure—would involve us in a fate worse than his who some winters ago owed his death to neglecting the means necessary for the support of life. The fatal morning broke dimly on hills all white with snow, and a sky along which the tempest hurled thick blinding drift. Alarmed for his flock, the shepherd dressed in haste ; and, deaf to the entreaties of a prudent wife who implored him to eat and strengthen nature for the coming struggle, he pulled his bonnet on his brow, and went out into the storm. It was bravely but rashly done. He never came back. Denied her necessary support, nature speedily sank under his violent exertions ; and he perished—the sleep he sought on the snow bank where they found his stiffened corpse, deepening into the torpor of death, the sleep that knows no waking. And if not their death—for they that are in Christ shall not finally perish—to what do saints often owe their falls and failings, but to their neglect of prayer, and of God's word, and of other divinely appointed means of grace ? He who would work without ceasing, must pray without ceasing. He who would do great things for God, must seek great things from Him. It is well, though faint, like Gideon, to be pursuing—getting on to heaven, though with faltering steps and many falls ; but it is better not to fall, to be pursuing and not fainting, constantly going on in the strength of the Lord.

Still, it is no great wonder that God's people are sometimes ready to faint. The servant is no better than his master, and in Gethsemane Jesus himself sank under the weight of his mysterious burden. Even his strength seemed unequal to the task, as thrice under an agony that rent his bosom with groans and bedewed the grass with blood, he implored his Father, saying, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me ! The Saviour almost fainted. The greatest saints have done so. Though no fragile reed bending to the wind, but rather like a lighthouse tower, that shining through the deepest gloom and rising from the solid rock, holds itself erect amid tempests which snap the stoutest masts, and, sending ships staggering through the waves, strew the shore with wrecks, Elijah fainted. Despairing of success, he abandoned his post ; threw up the helm ; took his strong hand from the plough ; and, wearied and worn out with what appeared a hopeless task, cast himself at God's feet to cry, O Lord, it is enough, take away my life ! We can enter into his feelings. How often does it seem impossible that we shall ever walk without stumbling, ever love God with all our hearts, ever closely follow Christ's holy footsteps, ever be ready and ripe for heaven ? Yet in such well-doing, let not God's people weary. In the pursuit of such noble, exalted objects, why should they faint ? The sweat standing on his brow, and the blood of the heathen dripping from his sword, Gideon, as he pressed on the flying foe, sought bread at the gate of Succoth. His request was refused ; and, the more honour to him and his followers, though refused and faint, they resumed the pursuit. But did any ever ask strength of God for well-doing, for his work, or watch, or warfare, and find the gates of prayer, like those of Succoth, shut in his face ? No. HE GIVETH POWER TO THE FAINT, AND TO THEM THAT HAVE NO MIGHT HE INCREASETH STRENGTH. EVEN THE YOUTHS SHALL FAINT AND BE WEARY, AMD THE YOUNG MEN SHALL UTTERLY FAIL ; BUT THEY THAT WAIT UPON THE LORD SHALL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH ; THEY SHALL MOUNT UP WITH WINGS AS EAGLES ; THEY SHALL RUN AND NOT BE WEARY ; THEY SHALL WALK AND NOT FAINT.

THE HYMNS OF THE REFORMATION.

AT the opening of the sixteenth century the whole religious life of Europe was crushed under the weight of the ecclesiastical institutions of Rome. Gloomy representations of the true faith, or baleful parodies of an extinct idolatry, filled Christendom. The childlike voices which had lisped "Abba Father," and the joyful music which had once filled the earth, were silent ; so silent that the echoes of the song sung when the Babe was born in Bethlehem were only to be heard among the persecuted brethren of Bohemia, and the Waldenses in the Piedmontese valleys. Christ's church was represented to the multitudes under the similitude of a great ship, as in the celebrated painting at Magdeburg, wherein was no layman,

not even an emperor or elector. In the prow, overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, were the pope, the cardinals, and the bishops; these, with the monks and priests, were all sailing easily heavenward. All round the ship were laymen struggling in the water. Some were drowning, others were drawing themselves up to the ship by means of ropes, which the monks, moved with pity, threw out to them. As ecclesiastics only were in the ship, so laymen only were in the water, never a cardinal, bishop, priest, or monk. This was the idea of salvation which pervaded Christendom. In the deep gloom all earnest spirits turned to her who was pierced with many sorrows, the mournful "Mother of Consolations," who with a mother's heart for all, and a mother's claim upon the Judge of all, might graciously pity and save. Men and women with "religious vocations" buried themselves in convents, practising austerities which, like the ancient sacrifices, failed to make the comers thereunto perfect, measuring their growth in holiness by the ossification of their human feelings, and becoming pitiful mockeries or tragic representations of humanity, with features stiffened already into something of the rigidity of death. This was the ideal to the perfecting of which the piety of the convents tended, the ideal for which men and women forsook noble work and the tender ministries of daily life. It was from such a living death, or from a life betokened only by strong cryings and tears, that the last of the mediæval hymns were wailed forth. But the convents were the homes likewise of the complacent piety of routine, of an indolence that was as often vicious as frivolous, of unholy levity, and that Mephistophelian spirit, to which truth and virtue in man, purity in woman, and devotedness in God's service, were but empty jests. Luther, worn by fast and vigil, seeking by maceration and prayers to attain unto holiness, illustrates one aspect of monastic life. Another is typified by the friar from under whose cowl come forth the words, *Panis es et panis mane bis*, the sacrilegious parody of the solemn words of the consecration of the host. Yet there was no alternative between the "religious" life and the outer world ever represented as in grievous case. The ecclesiastical system was felt to be the one ark which could float upon the troubled waters, priestly intercession the one refuge from the woe eternal, masses the sole escape from purgatorial fires, and though the thoughtful among the people might be stirred in spirit against the secular splendours and extravagant sensuousness of priests and prelates, in their hands alone were the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

Not fitfully as a lamp flickering in the night wind, but as the sun rising in his strength, God's recovered truth burst upon Germany. To souls groping for the wall as blind, to men reaching forth "lame hands of faith" in the feeble attempt to grasp the Christ, to spirits worn by fast and vigil, to tremblers who had offered for the sin of their souls the precious sacrifices of heart and life, and had offered them in vain; to the crowds which thronged the roads from the Elbe to the Tiber in search of a pardon which they failed to find; to multitudes in the death-like trance of indifference, to a whole nation sitting in the region and shadow of death, the light sprang up. Never in human history did noon succeed daybreak so rapidly. The times have began to wax old, and we of this generation on whose palates "the sincere milk of the word" has possibly begun to pall, and who occupy our time with much theological speculation and controversies on abstruse points, can scarcely comprehend the joy which set all Germany a singing. It was the grandest jubilee that the world had ever seen. The words "the just shall live by faith," involving "there is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," literally proclaimed liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them which were bound. The Comforter once more descended as with the sound of a rushing mighty wind, and filled men's hearts with the good tidings of the free grace and good will of the Father, and all that had been sought so toilsomely and vainly was presented to men's acceptance without money and without price. It was from hearts which had known suffering for sin that the new song welled forth, and the very stones would have cried out if the lips which sung the first hymns of the Reformation had been silent. So the mouth of Germany was filled with laughter, and the land was all the more jubilant in the new liberty, for that it had so long crouched and trembled slavelike under the lash of Rome. It was child-like in its joy, and some of the hymns of that day-break carol like the lark at heaven's gate, with that utterance of "Abba Father" to which the earth so long had been a stranger.

This musical outburst of an emancipated people was far too joyous and spontaneous to consent to be clad in no other garments than the antique and stately trappings of versions of David's Psalms, though Scotland and Switzerland for three succeeding centuries have found them sufficient for their soberer praises. Though Luther did translate some Psalms, and the great national hymn of German Protestantism is professedly a translation, these lyrics are so instinct with Luther's own spirit of joyful trust in God and defiance of the devil, as to be almost original; and he and the hymn-writers of his day soared so completely into the glad sunlit atmosphere of the New Testament, that their writings contain comparatively few allusions to the elder covenant. It was not for them to sing of the veiled Messiah of Moses and the prophets, when the Christ of Paul and John, dying, risen, reigning, was revealed to their gladdened hearts.

It is not within the province of this paper to trace the development of the German hymnology during the three succeeding centuries, but only to indicate its growth down to the period, nearly two centuries later, which marks the rise of a popular hymnology in England. German hymns, by means of many competent translators and imitators from Wesley downwards, have been so brought within our reach, that probably most of the readers of this magazine are familiar with the more marked of their characteristics, and are able to compare them with those of the mediæval and Ambrosian hymns, of which many are now to be found in our hymn-books. In contemplating the outburst of song which was contemporary with the Reformation, it is impossible not to be reminded of that outburst in the fourth century, concerning

which Jerome writes, "One cannot go out into the fields without finding the plougher at his hallelujahs, and the mower at his hymns." In the sixteenth century the Cardinal Thomas-à-Jesu writes, "The interests of Luther are furthered in an extraordinary degree by the singing of his hymns by people of every class, not only in schools and churches, but in dwellings and shops, in markets, streets, and fields." Nor is this the sole parallel. The hymns of Luther and his contemporaries have much of the simplicity of the Ambrosian period; the subjects and the position of the writers were alike various, and hymns which thrilled Germany as with a trumpet blast, poured forth once more from the lips of men whose hands were hard with earthly toil. Like the Ambrosian hymns, they told of strife and victory, and were used as battle-songs, or sent forth as sure messengers to stir cities and districts into an attitude of defence.

We are reminded of the famous days of hymn-singing in Milan Cathedral by some of the incidents in connection with the early German hymnology. At Heidelberg they won the battle for the truth when, from fear of the Emperor, the Elector Frederic delayed the suppression of the Mass. Standing at the high altar, surrounded by all the venerable symbols of the gorgeous Romish ritual, the priest was beginning the service, when high above the unknown tongue in which he spoke, a single voice in the vernacular led off the first line of Speratus's famous hymn, "*Es ist das Heil uns kommen her*," in which the vast congregation joined with such a burst of harmony as to convey to the Elector the strongest possible intimation of the will of his people, and the communion was immediately introduced in both kinds. In 1529, a Romish priest preached at Lubeck against the reformed faith, and just as he concluded two boys struck up Luther's hymn, "O God, from heaven now behold," and the whole assembly joined with one voice. This act was repeated as often as any one inveighed against the Evangelical doctrine.

There are scarcely any points of resemblance between the Latin mediæval hymns and the early German. Even the numerous translations from the Latin made by Luther and the other Reformers, are so instinct with their own spirit, and baptised with the new fire, as to be almost original. The lingering cadences, the ingenious rhymes, and the difficult metres which had employed the leisure of the monkish versifiers, all vanished, not to reappear until the decay of German song. The feeble voices which in the unwholesome atmosphere of the cloister had only dared to express a trembling hope in Christ, were exchanged for the manly, and indeed sometimes rude, tones of poets who breathed the free air of ordinary life, and had attained the full assurance of faith. It would be as easy to compare the blast of clarion and trumpet with the strains of a lover's lute, as the hymns of Adam of St. Victor and Luther. What had these hardy Reformers to do with fear, now that the spirit of bondage was destroyed, and they stood as co-heirs with Christ in the liberty wherewith He had made them free? Yet the German Church bound itself by loving links to the old Latin hymn-writers, not rejecting, as has been unjustly stated, all that had waxed old. Before Luther's great poetic innovation, various of the Latin hymns were popularised, and in some old hymn-books there are hymns with the lines alternately in German and Latin, as in that popular hymn which still may be found printed thus :—

In dulci jubilo
Nun singet und seyd fro: &c.

There was no break or pause in Germany, as with us, between the mediæval and Reformation hymnology. The good Abbot Mauburn, the last of the mediæval hymnologists, had not long departed before Luther electrified Germany with his "*Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.*" Hymns were in use among the Bohemian Brethren, and had been floating about in parts of Germany for many years before, but they were rather akin to creeds and catechisms in their dogmatic and detailed statements of orthodoxy, than to songs of praise, and only a few of them have been retained in the German hymn-books, and these rather from reverence than admiration. Venerable from their antiquity and from their associations with the martyr history of the Hussites, and abounding in statements of Christian doctrine, there is a chilling aloofness about them, and an absence of kinship with human hearts, which caused them speedily to fall into disuse at the Reformation.

It was on the wings of hymns, which embodied and popularised the new doctrines, that the Reformation flew through Germany. The Latin sacred poetry was speedily lost in the German Christian lyric, and a national hymnology of a novel and marked type rose up under Luther's auspices. The early Reformation hymns were popular religious ballads set to well-known melodies, and were remarkable mainly for their intensity and forcible concentration of the new-old truth. In those stirring days of conscious freedom and exuberant joy, when action was before speech, and life before thought, the hymns came forth with a bluntness and decision sometimes not a little startling, and with a disregard of metrical niceties not a little jarring to ears accustomed to the smooth cadences of the mediæval poets, but they did their work in building up the German Church, and rule and ornament followed soon enough. It was the *people* to whom the new doctrines were to be made intelligible, and the rugged, idiomatic High German, with all its capacities for the passionate and vehement, was Luther's vehicle of instruction. His hymns flew like wildfire, sometimes winning over whole towns to the reformed faith, and the roads of Germany, which had so lately swarmed with men and women on their way to buy indulgences, now echoed to the joyful stanzas of the Reformers.

Luther's translation of the 46th Psalm, "A sure stronghold our God is He," thrilled the whole German soul with its confident and defiant trumpet blast, and has been termed "the Marseillaise of the Reformation."*

Other writers writing for the people clustered round Luther, singing of the common sin and mercy, and stirring men's hearts as they have seldom been stirred

* *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*, "the Marseillaise of the Reformation."—*Heinrich Heine.* "Luther's grand chorale is a true Marseillaise."—*Victor Hugo.*

before or since. Germany loves to recall the names of Speratus; Justus Jonas, the beloved friend of Luther; Decius, who had groaned under the bondage of the cloister, and sang of liberty as well as light; Eber, so loved by little children albeit that he was a shrunken wasted controversialist; Nicholas Herman, the good precentor of quiet Joachimsthal, whose hymns resounded through the pleasant Rhineland, and whose funeral hymn was faltered by a vast assemblage of mourners over his own bier; Hans Sachs, whose "cobbler's stall" in quaint carved Nuremberg was the resort of all who loved to hear of the new faith better from the poet than the controversialist, and who was second only to Luther in speeding on the Reformation; and Nicolai, one of whose stirring hymns peals through Mendelssohn's "St. Paul." The hymns of all these are still living and in use after a lapse of three centuries, and the eulogies of Wieland and Goethe * have stamped those of Sachs at least as current coin in German literature.

A season followed when the German hymn, no longer the expression of the new life, showed a tendency to sink into the breathings of a contemplative and somewhat mystical piety; yet the favourite hymn by Paul Flemyng, "*In aller meinen Thaten*," and Rinkart's "New Year Chorale," still of universal use in the Fatherland, are echoes of the early joyous strains. The glory of the hymnology of the 17th century culminated in Paul Gerhardt, who was at once the Watts, the Wesley, and the Newton of Germany. Like Hans Sachs at an earlier period, Burns in Scotland, and Béranger in France, he was the minstrel of the people, and, like these national poets, is inaccessible in any translation. Round him are clustered Angelus, Herrmann, Rist, Dachs, and John Frank. The stormy period of the Thirty Years' War with which these names are more or less connected, when all that the Reformation had won seemed about to be swept away, was most prolific in sacred song, and the hymns came once more from the battle-field, the hiding-place, and the dungeon. Its hymns have characteristics of their own. They are mainly in a minor key—sighs from hearts almost broken, aspirations after rest from men who were weary of strife, cries for home and help from the exiled and helpless—groanings of men who were all wanderers, for the rest which remaineth. Christ on the cross, or Christ weary, buffeted, deserted, were frequent themes; but hope was hardly strong enough to sing of Christ on the throne triumphant, risen, reigning. The personal element, the individual experience, were increasingly developed; the fresh vivid realisation of Gospel truth had passed away, and the shadows of the mysticism wherewith the German hymnology was afterwards tinctured were creeping slowly on.

The hymns of Germany are her "Liturgy" and "Confession," the depositories of the expression of her faith in Christ, the voice of her Christian life. They were assimilated with the religious life of the people, as well as incorporated with their worship, and have remained through all subsequent time the nucleus of Christian vitality, the living testimony against error, and the rallying point to all who love the truth.

* "The Poetic Mission of Hans Sachs."—*Goethe.*

Truly there is yet a vigorous life about them, a true nationality of Christianity, and as long as they are sung in homes, and make the very church roofs ring, there is hope for Germany. The progress of free-thinking in the time of Frederic the Great, and the rule of rationalism in the schools and pulpits, met with a formidable obstacle in the hymns; and an attempt was made to tone down the rich warm evangelism of the *Gesangbuch* to the neutrality of neology. The miserable diluting process to which it was subjected, after receiving a name most expressive to the German ear * signally failed, and the sound doctrine and fervid devotion of the Reformation hymns remain to this day to testify against and counteract the fossilised or arid teaching of the pulpit. Some of the alterations introduced even by Klopstock are utterly needless and hypercritical. The change in the line in Schiller's favourite hymn, "All the world rests," which provoked the mirth of Frederic and his philosophers, making it "Now half the world doth rest" is a specimen of the more harmless style of prosaic and grotesque emendations. The German hymnology came later to have a powerful influence on our own, through the medium of John Wesley. About twenty-four of the most popular of the Methodist hymns are traceable to the German, either as imitations or free translations.

During late years attention has generally been called to a fact, formerly much overlooked, that Scandinavia possesses a rich Protestant hymnology, in antiquity only inferior to that of Germany. Ambrose's hymns were sung in Milan cathedral four centuries before the name of Christ penetrated into Sweden, and His faith waged its stubborn conflict with the fierce Scandinavian mythology. Seven centuries later, the reformed faith was fighting superstition on the same ground, and the hero of the struggle was Gustavus Adolphus. The Swedish Reformation, like the German, introduced the necessity for singing, and though this need was for a time supplied by translations from the Lutheran hymns, native hymn-writers shortly arose, whose hymns, until the late revival of religion, were the mainstay of orthodox doctrine. It is in Denmark, however, that sacred poetry has taken as high a place as the same species of literature in Germany. It is the legitimate successor of the magnificent ballad poetry of Denmark, and in the most dreary time of intellectual torpor was the one stirring and redeeming influence. Denmark is richer in hymns than any country except Germany; indeed so numerous were they even at the early period of 1569, that Thomïsson, himself a hymn-writer, wrote a brief history of Danish hymnology, from the Reformation period down to that year. The early poets, however, seem to have been as poor in poetic spirit as they were rich in piety, and it was not till Bishop Kingo † published his first collec-

* *Gesangbuchsverwässerung.*

† This fine hymn of Bishop Kingo's, translated by the Rev. J. Jeffrey, with the noble melody to which it is linked, is universally popular in Denmark. In style it has a strong resemblance to the celebrated *Pange lingua gloriosi* of Venantius Fortunatus.

GETHSEMANE.

Over Kedron Jesus treadeth
To his passion for us all;
Every human eye be weeping,
Tears of blood for Him let fall!

tion of hymns in 1670, that sacred poetry took that magnificent place in Danish literature which it now occupies. Many of Kingo's hymns, even when translated, carry the reader completely away by their ardour and lyric power, and in later days Brorson and Grundtvig have produced hymns of superlative merit. It has been truly remarked by a recent writer that "Danish ecclesiastical history is altogether incomplete without the history of Danish sacred song." In fact the Danish hymns are the very best guide to the internal development of the Danish Church. This very rich hymnology claims nearer kinship with the Latin than the German; the latter, with the exception of Luther's hymns, being lyric and subjective, the Danish epic and objective. It still has a very strong hold on the affections of the people, and contains the germ and promise of a new and warmer religious life.

It is not a little singular that the two great branches of that Reformed Church which was moulded by the spirit of Luther should so early have created a sacred poetry which ranks with the highest achievements of secular literature, while there was no outburst of sacred song in the churches of Scotland, Switzerland, and France, which were moulded by the spirit of Calvin. The metrical versions of the Psalms as used in those countries which were reformed from Geneva have gathered around them the most sacred memories and associations, but it is doubtful whether an emancipation which failed to express itself in an outpouring of new song, was as hearty and joyful as the jubilee of Germany. The Reformation in England was nearly two centuries old before it bore fruit in anything like a national hymnology. The church in England required the stern teaching of persecution and a baptism of blood to make her realise the pricelessness of the liberty wherewith Christ had made her free, and even then she sang of it with a slow heart and stammering speech.

ISABELLA L. BIRD.

THE OLD TESTAMENT SABBATH IN THEORY AND IN PRACTICE.

BY J. H. RIGG, D.D., AUTHOR OF "MODERN ANGLICAN THEOLOGY."

THE analysis given in our former paper (p. 369) will have served to show that, among those who regard the first day of the week as of right to be religiously observed, there are, fundamentally and really, but two classes. The first consists of those who view the day as being precisely and merely the weekly festival of Christians, instituted by apostolic or quasi-apostolic authority, as to the observance of which there is no Divine law, but only ecclesiastical law and prescription, and which men must be left to regard according to the quality and measure of Christian principle and feeling which they possess. The second class consists of those who believe that the first day of the week, in the Christian dispensation, takes the place virtually of the Jewish seventh-day Sabbath; that it is, by Divine law, a day of rest, in order that it may be a day of bodily and spiritual refreshment and of devout worship; that the rest of the sacred day is needful for man as man—for his physical well-being, his intellectual health and energy, his family union and happiness, and his moral culture—and therefore ought by human law to be enforced, on the basis of its prescription for man's benefit by the Divine law; that the rest of the Sabbath is also requisite, in order to a right and worthy use and enjoyment of the spiritual duties and privileges proper to the day, so that its meaning and blessing, as a day of worship, can only be truly brought out when it is a day of rest:—and thus, that the Divine commandment to sanctify the Sabbath as a day of rest justifies itself on the ground of our human relations and necessities, proves itself to be the guardian of human rights; and, at the same time, in its care for what belongs to our humanity, merely as such, secures also the needful opportunity, while it exhibits the proper motives, for the highest, that is the truly religious and Christian, enjoyment of the day. Thus rest and worship, humanity and religion, man's rights and God's rights, are indissolubly joined together; and provision is made for guarding and honouring all these at once in the observance of that law of the Decalogue which stands as the link between the first and the second tables, which is equally associated with the commandment that binds man to the worship

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Round his spirit flock the foes,
Place their shafts and bend their bows,
Aiming at the Saviour solely,
While the world forsakes Him wholly.

David once, with heart afflicted,
Crossed the Kedron's narrow strand,
Clouds of gloom and grief about him
When an exile from his land.
But, oh Jesus! blacker now
Bends the cloud above thy brow,
Hasting to death's dreary portals
For the shame and sin of mortals.

See how, anguish-struck, He falleth
Prostrate, and with struggling breath
Three times on his God he calleth,
Praying that the bitter death
And the cup of doom may go,
Till, replacing inward woe,
Angel comforts round Him gather—
"Not *my* will, but *thine*, O Father!"

See how, in that hour of darkness,
Battling with the evil power,
Agonies untold assail Him,
On his soul their arrows shower;
All the garden-flowers are wet
With the drops of bloody sweat,
From his anguished frame distilling—
World's redemption thus fulfilling!

But, O flowers, so sadly watered
By this pure and precious dew,
In some blessed hour your blossoms
'Neath the olive-shadows grew!
Paradise's gardens bear
Naught that can with you compare,
For the blood thus sprinkled o'er ye
Makes my soul the heir of glory.

When as flowers themselves I wither,
When I droop and fade like grass,
When the life-streams through my pulses
Dull and ever duller pass,
When at last they cease to roll,
Then, to cheer my sinking soul,
Grace of Jesus, be thou given—
Source of Triumph! Pledge of Heaven!

THOMAS KINGO, *Bishop of Funen*, 1670.

of the One God and with that which forbids that man's blood shall be shed by man. In order to establish the virtual identity of the Sabbath of the Old Testament and the Lord's Day of the Christian Dispensation, and to elucidate the meaning and law of the Day of Rest, as common to all the dispensations of revealed truth, it will be necessary in the first instance to exhibit the character of the Sabbath as disclosed in the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

1. First, then, I assume, as not needing to be proved elaborately here, that the Sabbath was a patriarchal institution, and that the observance of the Sabbath as a sacred day was a part of that primeval or patriarchal morality of which I wrote something in this magazine twelve months ago,* which the Scriptures from the first do not reveal, but presuppose, and of which the Ten Commandments may be said to condense or epitomise the preceptive part. To those who believe the book of Exodus to be an honest and real book, written in good faith by a good man, nothing surely can be plainer than that the sixteenth chapter describes the Sabbath as an ancient and authoritative but well-nigh forgotten institution, which the God of Israel required the people in the wilderness to keep sacred from the beginning of their journeyings, even before they came to Mount Sinai and received the law. I invite any open-minded inquirer to read that chapter for himself, and judge whether it be not as I have stated. Only let it be understood that the Sabbath was a primeval institute, the memory of which had been handed down to the children of Israel from the time of their great progenitors, but the observance of which had been almost obliterated under the cruel bondage of Egypt, and the whole passage becomes clear and consistent. Otherwise, nothing can be more obscure and perplexing. I know that Paley takes another view, and others whose names are weighty. Nevertheless, I must appeal to the candid historical student, and to the natural expositor, from the biased judgment even of a Paley. Meantime a host of greater names in exposition than that of Paley might be cited on the other side. Notably, the great Grotius, one of the most sagacious of expositors, and at the same time one whose chief fault lies in inclining, wherever possible, to low and rationalistic expositions, espouses the view which has just been given.

It would be foolish, indeed, to attempt to fix precisely and definitely in what manner the Sabbath was observed in patriarchal times. It is certain that the patriarchs had no Bible; if they had any written records whatever, they must have been exceedingly scanty. Neither had they any body of prayers or psalms, so far as we know; although, indeed, it would seem not improbable that some brief and pregnant forms of petition and ascription may have been in use. Such forms appear to have been in use from the earliest times among the Aryan races. Why may not such have been in such use among the chosen race of Shem? The offering of sacrifice, the rehearsal of traditions, simple invocations of the Deity, brief thanksgivings, may have constituted the religious element in the celebration of the day. Family union and intercourse, simple festivities, the tranquil enjoyment of nature and life, the shade and the mitigated sunshine, the fountain and the field, the moonlight splendour and the starry glory of the heavens; all may have been elements in the rest and refreshment of the Patriarchal Sabbath. In those pastoral times, when busy and urgent toil was unknown, and yet each day of necessity brought some indispensable labour, if it were but in the tendance of the flocks, we cannot doubt that the Sabbath was a day of rest, a day of lighter labour than other days, and yet that it was a day of some necessary works of pastoral duty. We may believe it to have been an easy, joyous festival, not without devout celebrations, prayer and praise, vow and sacrifice.

* See Sunday Magazine for 1865, p. 587.

THE SABBATH OF THE LAW.

2. If, then, the consecration of one day of seven to rest and religion was an integral part of patriarchal morality, the appearance of the law of the Sabbath in the Mosaic Decalogue is explained. On any other supposition it is difficult to account for its appearance there. For as the Sabbath makes its entry upon the arena of Israelitish observance and law, it has by no means the appearance of a stranger suddenly introduced, of a claimant for the highest honours that had never before been heard of. There is no elaborate explanation of the Institute; it is not announced as a new observance. It appears in the sixteenth chapter as an ancient statute which had fallen into neglect. In the twentieth chapter the language implies that the Sabbath is already an established institute; and that its ground and reason are as ancient as the creation of the heavens and earth.

Its very place in the Jewish Decalogue, as we have already intimated, is by no means an obscure intimation that its authority is altogether superior to that of the merely Jewish ordinances. The ceremonial law was merely Jewish; the details of legislation again, whereby the equitable principles of Jewish jurisprudence were carried into specific enactment, were merely Jewish. But all these are very broadly distinguished from that Decalogue in which the fourth commandment has a place. The ten "Words" announce principles; they are not of the nature of national statutes; they do not prescribe penalties. And accordingly, as a body of Divine principles, as a summary of human morality, of duty towards God and man, they occupy a position of glory and supremacy amidst the ordinances of Israel altogether unique. As Sinai, the holy mountain, was fenced off from the camp of the congregation by bounds which none might pass and live, so are the ten Words of Jehovah fenced off from the enactments of the Mosaic law. These ten Words, and these ten only, were spoken by the Most High himself. These, and these only, were written by the finger of God on two tables of stone. These two tables were placed in the holy ark called "the Ark of the Covenant," which itself was placed within the second veil, in the midst of the Holy of Holies, and underneath the cherubim of glory, in the innermost heart of the most holy and most secret shrine of the Divine Presence and Glory. Surely all this bespeaks an essential distinction and superiority in the Decalogue as compared with the merely national and the

necessarily temporary laws and observances of the Mosaic economy.

Moreover, this distinction between the Decalogue and the other parts of the Jewish economy is one which we find to be insisted upon most emphatically by the great apostle of Gentile enfranchisement and of Christian liberty himself, and insisted upon especially and precisely in those very epistles in which he most strongly contends for the abrogation of the Jewish economy as such. I cannot but regard this consideration as one of the weightiest character. The two epistles in which St. Paul most energetically and outspokenly contends against the imposition of the Jewish law as binding on the conscience of Christian believers, are those to the Romans and the Galatians. The spirit of a great part of both epistles may be expressed in the words which are found in one of them as addressed to Gentile believers: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." (Gal. v. 1.) And yet we read in the Romans, "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom xiii. 8—10.) And in the Galatians we read the same in brief: "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Gal. v. 14.) So that if in one sense the law is abrogated, in another sense the authority of "the law" remains. If the ceremonial law is done away, the moral law is still supreme. The apostle, it is true, cites only the commandments of the second table. But no one would contend that the second table alone remains in force; that the first table has been broken and abrogated, whilst the second abides in unimpaired authority. Our Lord, indeed, in one sentence conjoins both tables, and attests the perpetual obligation of both. In love to God and love to our neighbour He sums up the substance of both tables (Mark xii. 30, 31); and, in immediate connection with his own expositions of the spirit and principles of the Moral Law, He uttered the emphatic sentence, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." (Math. v. 17.)

If, then, the fourth commandment be an integral part of the Moral Law; if the fourth commandment may not be torn away from the fellowship of the other nine, and made the one exception, whilst all the others are admitted to belong to essential morality, and to be of lasting obligation; I see not what more is to be said. The position, in fact, taken up by some writers on this subject, is to the effect that the fourth commandment is such an exception. The very statement, indeed, might have seemed its own refutation. It is not easy to imagine a more apparently incredible paradox than that one commandment of a merely national scope and temporary obligation should have been associated, in a summary of moral duty, with nine others of perpetual obligation; that it should have been placed in the very central niche of all the commandments, as on one side directly touching the honour and worship of God, and on the other the rights and well-being of man; that equally with all the other commandments it should have been spoken by the voice of the Most High and written by the Divine Finger on one of the tables of stone; and yet that this one "Word" alone of all the ten should be merely ceremonial and temporary, the rest being all of a moral nature and of permanent obligation. Surely it must be felt as if no arguments could establish such a paradox as this.

3. It is necessary, however, whilst maintaining this position, to bear in mind that even the Ten Commandments have a certain Jewish colouring, necessarily implied in the fact that they were, as spoken from Sinai, addressed immediately to the apprehension of a particular nation, and could not, therefore, but be adapted to their modes of thought and habits of life. In each one of them there is a principle of universal scope and obligation; in several of them that principle is embodied in language which, while suitable to the Israelites, would be unsuitable to many other nations. Now the Jewish colouring was intended to wash out. The Judaistic element, in the language and conception of the commandments, of necessity must be temporary. Here is one element of agreement with those from whom we otherwise differ. For want of observing this, no doubt some have erred in expounding the commandments. But let it be observed that this does not apply only to the fourth commandment. If the law had been first given to a race of mariners, the *tenth* commandment would have been different in its terms from what it is. It was plainly intended for no other than a pastoral or agricultural people. The *fifth* commandment also contains a clause,—"that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee"—which manifestly could belong only, in its express and literal purport, to the people of Israel. This clause, accordingly, does not strictly belong to the unchangeable law, although it is found as a part of the form in which it appears. But would any one, on this account, contend that the law of honouring our parents is in itself no essential part of patriarchal morality, of the moral law, of human duty for all the race of man? Indeed, the clause itself which, as it stands in its letter, must be admitted to be merely national in its scope and of only temporary force, yet, in its spirit, as implying that the blessings of Providence attend on filial obedience, may be justly regarded as expressing an abiding principle of the Divine rule.

Nor is this all. It must further be admitted on all sides that, as human language is necessarily imperfect and coloured by the conditions of life in the midst of which its usages have grown up and to which it is meant immediately to apply, so also the necessity of expressing all laws in the concrete if they are to be apprehended by a nation in a simple and primitive stage of development, must often cause the letter of the law to be a very imperfect representation of its spirit. The Hebrew language has nothing to do with

abstract terms. Its precepts are not given in the principle on which they depend, but as prescribing or forbidding certain defined acts. Now a principle, the spirit of a precept, is too subtle to be restricted absolutely within any enumeration or definition of acts. Some of the things prescribed to be done, even although done outwardly, may yet, as acts of obedience, be essentially defective, because lacking the spirit from which they ought to have proceeded; while other actions, although in strictness of letter forbidden under penalty, might yet not merit the penalty annexed, because, in special cases, they may not be prompted by the evil motive which, in ordinary cases, constitutes essentially their guilt. The former principle is recognised in the prophetic maxim which our Lord on more than one occasion adopted and applied to the observances of a Pharisaic legalism, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." The latter principle may be illustrated in the case of the commandment prohibiting murder.

"Thou shalt not kill" is the word of the law. (Exod. xx. 13; Deut. v. 17.) And yet in various places of the Pentateuch God gives distinct commands to "kill" both men and women, under prescribed circumstances. In fact, it may be perfectly right to kill others, either in execution of the law on capital crimes, or in defence of one's country, or in defence of one's wife or children, or even in self-defence. Or a man may accidentally kill another, and yet not be guilty of the crime of murder. In all such cases the letter of the law is violated, and yet the law not broken. The concrete law, in truth, is directed against the sin of revenge. The spirit of it prohibits hatred, as both our Lord and St. John teach us. (Matt. v. 21, 22; 1 John iii. 15.) This *sixth* commandment in effect forbids all designs of selfish ill-will against the well-being of another. The cruel enemy who persecutes his victim at law, and follows him from point to point, till he has beggared his family and brought down his grey hairs with sorrow to a premature grave, is as guilty of violating the sixth commandment as the assassin who waylays his enemy in the dark bypath. All this is felt as soon as it is stated. But to have expressed the law in the abstract instead of the concrete—to have stated the principle instead of forbidding the most obvious and common violation of it, a sort of crime to which in rude and primitive times mankind are most easily tempted—would have been to render the law impalpable to the coarse commonalty, to have made it also circuitous in statement and cumbrous in form. The wisdom of the Most High gave the commandment in the form best adapted to positive law, most striking and compendious, most suited to the condition of the people for whom the Decalogue was *in the first place* intended, and in which it could most simply and easily be applied. The exceptions were left to be understood, and the essential spirit of the law to be felt, by means of that intuitive moral apprehension which is a better interpreter in such matters than any verbal definitions and refinements could have been to a rude people in the first hour of its separate national existence.

Bearing this in mind, we shall not fail to see where lies the fallacy of the reasoning that the fourth commandment must either be altogether abandoned, or that the strictest letter of it must in all cases be observed; otherwise, it is contended, its nature as a law, its authority as a statute, is violated. Surely this is carrying things much too far, farther than any English lawyer or statesman would carry them in regard to the interpretation even of British statute-law. The spirit of an English statute, when that is clear and undoubted, governs the interpretation of the letter; and exceptions are continually made and allowed, when to insist upon the letter would be unquestionably to violate the spirit and intent of the act. If it were not so, it would be an evil thing indeed. Even the men whose profession it is to frame deeds and statutes at law, find themselves unable to invest their full and exact meaning in words so as to make a complete and absolute fit. When legal science has done its utmost to find language adequate to express every nicety and sinuosity of thought, every condition or contingency of fact or of event, it finds itself after all at fault; and something has finally to be left to be supplied by the instincts and intelligence of the administrator.

But then the Ten Commandments are not "statutes" in the strict legal sense; the ten "Words" are rather the concrete expression of *principles* of law and morality. The statutes founded upon them, so far as any distinct legal enactments were founded upon them, are contained in the after, the lower, the minute and detailed legislation of the Mosaic Code. Let any one consider, for example, the *tenth* commandment, which forbids *coveting* the property of others, and ask himself whether that could be in any sense a national statute. It is a principle of morals. No distinct enactment or law was ever founded upon it.

We have then to regard the fourth commandment, like the rest, as embodying a *principle of morality*, adapted in its expression to the actual condition of the people of Israel. We have to ascertain what is the principle which it embodies, what the true spirit of the commandment. Having got at this, we must allow the spirit to govern and re-expound the letter; never pressing the letter in such a manner as to violate the spirit; even relaxing the letter, if in any case a strict adherence to it will frustrate the very purpose for which the law was given, and which lies upon the face of the commandment. This is the manner in which, by Divine direction, the fourth commandment was, from the beginning, understood and acted upon. This is the manner in which our Lord himself has taught us to understand and apply it. And if we thus understand and apply it, we shall find that it is as applicable to Christian times as to Israelitish, and even more necessary; and that all our difficulties are capable of solution.

4. The principle of the Sabbath law is so plain that he who runs may read it. The day is emphatically and solemnly claimed as sacred to God, and as commemorative of the Creator's glory and the serene providential supremacy of the Most High. As such, it is a day to be remembered and kept holy. This is a moral injunction, essentially and exclusively such. To have attempted to enforce it upon all the

people by any prescription of definite services to be everywhere performed, or of specific modes of Sabbath hallowing, would have been unlike the wisdom of the Most High. But that wisdom does prescribe and require that which, in the case of the Jewish nation, with certain definite exceptions, could most easily and happily be carried into effect. The commandment enjoins rest from labour, a commandment not only easy but pleasant to keep. In securing this rest, the opportunity for all that is included in the blessings of Sabbath observance was secured. Without this, as a preliminary, nothing could have been secured. The Divine wisdom enjoins and secures the necessary minimum of observance which the people, from the first, could comply with. By means of the doubled religious honour paid to the Sabbath in connection with the sacrificial worship of the Tabernacle; and by means of a progressive revelation of Divine truth and glory through the prophetic order, not without the concurrent operation of the Divine Spirit on the elect among the people; provision was made, after the Divine manner, for the development out of this earliest ground of hallowed rest of all that belonged to the rising honours of the day of God throughout the ages of prophecy, and throughout the Christian dispensation.

5. It is customary to think of the Jewish observance of the Sabbath as hard and rigorous, full of sharp scruples and of religious forms and observances. Of the Pharisaic observance of the Sabbath in our Lord's time this is true. But then it must be remembered that our Lord altogether reproved and disallowed the Sabbatic superstitions and excessive punctilios of the Pharisees. And "from the beginning it was not so," but far otherwise. The original observance of the Sabbath by the Jews had comparatively little of the religious element in it. This grew, as it was intended to grow, with the development of revelation; but it never was meant to take the form of servile literalness and hard externalism which the Pharisees inculcated.

The Sabbath was intended to be "a rest and a refreshing," not a bondage; a rest and refreshment to the whole man, his body, his heart, his intellect, his spirit. This primary intent of the Sabbath is to be kept in view throughout. This idea includes in itself the meaning of worship. Man's highest part is his spirit. Man's spirit cannot be refreshed, exalted, sublimed, without worship. Without worship, man's *heart* cannot be *at rest*. Without faith and worship, man's *intellect* cannot be *satisfied*. And in proportion as man rises in the scale of advancement, as he becomes more completely developed, as he grows into a more thoughtful moral being, with higher aspirations, and in fuller sympathy with the "powers of the world to come," must worship become more and more the necessity, the solace, the strength, the law, of his inmost being.

6. The three elements of Sabbath blessing are, bodily and mental rest, family union and fellowship, and religious meditation and worship, including the highest moral culture and spiritual satisfaction. These elements must vary in their degree and character, their mutual proportions, their respective developments, according to differences in nations and individuals, and according to the different stages of national and religious culture and development; but all three are essential. The first, however, is chiefly important as a means to the others, and must therefore give way, if necessary, for the sake of securing the higher ends to which it is intended to be subordinate. Indeed without family union and happiness, and without religious repose and elevation, there hardly can be any real mental rest or refreshment; whilst, apart from mental recreation, family happiness, and spiritual sensibility, the rest of the body is little more than mere animal rest, an object not in itself unimportant, but not to be put in competition with the other objects contemplated in the comprehensive beneficence of the Sabbath law.

It is manifest that the Sabbath rest is a priceless boon equally to the youth, the active man of business, and the aged matron, but that it must bear a different aspect to each of them. So again to the Jew of the Pentateuch, and to the Jew of the Maccabean age, the different elements of the day's blessing must have been differently proportioned and compounded; while, supposing the Sabbath law still to be virtually in force, to be in spirit still binding, it must be evident that the elements of the Sabbath refreshment, and the aspects of Sabbath observance, must have been very different in the unlettered middle ages, when there was neither a Bible for the people nor skill to read it, from what they are, or ought to be, in England at the present day; while the celebration in England at this day, again, could not but differ, at the least, as widely from the Jewish observance, especially before the times of the captivity, as from that of the middle ages.

7. In the childhood of the Jewish nation the Sabbath was emphatically a Sabbath for children, and its style of observance cannot have been very unlike what is now commonly found among the young children of Christian families in England. At that time the nation possessed no sacred records besides the earliest books of Scripture, little besides the Pentateuch, and these writings could not, of course, be in general circulation. The people at large, therefore, were without any sacred literature; and had, in place of such a literature, nothing but a collection of impressive traditions. Neither had they any body of psalms, or any national liturgy. In simple truth the people at large were destitute of any public religious services. The services of the Tabernacle could only be attended by a few. The people were forbidden to make to themselves high places for worship, for the obvious reason that these would have ensured the perpetuation and the multiplication of local superstitions and idolatries. The worship of the Israelitish nation, therefore, apart from the three annual festivals, and especially as related to the observance of the Sabbath, can only have been private and personal or family worship. From repeated references in the book of Deuteronomy (xii. 18; xiv. 27; xvi. 11; xviii. 6), it seems evident that the domestic priesthood or chaplaincy of the families of Israel was maintained by the Levites, so often spoken of in connection with all the inmates of the house as

members of the family.* These, no doubt, in their itinerant ministrations, instructed the family in the history and holy traditions of their race, in the law, and their moral duties, and to some extent in sacred minstrelsy or psalmody. They thus occupied in the families distributively the place, as to matters of religion, which, in patriarchal times, had been filled by the head of the family.

At the beginning of the Sabbath, when the sunset marked the close of the foregoing day, a pleasant stillness reigned throughout all the land of Israel. At every family homestead in that land of homesteads were gathered together for the evening feast of the opening Sabbath all the members of the family, grandsire and granddame, sons and daughters, and daughters-in-law, children, and children's children, to the third or even fourth generation. With them, also, although distinguished from them by the place which they occupied, were manservants and maidservants, and possibly "the stranger" who had claimed the benefit of his countryman's hospitality. Seated in honour by the side of the aged head of the household was often to be found "the Levite within the gates" of the homestead. The feast was frugal, but yet rich in the pleasant provisions of pastoral plenty; usually cold, but all the more suitable to the climate and the tastes of the people. On rare occasions, however, a kid which had been made ready before the sunset hour might grace and complete the provisions laid out on some special Sabbath. There were cates and fruits, and milk and honey; especially the olive, the grape, the fig, and the date, appeared in plenty at the feast. It was to all a season of rest and rejoicing; a season of good cheer. After the feast, we may believe that the Levite rehearsed national traditions, recited sacred histories, chanted to his harp sacred songs, not without the accompaniment of maidens and young men, and inculcated the precepts of the Divine Law.

On the morrow, there would be seen the family, in all its branches, enjoying the day according to the fashion of their race and the suggestions of the climate. They might be seen early abroad, still keeping, however, within easy hail from home, to lead the oxen or asses to the watering, or to breathe the sweet air of the cool, fresh morning; presently they would partake of a forenoon meal answerable in character to that of the previous evening; they may have been led again in prayer or sacred song; and taught again, the younger branches especially, out of "the law of the Lord." We may imagine them in the warm noon reclining under the thick screen of the drooping fig-tree, or the shadow of some great rock, or in the shelter of some cool and hidden valley; the old renewing their youth whilst they caressed the little ones, or gravely conversing with their mature children, the patriarch with his sons, the aged matron with her daughters and daughters-in-law, all resting from labour, relaxing from care, while family affection expands in the warm and blessed leisure, and the whole household is knit together into close and kind union; and a sense of the blessings of the national covenant, of the goodliness of the land of promise, of the graciousness and glory of the God of Israel, settles into the heart of all. Such may be taken to have been the character of an Israelitish Sabbath in the earliest times—the times antecedent to David.

Samuel may be regarded as having founded the schools of the prophets. From several hints it would appear that these schools, probably composed chiefly of Levites, as Samuel himself was a Levite, did much to keep alive the knowledge of religion in the land; and that on Sabbath days it was customary for devout sons and daughters of Israel to repair to the prophet and his school for religious instruction (2 Kings iv. 23). It may be believed that, in this way, some knowledge of God was kept alive not only in Judah but in Israel, even during the worst times of idolatrous apostasy; and that in these schools there grew up that more developed and truly sublime theology which is common to all the later prophets of the chosen nation, and which is seen in such high perfection in the prophecies of Isaiah.

At the time of David, not only was there a larger body of sacred history than before, but a noble and pathetic service of prayer and song for the house of the Lord was established, the strains of which would not only fill Mount Zion with thanksgiving and the voice of melody, with pleading prayer and lofty praise, but would be echoed and re-echoed throughout the land of Israel. The worship of the Tabernacle, restored so splendidly by David, and the gorgeous worship of the Temple of Solomon, would not only add impressiveness to the great feasts, but must have lifted all that belonged to religious truth and worship into a much higher position before the nation, and have reacted mightily upon the religious faith and devotion of all the tribes. The Sabbaths of the land would catch a glow from the glory of Mount Zion; and would gain greatly in fulness of religious instruction and influence, and in spirituality of character and meaning.

How largely the religious element in Sabbath observance had developed between the time of Joshua and that of Isaiah will be manifest from a reference to what that prophet says in regard to the Sabbath in the fifty-eighth chapter of his prophecy. The Sabbath of Isaiah was very much more than a mere day of rest; it was a "delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable," a day in which he "honoured God, not doing his own ways, nor finding his own pleasure, nor speaking his own words;" a day in which he "delighted himself in the Lord" (verses 13, 14).

We may surely say that, even in Christian days and on the part of the most Christian people, no observance of the "holy day" could exceed in spirituality and perfection that which is described in these words of the evangelical prophet. This, indeed, is one of the many evidences of the truly divine inspiration of the prophet. But still we must remember that these words are part of a practical sermon preached by him to his contemporaries, and therefore that they must have been adapted to their capacity. Those to whom the prophet spoke these words must have had that in their consciences and feelings which was capable of responding to the prophet's words.

8. After the Captivity the establishment of syna-

* "Thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates."

gogues throughout the land greatly affected the mode of Sabbath observance, which became proportionately more religious, and approximated so far nearer to the Christian method of Sabbath observance. The temptation of the Jews henceforth was rather to formalism and sanctimoniousness than to irreligion. Pharisaism arose and grew to that height of ostentatious and godless religiousness which our Lord so terribly exposed in his personal ministry. Of necessity Pharisaism, in its spirit of exaggerated legalism, centred its very special attention on the law of Sabbath. As every legal scruple and observance became the ground of a specific merit, and furnished an item in the account of self-righteousness, to multiply scruples became a great point in the development of Pharisaism. Among the Pharisees the punctilios of Sabbath observance did really equal what by Dr. Hessey is unauthentically ascribed to the Puritans of New England.* To trim the nails on the Sabbath was a grave offence. All exercise of the physician's art was forbidden on that day. To rub in the hands an ear of corn was corn-grinding, even though a man might be hungered in passing through the fields. Such were the scruples of the Pharisees. But to assume, as people perversely insist upon doing, that their interpretation of the law was true and right, is so unreasonable as to tempt one to imagine that men insist upon it in order to discredit the real and ancient Sabbath law.

9. What the law prohibited was servile work, real labour, work that was connected with the proper tasks of other days. Such needful waiting in the house as was essential to the enjoyment of the Sabbath feast is not forbidden by the law; nor any other act which, not involving toil, is necessary to make the day one of ease and happiness. Nay, from the other prescriptions of the law, it is manifest that even bodily toil, if needful in order to the due celebration of the day, must be admitted as lawful. The end must not be sacrificed for the sake of the means, which are themselves only valuable with a view to that end. Hence, as our Lord unanswerably urged against the Pharisees, the priests in the temple did even servile work, were compelled to do it in order to the sacrifices, did twice the work of other days, and did this in virtue of the direct requirement of the law of the temple service. The priests in the temple "profaned the Sabbath," broke the Sabbath law, and were yet "blameless." So the very Pharisees themselves always led their ox and their ass to the watering on the Sabbath. They took care that their punctilios should not injure themselves in their own material interests. On the Sabbath they would, at whatever cost of labour, extricate their cattle if they had fallen into a pit. All which was work.

10. On such grounds as these our Lord lays down the rule that "it is lawful to do good" on the Sabbath day; and throws a piercing ray of light on the whole subject, when he utters the apophthegm, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."

Was this, as is so strangely alleged even by divines, to repeal the law of the Sabbath? Nay, rather, it was most impressively to confirm it. "The Sabbath was made for man;" was intended to be a blessing to the race; and our Lord's own practice was the best comment on his testimony. It is monstrous to pretend that He who "was made under the law," and who came to "fulfil the law," and to "fulfil all righteousness" (Math. iii. 15), even legal righteousness, violated the law of the Sabbath. He observed it most strictly. He vindicated it in its true sense, as it had been from the beginning, and in its benignant purpose. At the same time He added to it a lustre of blessing by his deeds of mercy, and a spiritual glory by his Sabbath teachings, such as it had never known before.

His miracles in no sense violated the rest of the Sabbath, while they did most impressively enhance its sanctity. He did no servile work in performing them; they involved no fatigue, no exertion to Himself or to others, save only the free and happy exertion of his own benevolent will. To anoint the eyes of the blind is not to do work, any more than to perform a common ablution. To receive healing by the word of the Saviour was not work on the part of the healed. For a healed cripple to take up his mat and carry it away folded on his arm was not work. These miracles were not work: they involved no toil or fatigue; they were not done for wages; they were not what Isaiah denounces as "doing one's own work." But they *were* refreshment. So far from being opposed to rest, they were in harmony with it in its deepest and richest sense. They sent healing and refreshment home to the secret springs of body and soul; they filled the spirit with a well-spring of gladness. They brightened the Sabbath with heavenly glory; they made it indeed a rest and a refreshing. They beatified the Sabbath day both to the Healer and the healed.

Throughout, both by his doctrine and his example, the Son of Man illustrated and enforced his own principle. He showed in what sense the Sabbath was made for man, to benefit him in body and soul; He showed also how those defeated the true end of the Sabbath-day who made it into a mere idol of superstition; as if there were virtue and merit in imposing disabilities and difficulties in connection with the Sabbath, as a tribute to its authority and awfulness; as if the Sabbath, and its superstitious veneration, were in and of itself an end to which all the joys and charities of life must be sacrificed; as if "man were made for the Sabbath."

11. Now all that Christians have to do in order rightly to keep the Lord's Day Sabbath is truly to carry out our Lord's maxim, and to follow his spirit and example. The true principle of Sabbath observance is to be applied to the circumstances of Christians at the present day. In most respects those circumstances are altogether in contrast to those of the people of Israel at any period, but above all in the earliest period of their history, at the time when the Sabbath-law was originally given. They were pastoral or agricultural; a large part of our people are commercial or manufacturing. They lived in homesteads

* The famous *blue laws* of Newhaven, gravely cited by Dr. Hessey as authentic, were the invention of one Dr. Peters, a fugitive royalist, in 1681.

scattered over the whole country; and, except in the case of Jerusalem towards the end of Jewish history, there was not what would now be regarded as a considerable town in all the land. Theirs therefore was a quiet, self-centred family life, and this life was equably diffused throughout the land. They, on Sabbaths, would naturally give a preponderating development to the element of rest. Our habits and conditions of life will not admit of our doing the same. Ours is "an age of great cities," throughout which all relations are ramified and reciprocated. Ours is an age of Missionary activity, in perfect contrast to theirs. For ages they had not even synagogues; we have our synagogues everywhere, and these of necessity gather their adherents from many different localities. Their families all clustered and gravitated round about the family centre. Among us the members of families must often from Sunday to Sunday be scattered abroad far and wide; and to secure that family union which is so essential a part of the meaning and blessing of the Sabbath day, it may be necessary for the members to perform much more than a Sabbath day's journey. Our civilisation, in its internal and domestic aspects, as well as in all other respects, is, for the most part, an entire contrast to that of the Jews. In rural districts, indeed, it approaches in some measure to the same character; and hence in purely country districts the type of Sabbath observance among ourselves is found to approximate more nearly to that of the Jewish people than it does or could do in large towns. But even in the country there cannot in our land and climate be the same manner of easy unlaborious Sabbath life as among the Jews. People cannot live altogether *al fresco;* nor be feasted altogether on cold viands; nor, under the warmth of a happy sun, dispense altogether with fires. If these things, and such things as these, are borne in mind, we shall find it perfectly possible to adhere to the spirit and principle of the Sabbath law, to secure its blessing, and yet to adapt our Sabbath to the conditions of our own national life; we shall be able effectively and happily to apply our Lord's two-fold principle: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."

THE NOBLEMAN'S SON.

How fares the man who loves the world's caress,
When the dread shade draws near,
And sends thro' all his golden palaces
The shudder of his fear?

With what blank looks, empty of all delight,
He views his gleaming halls!
How cruelly the sunbeams, calmly bright,
Beam on the pictured walls!

Whence is there help? His eyes' desire is laid
In the rich-curtain'd room,
Sunk far too deep for skill of man to aid,
Even at the point of doom.

There is one hope; and while the kindling shame,
For all his prayerless days,
Shakes his weak knees and burns his face like flame,
He bows his head and prays.

And lo! the prayer is answer'd: angel hands,
Commission'd wrath to deal,
When He that sent withdraws his dread commands,
Are swift as light to heal.

And shall the voice of mercy plead in vain
In the world's gaudy glare?
Can the touch'd heart, grown doubly hard again,
Forget the answer'd prayer?

Nay: may the Hebrew noble's faith be thine,
That, faint at first, became,
Thro' inward motion of a breath divine,
A full and steadfast flame.

O joy of joys that broke with morning light
Across his waken'd soul,
When, ere they spake, his servant's smiles were bright
With this, "Thy son is whole!"

What wondering looks were look'd, what gleams of joy
Fell on their lighten'd ways,
As, gather'd round about the ransom'd boy,
They pour'd the hymn of praise!

Brief is the record, but how full of bliss!
What more ennobling word
Can truth write on a mortal's tomb than this?—
"He trusted in the Lord." J. H. Clark.

A LECTURE FROM A WINDOW.

A narrow lane or alley runs off one of the back thoroughfares near Prince's Street, Manchester. It looks dark and gloomy, even in broad daylight, for the houses on both sides are too high to permit the sun even at mid-day to peep in.

I wish to call attention to the two corner houses. The ground-floor of the one on the right-hand side contains only two rooms. These were occupied at the time when my narrative begins by Peter Leonards, a widower of fifty, and his daughters Emmy and Kate, two strong healthy-looking girls of twenty-two and twenty respectively. Peter was a workman in one of the mills, where Kate was also employed from dawn till dusk. Emmy stayed at home to keep the house, to cook the meals, and to mend the clothes. She was a clever seamstress, and, having a good deal of leisure time, she sewed for the neighbourhood. In this way she earned enough to pay for her own clothing, and to purchase many a bit of finery, of which she was very fond. Girls who are fond of finery and a deal of trimming, are, as a rule, also fond of pleasure and company; for, without these, what would be the use of hanging all that flourish of lace and ribbon, frill and fringe, about one's body? There would be no opportunity for displaying it. Not that Emmy was a flaunting girl: very far from it; but she was fond of a laugh, and a song, and a dance, and her father used to say, "Why should she not enjoy

herself in her young years, if she can afford to do so?"

Her sister Kate was at the mill all day. She, too, was a cheerful girl, but of a calmer, quieter temper. She was rather indifferent to the question of dress. Emmy, indeed, constantly teased her about her old-fashioned bonnet, and gave her the nick-names of "Queen Bess," and "Old Bessy," but Kate took all quite good-humouredly; and there being no opposition or retaliation on her part, the fire of Emmy's teasing often died away from want of fuel. Kate was a kind-hearted, good-natured creature, but with a slight inclination towards melancholy. Her father and sister, at least, set it down to that, but perhaps seriousness was the better word. She felt life to be a *real* thing and not a play, as her sister and most people around her seemed to think it was. She had no objection to fun and sport, and she often wished that people had more leisure to enjoy themselves. But she could not make out how persons could so entirely forget that there were many poor creatures who never enjoyed themselves, and that there was a great deal of misery in this world of ours. Nor did Emmy deny there was; but then, she thought, it was no use being sad, as that certainly would not alter the case. She reasoned with herself that Cripple Dan, for instance, who never saw the sun in the sky nor a flower in the field, except when wheeled out of the town on a bright summer day once a year or so, was neither the better nor the worse, whether other people who could move their limbs as they liked danced or not. There was some truth in this reasoning, and Kate had nothing to say against it. Still she felt there was untruth in it also, but what that was she could not well make out.

Poor Cripple Dan lived in the opposite corner house. Its ground floor also contained two rooms, but the front room, which opened into the street, was occupied as a shop, so that only the back room was left to the family to dwell in. This apartment received its light from a window that opened into the narrow lane. The light, however, was scanty and dim, with scarcely any variation all the year round. The family consisted of Dan, a lad of eighteen, his step-mother Mrs. Baker, and a baby. Dan's mother died when he was scarcely one year old. His father, who was a tailor, continued a widower for several years, and poor little Danny was placed under the care of a sister, who was only eight years older than himself. This girl, poor thing, handled her little brother very much as though he had been her doll, dropped him sometimes, and occasionally even, for a couple of hours, she would stow him into a corner, that she might have a romp with the children in the street. Little wonder that he came from her hands a crippled sickly boy. She ran away at the age of sixteen, and had never been heard of since. Mr. Baker, calculating that it would be at once cheaper and more social to take a wife than to engage a housekeeper, married a strong robust woman from the country, with whom he lived in peace for several years. At his death she was left with a baby, a boy of eight months, and had also Dan to take care of. Being a somewhat shrewd woman, she turned her front room into a toy and small-wares shop, and made her back room serve the purpose of dwelling, bed, and work-place, All the day it resounded with the stroke of her little hammer, for she earned part of her livelihood by cutting images of pasteboard, which, stuck over with papers of the most brilliant colours, made her shop famous among the juvenile population of the district.

Though rather a rough and boisterous sort of woman, Mrs. Baker was yet, at bottom, an honest, kind-hearted soul. What she lacked in delicacy of expression, she made up in tenderness of feeling and firmness of principle. Dan was a burden to her, and no help. Not only was he a cripple and unable to walk one step, but he was also weak, sickly, and needing attention and nursing. Every morning, after having dressed himself in bed, he was carried, like a little child, by his step-mother to the window, where she put him on a wooden stool at the table, which stood at right angles to the sill. There poor Dan sat till she carried him back to his bed in the evening. She gave him his meals regularly, when she had any to herself; for it sometimes happened that the landlord, and the toy-merchant, and the stationer, took away all her earnings, and it was a rule with her, as strict as the laws of the Medes and Persians, never to eat her breakfast until it was paid for. Still, for Dan's sake, she would sometimes pawn some of her stock-in-trade, and provide him with a herring to pick, which would at the same time keep him occupied for an hour or so, since the poor fellow had nothing to do all the day long.

Indeed it was a great puzzle how to keep Dan busy. It far surpassed Mrs. Baker's sagacity. As he bowed over the table, his head resting upon his hands, and his pale face buried under a thick confused mass of black hair, it was a pitiful sight to witness his emaciated form, which seemed more like that of a boy of twelve than a lad of eighteen. For hours and hours Dan might thus be seen, turned towards the window, and looking into the narrow, lonely lane, his expression never altering, except perhaps when a bird happened to alight on the sill of the opposite window, or a yelping cur pursued a chicken along the streets. And if there was not much variety for the eyes of the unfortunate young man, neither did his ears enjoy any greater change of impression. His mother either broke the silence of the parlour by the strokes of her hammer, or the baby would fill up the quiet space by his cries, which would again be responded to by sundry rather clamorous annotations from the mother, all of which however usually ended in the "little blackguard" being taken out of his cot, kissed passionately, and placed upon the table before Dan, whose task it became to play with it, and keep it silent and cheerful. This, however, was a pastime which was all enjoyment to the cripple, for the baby, as soon as he could grasp, used to seize Dan's hair with both his hands, and pull his head to and fro with such force that mother was at length compelled to come to the rescue. Sometimes, too, a customer would enter the shop, and Dan would sharpen his ears to catch scraps of the conversation. His mother, having resumed her seat, Dan would then

ask who it was that had been in. But he gradually dropped this sort of interrogatory, as the answer he invariably received was, "Somebody you don't know." Now, Mrs. Baker was not destitute of the talent of talkativeness. On the contrary, the baby had to exert its powers to the utmost, and Dan had often to second it by his loud cries, before she could be prevailed upon to dismiss a neighbour with whom she was gossipping in the shop. But her room was the worst place imaginable for a comfortable talk, since she had to keep her hammer at rest if she wanted to wag her tongue. Nor was Dan a very fit subject to converse with. His range of thought was very narrow, scarcely extending beyond that of a child of twelve. He knew hardly anything of the world outside the house, for he very seldom saw it, and he had not been able to make its acquaintance through the medium of books. He could neither read nor write, and his step-mother knew so little of these arts that she was quite indifferent to them.

Still, Dan knew that there was such a thing as reading. In his mother's shop-window there were little books suspended—"The Life of Jack Sheppard," "The Story of Jack the Giant-Killer," for instance, and a parcel of them was kept in store under his bed. His mother would sometimes give him one, and then he might have been seen for hours looking at the coarse woodcuts. But what would most of all excite his curiosity was what the letter-press meant, and how people could make it tell them a story. He knew most of the stories by heart, for his father used to tell them to him on Sundays. But since his father's death he had heard nothing of them, and he would often think, "I wish I could make those letters speak to me. Oh, if I could read, how it would shorten the long dreary hours for me." And those hours were ten times longer and more dreary to him than they were when his father was alive, for in those days he used to sit at the window of the front room, and look into the bright broad street, where the children were playing, and people passing, and horses and carts rolling along, and where sometimes men came with organs, playing lively tunes. But all those luxuries were now gone, and his place was fixed at the back window, where he could only see that dull, dark, lonely lane. And, instead of the songs of the children and the organ tunes, there was nothing but the never-ceasing monotonous clicks of his mother's hammer, and the cries of the fidgetty baby.

Now, while poor Dan was thus spending his days in sad loneliness, apparently destined to wither away unknown and forgotten by everybody except his step-mother, he little thought that there was another person who thought of him and felt for him deeply. Kate, from the earliest time she could recollect, had known that there was a poor creature called Crippled Dan living over there in the corner house. She also recollected having sometimes seen and talked to him when, as a child, she played in the street on those bright summer days when he usually sat at the open window of the front room. But she had gone to the mill in her twelfth year, and she had lost sight of him for years, and would have forgotten him altogether, had it not become a custom among the women and girls in the neighbourhood never to buy anything at Mrs. Baker's without asking how Dan was;—a manifestation of neighbourly kindness, in regard to which Kate would have been the very last to fail. As, however, she never saw Dan now, Mrs. Baker never asking her friends to step into her back room, he was to her, as to all other people in the neighbourhood, a sort of imaginary being, whom she could not help thinking of as a child of twelve. So one may conceive in some measure her amazement when, one Sunday afternoon she unexpectedly happened to find herself face to face with him, and saw a young person, whose emaciated and pale face was like that of an old man, while his body was like that of a boy of twelve. It must be kept in mind that Peter Leonards' house being of the same length and construction as Mrs. Baker's, the window of his back room was just opposite to hers, the narrow lane separating them so little that two persons could easily shake hands across. The Sunday referred to was the first bright mild day of spring. Dan had his window open all the day, to inhale as much of the fresh balmy air as the close place supplied, and to enjoy the merry noise of the children in the street round the corner, for which purpose he was leaning nearly half his length over the sill, and looking fixedly towards the entrance of the lane. Suddenly the opposite window was thrown upward, and Dan's delight and wonder when he found himself in the immediate presence of a nice, cheerful-looking girl may be imagined. Kate shrieked, and started back a little, as she thought she saw a ghost in human form. And no wonder, indeed, for the wind had blown his dark long hair all round his head and face, so that it looked very much like a skull under a crape veil.

"Don't be afraid of me; I am Dan," said the cripple, in a kind voice. "And you are Emmy, aren't you?"

"No; my name is Kate," was the gentle reply.

"Oh yes, I see, you have still that little brown spot under your left eye. And Emmy had three warts on her right hand."

"Oh, they're all gone," said Kate, with a laugh.

"How tall you are," said Dan; "you were such a little girl, when I saw you last. What have you round your neck? That's very nice."

He pointed to her necklace, composed of red beads, and a little gold brooch. It was a very common thing, but looked quite marvellous in Dan's eyes.

"Would you like to see it?" said she, loosing it from her neck, and handing it to him. He examined it with great curiosity, and as he counted all the beads, it took a long time.

"Have you made it yourself?" asked he.

"Oh, no; I cannot make such things. I bought it at the jeweller's."

"What did you pay for it?"

"I really forget," answered she, cheerfully, re-adjusting the necklace. "How many beads have you counted?"

"Eight times ten, and four."

"Why that's four-and-eighty."

"Yes, it may be. Don't know. How much can you count?"

Drawn by G. J. Pinwell. Engraved by J. Swain.

"KATE MADE HER APPEARANCE, A SMILE ON HER FACE, AND THE BOOK IN HER HAND."

"How much?" repeated Kate, with a laugh; "why I think I could count on and on till my death. There is no end of it."

"No end of it!" repeated Dan, in a pensive voice. "No end!"

He appeared sunk in deep thought.

"Can you read!" he asked.

"A little," answered Kate, slowly. She felt ashamed of herself, poor thing; for since she went to the mill she had not even looked into a book; and what she had learnt before that time was very insignificant indeed."

"Have you got a book? Read something to me. I never heard anybody read."

"I have no book."

"Stop, I have one," said Dan, taking a copy of "Jack the Giant-Killer" from his table.

"No, not now," answered Kate, kindly. "I will do it next Sunday; I am engaged just now. Do you feel well, Dan?"

"Not very well. I am queer every day; but I am better now, since the weather is so fine."

"What do you do all the day?"

"Nothing; I sit at the window."

"Where is your mother?"

"She is away at a friend's just now, with the baby."

"So you're alone in the house?"

"Yes, since breakfast."

"Then have you got no dinner?"

"Yes, mother left me a piece of a pie."

"Would you like a hot egg?"

Of course this offer was not declined, and in a few minutes Kate reappeared with the luxury, and a cup of tea in addition.

From that day Kate could not help thinking a good deal about poor Dan, and feeling for him. She remembered having once been compelled to stay at home for a week, to recover from an injury received at the mill, and she recollected how dull and dreary those days were, and how slowly the hours used to creep on. And she wished she could read better, for she might then read a page to Dan from her window. She thought she would try to teach herself first, and when she had made herself familiar with a book, she might go and read it to him. But she had no book, and she did not know how to get a good one.

That same afternoon, while crossing Portland Square, she noticed a crowd listening to an open-air preacher—a venerable-looking man, apparently between fifty and sixty. She involuntarily stopped.

"And now, my friends," the preacher said, holding a little book in his left hand, which he repeatedly slapped with his right, "this is the book which is able to make you wise unto salvation. It is the Word of God. It is written by the Holy Spirit. It speaks to you of the only Saviour of poor lost sinners, who died for you on the cross, who loved you even better than your own father or mother, husband or wife, will ever be able to love you. Read this book. It is your only trustworthy guide to eternity. Read it every day, for it is to a poor sinner's soul what his daily bread is to his body. Read it this evening before you go to bed, for perhaps you will have to give an account to God even before the morrow dawns, since nobody knows the hour of his death, &c."

The preacher continued for a few sentences in the same strain, after which he closed with a short prayer. The doxology was sung; the crowd dispersed, and the preacher strode off in the direction of Piccadilly.

"Pray, sir," said Kate, who, having mastered her bashfulness, succeeded in overtaking him, "could you help me to such a book as yours?"

He said he could not do it at the moment, but he requested her to call at his shop the next day. It was a long way from the mill, and Kate had to give up her dinner that she might be at the appointed place in time. But she thought she must make this sacrifice, as she was bent upon having the good book. Of course it must be a Bible, for, though she had never read it, she had often seen it and heard about it.

She found herself at a stationer's of the name of William Lever. She recognised the preacher in Mr. Lever.

"Do you want a Bible, or only a New Testament?" he asked.

Kate was put out. Were there *two* books?

"Pray, sir, which is the better of the two?" she inquired.

Mr. Lever smiled.

"Have you never read the Bible?" asked he, in a kind tone.

"No sir," she replied.

"Can you read?" he asked.

"A little, not much," she answered, blushing.

"Well, then, I think you had better buy a New Testament first, and when you have read it through, you may take the whole Bible."

He gave her a fourpenny New Testament, in large type.

"Do you know about Jesus?" asked he, while she produced the coppers from her pocket.

She cast down her eyes, and gave no answer.

"Have you never heard of Him?"

"I have, sir."

"Then who is He?"

"The Lord in heaven, sir."

"Just so. Do you know what He did for you?"

No answer.

Mr. Lever shook his head. He could not understand this.

"Then tell me what makes you want to read this book," he asked, in a gentle voice. He expected her answer would be: "Because I feel anxious about the condition of my soul, and desire to know the way of salvation." He supposed that his sermon of yesterday had roused her out of the sleep of carelessness.

"Because you said, sir, it was a good book, and that we ought to read it. I was just looking out for a good book, sir, as I want to read a little to a sick neighbour who cannot read at all."

"What is his name?"

"Cripple Dan, sir."

Mr. Lever took down the name and address.

"Please, miss," said he, kindly, opening the first page of St. Matthew, "would you mind reading a few lines to me?"

It was not without some difficulty that Kate was

prevailed upon to pass this examination. But Mr. Lever pressed her so kindly, and, besides, was so winning in his manner, that she could not help looking upon him as a father. So she addressed herself to her arduous task.

"The—bo-boo-book of the gen-gener-general—"

"No."

"Generating."

"No."

"Generation."

"Aye, that's it. Go on."

She went on in the same way, till she got to the names of the genealogy, when she got quite confused.

"That'll do," said Mr. Lever kindly, tapping her on her shoulder. "Those names are so strange, aren't they? But you'll learn them soon, if you continue reading every day."

"Do you think so, sir?" asked Kate, greatly encouraged

"No doubt you will. But it appears to me, that when reading to your sick crippled neighbour, you had better not begin with this page. I know a page which tells a few stories of sick and crippled people who were cured by Jesus. I will show it you."

Mr. Lever showed her the fifth chapter of St. Luke, and Kate gratefully put a fold at the page.

That same evening Emmy found Kate busily engaged in decyphering the fifth of St. Luke.

"What in all the world is that? Are you mad, Kate?"

"No, I'm not," answered she with a smile, yet not without a blush.

"Are you going to turn schoolmistress?"

"Yes, something like it. Isn't it a shame, Emmy, that neither of us can read!"

"Well, it is bad enough; but we are too old now to sit down and spell a book. Come along, Kate, to Mrs. Braithwaite's."

"No, not now."

"Jane will be there, and Polly, and Margaret, and her brothers."

"No, not this evening."

"And William promised also to come, and to bring his accordion."

"Did he? Perhaps I will go at nine."

"Eh!" said Emmy, clapping her hands triumphantly, "I knew Willie was needed. I have caught you now."

"Nonsense. I don't care for William," replied Kate, crimsoning all over, "except that he plays so nicely."

"Of course, only that!" said Emmy, casting a glance into the little glass suspended on the wall, and adjusting her bonnet. "Do come by all means. I'll wait till you fetch me."

Kate continued her study. The chapter was by far too long to be got through in one evening. She saw it contained thirty-nine verses. She divided it into three parts, each consisting of thirteen verses, and prescribed to herself the task of reading a part each evening. It took her about an hour to work her way through the first thirteen. She greatly enjoyed it, however. It was so nice, after having tumbled across a score of characters and words which at first had no meaning at all, to find that by gradually going over the same ground a meaning came out, and an intelligible sentence, as it were, shaped itself to her out of the waste of words. It was as if in those letters some invisible spirit were dwelling whom she could make speak to her by a persevering look at the letters. She was so absorbed in her wonderful pursuit that it was with reluctance she shut the book when the clock struck nine. She hurried to Mrs. Braithwaite's, joined in a dance, and heard William play, but this was not nearly so pleasant to her as reading about the fishermen, who washed their nets and caught such a great multitude of fishes that their net broke.

Meanwhile Dan had told his mother about his meeting with Kate, and that she had promised to read to him next Sunday. Mrs. Baker was very much pleased. She liked Kate, because she was a kind, affable girl, who never entered her shop without a dainty for the baby, and sometimes, indeed, would even take it out for a walk. Still, Mrs. Baker had never invited Kate to step into her back room, for, to tell the truth, she was ashamed of the poor and disorderly aspect it presented. Dan, too, knew his mother's mind on this point, and so he did not ask her to invite Kate into the room of an evening. He saw that he must patiently wait till next Sunday. How poor Dan counted the days! The hours seemed to creep on twice as slowly as before.

At length the long-wished-for day arrived, and, happily, it was again bright and warm. Dan opened his window immediately after breakfast. Kate's was closed, and it remained so till the church bells had ceased to ring, and the noise of the people going to church had subsided in the street. Then she made her appearance, a smile on her face and the book in her hand.

"How early you come! that's very kind!" exclaimed Dan, in a tone of joyful surprise.

"I saw your mother go out with the baby," said she, "and so I knew you were alone."

"You have on a different dress from the one you had on last Sunday. It is not nearly so nice. There were such large bright flowers on the other one."

Kate laughed. She could not tell him that her former dress was her sister's, which she had borrowed because hers was being mended.

"Are you fond of flowers?" asked she.

"Oh, yes! I had a rose last summer, but it is gone. What book have you there?"

"It is a Bible. Do you know it?"

"I have heard of it. People read it in church, don't they? Are there any pictures in it?"

"No, but beautiful stories. I will now read one to you."

Kate read the first thirteen verses of the fifth chapter of St. Luke with a clear voice. She read it without the slightest stammering, though slowly, as a man walks on slippery ground. But this was all the better for Dan, who but for that would not have been able to follow her. He was all ear, and asked her to read it again, and even a third time.

"That's very wonderful," he said, looking up to Kate. "Is it a *true* story?"

"Of course it is."

"Has it *really* happened? *Really*, Kate?"

"Yes, as really as I am speaking to you now. It is *printed*, you see."

"But how *could* Jesus do it?"

"Why, He is the Lord in heaven. Don't you see?"

"But He didn't do it in heaven. There was a lake; or are there lakes in heaven, too, and fisher-people and ships?"

Kate laughed.

"Of course not," she said. "It was on earth, in some far-away country, many, many years ago."

Dan was pensive.

"Then was the Lord on earth in those days, and *not* in heaven?" asked he.

"I think so," answered Kate. "He was a man, you know."

Dan fell again into deep thought.

"Doesn't the Lord make the sun rise every morning?" asked he.

"Yes, He does."

"Then who made the sun rise when He was on earth?"

Kate was silent. This was a question which had never suggested itself to her mind. But soon a thought occurred to her, which in her opinion explained everything.

"Why, I think it is in heaven as it is in our mill. Our master is often away for a week or so, but the mill doesn't stand still for that; he gives his orders before leaving, and business goes on just as if he were present."

Dan seemed satisfied with this bit of theology.

"What a kind Lord He must have been," said he, after a pause. "I suppose leprosy is a sore thing?"

"I believe it is. People die from it."

"It must be so, for the poor man fell on his face and besought the Lord, and he was cured at once. How wonderful! Do you think He could also have restored my legs and made me healthy?"

"Certainly. He can do all things."

"Oh, I wish He were here!" said Dan; his face brightening up at the thought.

"He would be sure to help you at once," said Kate. A tear glistened in her eye on noticing the enthusiasm which such a slight ray of hope called up in the poor fellow's heart.

"Can't you read any more to me about Jesus?" asked he, in a supplicating voice.

"I cannot now; but I will next Sunday."

Dan drew a deep sigh.

"I wish I could read," said he. "Could you not teach me?"

"Well, I think I could," answered Kate, after a few moments' reflection. "I will think of it, and let you know."

At this moment Mrs. Baker entered the room with the baby in her arms. She thanked Kate for the kindness she had shown to Dan. Kate then asked permission to take the baby out to the fields after dinner, which request was of course gratefully granted.

It was about sunset when Kate returned with the baby, and a large nosegay for Dan. He clapped his hands with wonder and delight. Mrs. Baker put it into a jug of water, and Dan kept it close beside him, and buried his face every two or three minutes in the fragrant flowers.

But, how teach Dan to read? This was the question which Kate pondered over all the day. It could not well be done from the window, as there was no opportunity for that except on Sundays, and with fair weather, and it would be a very long and tedious process. No doubt, the best way would be to teach him in his room in the evening. But she never was in Mrs. Baker's room, and—she should not like to be alone with Dan, supposing his mother went out.

Still, she resolved to propose the thing to Mrs. Baker. That evening, however, just as she was engaged in studying the second thirteen verses of the chapter, a knock was heard at the door. It was Mr. Lever. He was agreeably surprised to find her poring over her open New Testament. He told her that he had been calling at Mrs. Baker's, for the purpose of speaking to Dan; but that she had dismissed him rather abruptly, saying that her son could not see anybody.

"I see you are reading your Bible," said he; "are you making any progress?"

"Oh yes, sir, getting on very nicely. It is so beautiful. But there are a great many things which I do not understand, and Dan put questions to me which I really could not answer."

"Call upon me every Saturday evening at eight," said Mr. Lever, "and I will try to explain all that you don't understand."

"Emmy," said Kate the next morning to her sister, "could you not try to teach Dan to read?"

"Me teach Dan to read!" answered she, bursting into laughter. "I cannot read myself, you silly girl."

"You can. You know the letters of the alphabet at least, and you could teach him them. You are at home all day, and you could easily find an hour to speak to him from the window."

"Ridiculous! We should soon have a mob crowding the lane. Why don't you go to him yourself in the evening?"

"Why, because you know Mrs. Baker never allows people into her back room."

"Well, if *she* doesn't care for Dan's being able to read, why should *we?*"

"Because Dan does. Poor fellow! he sits all the day alone at that dull window. If he could read, it would so cheer up his dreary hours."

"Poor fellow!" repeated Emmy. "And he never comes out to take a draught of fresh air, I'm sure."

"I often thought of that, too. The weather is so fine, and I pity the poor fellow who never sees sun nor moon. His father used to wheel him out once or twice in a summer; but since he died, I am afraid he will be buried alive behind his window all the year round."

"Tell you what. Ask William to wheel him out next Sunday. He will do anything if *you* ask him."

Kate blushed. Emmy spoke more of the truth than even she knew herself; for William had just a

few days before asked her to marry him, and though she had not yet made a promise, he knew that she looked on him with affection. William was a respectable young man. He was porter in a large establishment, and remarkably well-educated, taking into consideration the class he belonged to. He could sing beautifully, and could accompany his singing on the accordion.

Who can picture the joy of Dan when one evening his mother told him that Kate's sweetheart, William (for that William should marry Kate one day had been long since settled in Mrs. Baker's shop), had offered to wheel him out to the fields next Sunday afternoon! Tears actually sprang into his eyes, and he could not sleep that night from thinking of it. Kate of course gave him his lecture in the forenoon, and could now tell him many things which Mr. Lever had explained to her the night before. This time she read of the man who was taken with palsy, and was let down with his couch through the roof before Jesus, who not only cured him, but said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." Dan could not be satisfied with hearing this story, though it was read to him again and again. He drank it in as a thirsty soul drinks in a fresh draught of water. He thought that the paralysed man was just such a one as himself, unable to walk, and poor and miserable.

"And what does it mean, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee'?"

"That man had sinned against God," answered Kate, remembering what Mr. Lever had said to her about it. "He had often done wrong, and spoken evil words, and thought evil thoughts; and he was afraid that God would punish him for it after his death. But Jesus forgave him all those sins, so that the poor man knew he was not to be punished, and that God would take him up into heaven after his death."

"How glorious!" said Dan. "I believe that I have often sinned, too. Have you, Kate?"

"I believe I have," said Kate, gravely. "We are all sinners, you know."

Dan fell into deep thought, as he often did. "Thy sins are forgiven thee," he repeated, as though speaking to himself. "Those words speak of great love and kindness."

"But *you* don't often sin, I'm sure," said Kate. "How could you? You always stay at home."

"I got angry, and knocked baby this morning," answered he, "because it pulled my hair. And I was cross to mother, because she put me to bed earlier than she ought to have done last night. And when mother called me a rascal, I said 'Confound it!'"

"Oh! that was very bad," said Kate, scarcely able to repress a laugh.

"Yes, it was. I am sure Jesus would have rebuked me had He witnessed it. Oh! I wish He would say to me also, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee.'"

At three o'clock William, with a little invalid's carriage, made his appearance at the door. He stepped into the shop, and Mrs. Baker took Dan into her arms to carry him out. She had great difficulty, however, in getting him through the rather narrow door-way; and William, noticing her struggle, hastened to her assistance, and thus they managed to get Dan into the little carriage. Kate was one of the party, and while William pulled the carriage she walked at his side, talking alternately with him and with Dan. It was a charming day; and when, having got out of the town, the cripple saw the trees and shrubs clad with the fresh verdure of spring, and the cattle browsing in the sunshine on the flowery grass carpet; and when he heard the birds warble in the young foliage, and when he inhaled the fresh, balmy, invigorating air, pouring fresh life into his veins—he sat in his carriage lost in wonder and with folded hands, unable to utter a word, except, 'Oh! How wonderful!"

Upon returning to Mrs. Baker's house, William took Dan by the arms, Kate lifted his feet, and thus they carried him into the shop. Mrs. Baker stepped out of her back room, and was evidently not a little put about. There was no help for it, however. She felt she must this time open the door of her sanctuary, and allow the strangers to carry their burden to its proper place. She made the best of things that she could. She forced her face into a kind smile, and thanked them for the trouble they had taken. When they had put down Dan on his stool near the window, she of course could not forbear kindly inviting them to sit down and rest a little, after their walk and charitable Sunday labour. They gladly accepted her invitation, and she made tea. They had a nice chat, Mrs. Baker being in no lack of subjects. Dan could scarcely believe his eyes when he saw this nice tea-party in his mother's back room. Such a Sunday as this, he thought, had never before dawned upon Manchester.

"I am surprised that you can manage so well in this room," said Kate, in a confidential tone to Mrs. Baker.

"Oh, pray don't look about," said Mrs. Baker, a smile and a frown combating each other on her face. "I must do everything myself, you know, having no help whatever."

And certainly there was plenty of evidence that this was no place where many hands found work to do. It served at once as a dwelling-room for three individuals, as a bed-room, and a kitchen, and a store-room for shop articles, and a workshop besides; and all within a space of a very few feet. No wonder that it did not look clean and orderly. Pots and pans, and parcels and tools, were heaped up in strange confusion in the corners and alongside the walls. The few articles of furniture visible were in great need of repair. Kate now fully understood why Mrs. Baker did not like to have anybody enter here. She fancied she herself would have been quite as exclusive had the case been her own. She knew that Mrs. Baker was not a dirty, slovenly woman, but she also knew that it was quite impossible for even a strong robust woman to overtake so much.

There was one article which was too conspicuous not to attract Kate's attention whenever she turned her eyes in its direction. It was the counterpane that covered the bed. It was very much torn, and Mrs. Baker, who noticed that Kate could not help seeing it, thought it incumbent on her to give an explanation of its state. It *was* such a fine strong counterpane,

but unhappily baby had contrived to discover a little hole, and putting its little fingers into it had torn it so in her absence, and she *could* not find one moment to take needle and thread in her hand, though she had plenty in her shop.

"Tell you what, ma'am," said Kate, "you cannot possibly attend to that; you have too much on hand. But I will come some evening and help you, and so will Emmy, I have no doubt, for she is a capital seamstress, you know."

While this conversation was going on between the women, William had a chat with Dan.

"Well," he then said, turning to Kate, "if you come here to-morrow evening with your needle, I will come with a book to teach Dan reading."

Dan clapped his hands, Mrs. Baker smiled, and the next evening the two friends were seen sitting at their work. And William had his accordion with him, and when Dan had successfully gone through his first lesson, he was rewarded with a tune.

From that time the window-lectures ceased. It was amazing to witness Dan's progress in reading. No wonder, for he had the whole day to himself, and he did nothing else from dawn till dusk. In the course of two months he could read as fluently as William himself, and far better than Kate, notwithstanding that she exercised herself every evening, except when she was at Mrs. Baker's mending the clothes, and tidying the room, and doing a great many little things which nobody told her to do save her own kind heart.

Twelve months passed away, and another spring called nature up from her winter sleep. No sooner did the south wind breathe life and joy into town and country, than Dan opened his window as usual. One Sunday morning he found Kate's window opened, and heard a conversation between the two sisters. It was conducted in a very animated spirit, especially on the part of Emmy. She was quite in a rage. Her anger regarded a friend who had grossly insulted her on the previous evening.

"And you know," said she to Kate, "I made that bonnet with blue ribbons for her, and charged nothing, as I knew she could not well afford it. Well, she had it on last night, and with that same bonnet on her head she called me a bad name."

"Shame!" said Kate. "Why, send her your bill."

"Yes, I will," cried Emmy.

"Don't!" cried a voice from the opposite window.

"Oh, that's Dan!" whispered the girls. Emmy could not help smiling. It was so odd.

"Why not?" asked Emmy, putting her head out at the window.

"Because it is in the book, Recompense to no man evil for evil," said Dan; "and didn't the Lord say, If you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses? Look here it is," said he, producing his Bible, and pointing with his finger to the text.

Emmy was silent. She left the room.

"How could you give such an advice to Emmy?" said Dan to Kate. "Don't you know that Jesus bids us love our enemies?"

Kate looked ashamed. "Why," said she, "Mary Hennell treated her very badly."

"Kate," said Dan, in a kind but grave tone, "I am afraid you have not yet begun to do what the book tells us. Has not the Lord in heaven freely forgiven us all our sins?"

"He has," whispered Kate.

"Then, how could you speak to your sister in that way? If God were to send you his bill, what would you do?"

Kate felt her eyes getting moist.

"William," said she that evening to her friend, "I believe Dan is a-head of us all."

"And no mistake," said William. "Many that are last shall be first,' and so it is with him."

Another twelve months elapsed, and a young married couple were seen standing in the cemetery near a freshly-dug grave. It was Dan's, and the couple were William and Kate.

"Do you know what his last words were?" said Kate.

"I do not."

"'Come, blessed Jesus.'"

They walked away in silence.

"Kate," said William, when they had entered their own room, "I think I will take a pencil, and write on the wall above the fire-place, 'As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.'"

ANDREW WHITGIFT.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

WHAT do we mean by Divine Providence? Is it foresight, or is it government? Is it an interruption of order, or is it included in the order which it may be supposed to interrupt? Where does it begin, and where does it end? What does it include, and what does it exclude? Is it special as well as general, or does the general providence contain and imply the special? Is it for individuals as well as for nations, and for heathens as well as for Christians? Is it for all sorts and conditions of men, heathen and Christian, or only for great and good men? Does it operate on us irresistibly, or are we free to go our own way if we please? Are there any outward signs or tokens by which we can infallibly discover its leadings? and if not, what is our best way for ascertaining them?

Some of these questions may not closely affect us, but they are being asked continually by those who deserve a serious answer; and if we wish to help others to the peace we ourselves enjoy, we must present some stronger testimony than that of personal experience. Put in its plainest and broadest form,

the one question underlying the whole matter is simply this—"What is God willing to be to us in our daily life?" and precisely in proportion to the importance of the subject is the desirableness of thinking clearly, as well as feeling strongly, with respect to it.

Now on almost all the questions already suggested the second verse of the twenty-third Psalm throws light: "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." First, it teaches us that the Fountain of Divine Providence is not a blind fate, but a living and personal God, holding our world and all in it in his own right hand, the Lord and King of men. "He maketh me to lie down, He leadeth me." If the New Testament tells us of a personal Saviour, the Old Testament tells us of a personal God. This was indeed the essential strength of the ancient Hebrew faith: and though some narrowed it into the intolerance and exclusiveness of denying to the rest of mankind the care, or even the notice, of Jehovah, they intensified it as few Christians do now. It was the promise of God to Abram: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great." It was the conviction that possessed Hagar's soul when the angel found her in the wilderness: "Thou God seest me." It was the substance of Jacob's vow after the vision at Bethel: "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God." It was the Divine message to Israel in Egypt by the hand of Moses. "I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt, and I have said I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt." The Psalms are more or less the repetition, under every form of expression and every variety of experience, of the psalmist's personal and abiding consciousness of a God above him and around him, ruling the world for his sake, covering his head in the day of battle, listening to his prayers, putting his tears into His bottle, keeping him as the apple of an eye. In the mystical language of the Canticles it is expressed by the idea of a mutual and personal possession: "My beloved is mine, and I am his." Yet neither David nor Solomon can surpass the impassioned tenderness of the language in which Jeremiah describes the origin, and explains the proof of it: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." And here let us remember that we must not try, we must not even wish, to separate from this great truth of a living, personal, Divine Ruler, the equally great, equally indisputable truth of a living, personal, Divine and sovereign will. If man could not be man without a will, how could God be God? Why are some of us so afraid of the sovereignty of God? Surely much of such fear must spring from ignorance of his nature; much of it, also, from doubts of his goodness. Separate, indeed, will from character; and then the more irresistible the will, the more terrible may be its results. Nothing in all the world is so intelligible or so reasonable as devil worship, if the only God we know of is a vindictive and cruel tyrant, never to be appeased but by blood and pain. But our God is a Father. "*And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there and proclaimed the name of the Lord . . . The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.*" He is a Father, who is merciful and holy; merciful because He is holy, and holy because He is merciful; whose sovereignty is but the exercise of his mercy; for all his ways are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies; yet never indulgent to sin in anyone, never passing by those who wilfully persevere in it, whoever they be,—hastening rather, out of very love to them, to deliver them out of it. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the thing that is just.

Yes: if we look at Divine Providence in the light of the Divine Sovereignty, and then contemplate the Divine Sovereignty (whether as a general, universal truth, or in its application to our individual case) in the light of the Divine character, instead of being startled by it, or never venturing to allude to it save with hushed breath, we shall come to look on it not only as one of the attributes of God, but even as displaying the glory of his Infinite Righteousness: we shall exclaim, with the apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" Divine Providence is the acting of Divine will; a will irresponsible save to the harmony of its own perfections, irresistible in the final result of its Eternal Purpose, though rather through the wise combination of various and even opposing forces, than by limiting the freedom and so destroying the responsibility of men; a will, on which the sheep of the Good Shepherd repose the assurance of their certain, because predestined, glory; a will which is the mainspring of all godly zeal for the salvation of others, since He "willeth all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth;" a will, which now, whatever it may be, we must learn to trust, and to do, and to love, and to suffer; and about which our daily prayer must be, that it may be done on earth as it is done in Heaven.

And this brings us to the second point in the verse, the result of this Divine Providence: "Green pastures and still waters," or, as Mr. Perowne more exactly renders it, "pastures of grass and waters of refreshment."

The imagery of the verse sketches for us the pleasant picture of long waving grass in rich meadows, where the tired sheep can lie down, sheltered from the burning sun, and browsing as they lie. We seem also to see glimmering in the thick heat the still deep pool of cool water, not babbling noisily over rough stones, and baulking with its shallowness the eager thirst of the impatient flock, but accessible, abundant, satisfying. Taken out of its figure the verse assures us that there is always abundance, always refreshment, if we are walking in the ways of God. What a truth this is, if we could take it altogether for our own. It is true under all circumstances, if we meet them and bear them in the right spirit: it is true at all times and seasons, in all places and countries; for Joseph

in prison, for Moses at Horeb, for Elijah by Cherith, for Paul at Rome, for John Bradford at the stake, for solitary Henry Martyn in the Gulf of Persia, for Richard Williams in Patagonia, offering up his beautiful life to God, for Robert Hall, in his Cambridge study, rolling in bitter pain. In David's way of putting it, "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want, *for* He leadeth me to the pastures that are green, and to the waters that are still." In St. Paul's way of putting it, "My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

But here some one will ask, "Is this always true? Ought it to be always true? Does any one on earth so find it? Are there no exceptions to the rule which prove it and maintain it? Has not the soul, like the earth, its appointed changes, and its needful alternations of heat and cold, of day and night, of summer and winter, of drought and rain? For indeed my experience is, that the pasture is not always green, the water is not always still for me: and tell me if this may not sometimes be God's own will about me, and not, of necessity, through my own sin?"

Now, in the first place, the verse does not so much express the uniform and unvarying present effect of Divine Providence, as its general purpose and tendency in the end. To borrow two illustrations, one from the imagery of the Psalm, the other from the actual dealings of God with Israel: when it comes to pass that the grass is all eaten and the pool, filled by the winter rains, drunk up, the sheep must change their place of pasture, and while on the road from the old halting place to the new, instead of rich herbage and cool springs, there may be a glaring and waterless plain. Israel in the wilderness had to pass Marah on their road to Elim: and they could not stay at Elim long, for they were on their march to Canaan. Under such circumstances, memory and hope are the springs of action; the sheep have still their shepherd leading them, the believer still is safe under the wing of his God. There are times (and when we look back at them, we see they were blessed times) when Christ himself is felt to be our only food and joy and stay and friend; when, in the weariness of our life's journey, and in the entire drying up of the wells of human gladness, we fall back on Him, the shepherd of our souls, that He himself alone and entirely may be our "pastures of grass and our waters of refreshment." We learn then, what afterwards we never quite forget, how to refer all things to Him and to take all things from Him: we understand then how the Psalmist could say, nay (though humbly and timidly), we venture to say it after him, "Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee." Another truth, however, claims to be heard here, and of an importance which it is impossible to over-estimate: even that the abundance and refreshment spoken of in this place are not only material but moral; in other words, they are not so much, perhaps not so frequently, in the nature of outward circumstances, as in repose and contentment of heart. For Divine Providence means the arrangement of all our life, not only of its bright side, but also of its dark. It may mean sickness as well as health; death as well as life; loss as well as gain; peril as well as safety; shipwreck by sea and accident by land; murrain to our flocks; cholera in our homes. There is no immunity for one man more than another from troubles of this kind, whatever his errand, whatever his character. St. Paul himself tells us that he "thrice suffered shipwreck," and peril of all kinds was the unvarying feature of his missionary journeys. It neither honours God, nor trusts Him, nor rightly interprets Him, to receive good at his hand and not to receive evil. To let God choose for us and to be satisfied with his choice, here is the secret of peace. "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." To be a sheep of the Good Shepherd, to be a child of the Eternal Father, to be a subject of the heavenly kingdom, to be an heir of the exceeding weight of glory, is to have the machinery of the Divine government for our protection, the resources of the Divine treasury for our provision; now the love of God for our possession, presently the vision of God for our reward. All that God is, all that God has, is for his people. The outward features of our life may not be all that we should choose them to be; there may be things we wish for that never come to us; there may be much we wish away that we cannot part from. The persons with whom we live, the circumstances by which we are surrounded, the duties we have to perform, the burdens we have to bear, may not only be other than what we should have selected for ourselves, but may even seem inconsistent with that formation and discipline of character which we honestly wish to promote. But it is faith that overcomes the world, not a sense of enjoyment. The end of life is not personal happiness; it is the image and glory of God. We need not envy others what God has given them and denied us, as if He were hard to us and kind to them. The same love that has in this instance given them what was safe for them, and denied us what was not safe for us, has, we may be quite sure, also denied to them in other instances blessings which they hunger for but may not have; and the enjoyment of which they behold and envy in ourselves. God is just in his ways with all men; but He is also wise and kind; and knowing us better than we know ourselves, fully understanding how greatly we are affected by the outward events and conditions of life, He has ordered them with a view to our entire and final, not only our immediate, happiness; and whenever we can be safely trusted with pastures that are green and waters that are still in the way of earthly blessing, the Good Shepherd leads us there.

Once more, to point somewhat higher, and to indicate yet another aspect of Providence, which to some may seem so far above them that they can never reach it: it is often God's way with those who love Him best, not as a chastisement for sin, but as a distinction and a privilege, to teach them the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, and so to make them more conformable to his death. Our Blessed Master, "though He were a son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered." How does St. Paul describe his own life—a life, after that of his Lord, perhaps the

very noblest and hardest and most successful life ever yet lived on this earth? "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings." It is an utter, nay, a dishonest confusion of terms, to say that these things can be in themselves pleasant to the flesh, or otherwise (at the moment we feel them) than grievous and burdensome. Pain, hunger, isolation, misrepresentation, disappointment, mockery! To speak of such things, even when endured for Christ's sake, as green pastures and still waters, is to call evil good and good evil, is to put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. There is no evading the meaning of Christ's words, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." St. Paul bore in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus, and those were marks of pain. But does it therefore follow that there was no strength to bear the pain, no blessed consciousness of a Divine Presence, going with him and giving him rest everywhere? When he fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, was not Jesus with him? When they stoned him at Lystra, was not his soul rejoicing in the thought that tribulation was the way to the kingdom? Oh! indeed; though the wilderness is not a green pasture, though sickness is not health, nor toil rest, nor loneliness a troop of friends, nor a prison cell the liberty and happiness of home, to live may be Christ, anywhere and anyhow. And thus we find the same apostle at one moment describing the sharpness of his outward sufferings, at the next moment the blessedness of his inward peace. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed: always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."

Thus, to recapitulate, we must not so misunderstand God's meaning in this promise as to suppose that the processes of his providence can always be as pleasant as the result; or that any set of outward circumstances, prosperous and desirable as they may be, can bring us either happiness or blessing apart from the spirit in which we interpret them, or the character in which they find us; or, once more, that the "green pastures and still waters" may not sometimes to the eye of sense be utterly devoid of all visible and earthly prosperity; when, for the advancement of Christ's kingdom as well as for his own ultimate glory, the believer, like an apostle before him, fills up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh, for His body's sake, which is the Church.

But there is yet another consideration which may even further help to explain to us why the pastures are not always green, the waters not always still.

"He *maketh* me to lie down—he *leadeth* me." The Divine government is a moral government; its method is not to compel, but to persuade. The Good Shepherd does not drive but lead, and the sheep follow Him, for they know his voice. The words "maketh them" may indeed sound like compulsion, yet they describe the purpose of His providence, rather than an enforced result of it; and no ingenuity can reconcile the idea of guiding with that of violence. In solemn truth, God's rule is the same in providence that it is in grace. By any and by all means He will draw us; force us, never. As has already been hinted, surely we may see this in the word "lead." No one is compelled to follow a guide. Scripture, again and again, in the Psalms, and in the Prophets, and in the Gospel, introduces the image of wandering and straying sheep; but nowhere is it assumed that the sheep by so straying lost their original relation to their shepherd, or that mere wandering can turn a sheep into a goat. The plain fact is, that Divine Providence is to us just what we suffer it to be. "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life," was the pathetic complaint of the Saviour, about those whom he yearned to save, but who would not let Him save them. "He is of age, ask him; he shall speak for himself." This in the first instance was the reply of the blind man's parents to the Jews. May we not admit its abstract and essential justice, and apply the words to God, as he considers the actions of men? And if we at first shrink from this view, as on man's side too much aggravating his responsibility, on God's side too little recognising his sovereignty, let us apply two tests to it which, in their combined force, may persuade us of its truth. One is that of conscience, long ago used with irresistible force by Dean Alford in vindicating the human side of the doctrine of predestination; the other is that of experience, which, instead of speculating what men can do, proves it from their acts. As we look back at the past, and muse on the share we have ourselves taken in the attainment of our position, in the use of our opportunities, in the improvement of our talents, in the discharge of our duties, is there no feeling of regret, or of loss, or of shame? Have we always honestly consulted God? Have we always obeyed the voice of conscience? Have we never gone the way of our own heart, though our heart and our judgment were at variance? Do we not sometimes feel that we might have been more happy, more useful, than we are, but for wilful mistakes of our own? In some things, it is true, we are not the makers of our own history. Our birth, our parentage, our natural talent, our bodily shape and constitution, nay, to some extent, our character, are the irreversible and irredeemable lot which He who worketh things after the counsel of his own will ordained for us before the worlds were made. Providence, if we may so speak, gives us our start, and the start tells on the race. "Promotion cometh neither from the east nor from the west, nor yet from the south." But it is for us to run with patience the race that is set before us, "looking unto Jesus;" and while our sense of dependence convinces us of the existence of an over-ruling God, and our conscience betrays that we do not always obey Him, our instincts of energy, and self-reliance, and ambition, and enterprise, are indisputable evidences of direct responsibility; and if gratitude and humility compelled St. Paul to say, "By the grace of God I am what I am," the sense of his own use of that grace justified him in adding, "I laboured more abundantly than they all."

But there is still one other word in this verse, which contains a truth as important as any we have yet considered, and which makes all the difference possible, both in our conception of God and in our view of life. It is not *us*, but ME. "He maketh *me* to lie down—He leadeth *me*." The Psalmist is not describing the care of a shepherd over the entire flock, so much as his care for each individual sheep in it; and the verse recalls the time when he, who was afterwards called from following the ewes great with young "to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance," was but a humble youth, his sceptre a crook, his subjects goats and sheep and lambs, his dominions wild open fields between Bethlehem and the Kedron.

The doctrine of a Divine Providence, whatever we may understand by it, is peculiar to Revealed religion. The deities of the Pagan world (as mythology describes them) interfered with the affairs of men, only for vice or pride; and the philosophers, who found themselves able to accept gods at all, preferred to think of them as dwelling apart from men in a stately and perhaps contemptuous repose.

Barrow, in his famous sermon on the Gunpowder Plot, quotes a sentence of Cicero, to the effect that "the gods care for great things and neglect small," a statement to which we should be willing to give more attention if he had gone on to explain what great and small mean in the affairs of life, and how we are to know when to apply the words. No doctrine more than this exalts God or dignifies man; exalts God in setting forth at once his power and his goodness; dignifies man in giving to each redeemed human being his own inalienable position in the creation, and by placing the beggar and the king, the little infant and the man in his prime, the lonely widow and the powerful statesman, the decrepit pauper and the conqueror in a hundred battles, on the same level of entire equality before Him, with whom is no respect of persons. It is in no feeble, unhealthy, self-loving, self-exalting spirit that a human being, first looking into himself and then looking up towards Heaven, should ask with all reverence, but with all anxiety, "Does God care for me—will God help me?" We are all familiar with the suggestive remark that the microscope was discovered about the same time as the telescope; and that the mighty Creator of the innumerable worlds which gem the fields of space, was thus found willing to put forth the resources of his Omnipotence, and to exert the secrets of his wisdom on a drop of water, or a butterfly's wing. It is not that any one who believes in a God at all really disputes his power; there are no degrees of power with Omnipotence. The simple question is, what is the sphere of his power, what the method of its exercise? Nay further, any one who believes in God as a moral being, is prepared to admit the general benevolence of his character, and the wisdom of his universal government; but that is not enough for those whom God has so formed, so disposed, that each needs God for himself. Man is not satisfied to share only, with the beasts and the birds and the trees, a general supervision. Life is too vast, too solemn, to be spent alone. He would come close to God, and feel after Him till he finds Him.

The subject we are considering actually includes two questions, one of less, the other of greater moment; the one, the use of a word, the other, the meaning of a truth. To take the last first, a Christian does not need to be reminded that He, without whom not a sparrow falleth to the ground, hath numbered the very hairs of his head. We have not so learned Christ from the history of his earthly life; we have not so seen the Father manifested in his Son as to dare to do Him the crowning dishonour of doubting for a moment his full and tender sympathy for each one of his redeemed people, or of refusing to believe that He who made the worlds, watches over a little child. If there is no limitation of infinite power, there is no limitation of infinite love. God can, God will, God does, care for us. The secrets of nature, the marvels of creation, the mystery of redeeming love, the individual experience of millions upon millions of reflecting and intelligent men,—nay, almost every page of that Book, which is luminous with the doctrine of a Divine Providence, and which, if the doctrine be false, must itself be the cruellest delusion that ever mocked mankind,—each of these alone, all of these together, are a witness to the superintendence of God. In all things, and at all times, and for all needs, and under all difficulties, in things temporal and things spiritual, in the necessities of the body and of the soul, in the choice of a profession, in the arrangement of a home, in work and in rest, in study and in holiday, in marrying and in giving in marriage, in the bringing up of children, in the selection of servants, in perplexities of business, in the entanglements of society; however small our cares may be, however insignificant our condition, however inextricable our confusion, however dark our future, "He knoweth the way I take."

It is, however, one thing to be infallibly assured of the love and care and protection of God for each human being in all the affairs of life, and another thing to describe this Providence accurately, and to explain it consistently with the other operations of his will.

The word "special," as applied to Providence, is often somewhat loosely used by those who do not sufficiently reflect on the logical consequences of the language they are using, and who, in their intelligible anxiety to recognise and adore the Providential care and goodness which from time to time are mercifully conspicuous in their own case, feel constrained to describe it as a peculiar interposition for their sake, when it is but a pre-arranged element in a universal plan.

If we insist on a so-called "Special Providence" as an exception to, and an interruption of, the method of general Providence, and on no other ground than that of our own consciousness (more alive to it at some times than at others), it is difficult to evade the objection, that with the all-wise, all-seeing God, there must be neither settled purpose nor predestined order; then there is one kind of government over us to-day, called general, and another over us to-morrow, called special. And in admitting the possibility of eccentricity and change in the Divine counsels, we seem to impeach the wisdom, and complicate the operations of God. For some it is enough to believe that there is

one uniform universal government over us all: always the same, always righteous and merciful, by night as well as by day, in quiet times as well as in troubled times, when we are not conscious of it as well as when we are: purposing our good, contriving our happiness, willing our sanctification. And though at some times more than at others, we are more impressed by its influence, more grateful for its blessings, or more awed by its judgments—it is the same government, on the same principles, of the same God, for the same end.

The word, however, is but of slight consequence, so long as we rightly grasp the doctrine beneath. The practical result of our belief in Divine Providence is the one thing to inquire about; and whatever our private theory may be, it need not give us uneasiness, if only it encourages us in prayer. For, as has well been said, man is a creature that prays; and whatever may be the speculative difficulties of prayer—however hard some of us may find it to reconcile the notion of prayer moving God with God's infinite and unerring wisdom—in spite of all the philosophers and the thinkers, men and women will go on praying as they have ever done: and what is more, will refuse to be convinced that their prayers are in vain. In plain truth, all the difficulties on the subject (and there are difficulties), simply and solely spring (as Bishop Butler has observed about revealed religion generally) from our imperfect knowledge of God. A man will say, "Do you really expect an answer to your prayer? For if you do, you are only in other words asking for a miracle." "Well, what if I am? Can you tell me, my friend, what a miracle is, what nature is, what God's order is, what interrupts and what does not interrupt it, what is contrary to it, and what is merely above it, or suspends it?" No doubt Divine Providence, if we accept the Old and New Testaments, has worked miracles in past times; and nowhere is it said in the Bible that they will never be seen again. And if we had to choose between the alternatives of denying the possibility of answers to prayer altogether, and of describing each answer as miraculous, the sounder and the more philosophical and the more consistent of the two, would be the latter. For it is quite begging the whole question to speak of miracles as something against nature; when possibly, as Archbishop Thomson has observed ("Dictionary of the Bible," vol. ii. p. 1046), "they are above it: not the few caprices of Providence breaking in upon ages of order, but glimpses of the Divine spiritual cosmos permitted to be seen amidst the laws of the natural world, of which they take precedence, just as in the physical world one law can supersede another." Yet there is no real need to adopt either theory, if we for a moment reflect on the infinite wisdom of God both in Providence and grace, and consider also on what conditions it is promised that our prayers shall prevail. "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world." In the language of Professor M'Cosh, "God has so arranged his Providence, that He provides an answer to prayer. When the question is asked, how does God answer prayer?—it is by a pre-ordained appointment—when God settled the constitution of the world, and set all its parts in order," and "the answer to prayer proceeds on the foreseen circumstance that the prayer will be offered; that if the man refuses to pray, he shall assuredly find it fixed that no answer is given." ("Method of the Divine Government," pp. 222, 224.)

Besides, God has only promised to answer the prayers which are acceptable to Himself. "If we ask anything *according to his will*, He heareth us." Many of our prayers are not answered, because they are incompatible with our real good. When, however, we pray in the mind of the Spirit (and if we please we always may), then we pray according to the will of God; then we ask and we receive, we seek and we find, we knock and it is opened to us. Dr. Barry has observed that the prayers of the patriarchs were principally for personal or domestic blessings; those of Hebrews under the monarchy for national blessings; those of New Testament saints for spiritual blessings. We Christians may surely unite all these varieties of prayer in our own case, some, of course, more at one time than another; yet the one thing we have to do is to pray everywhere, to pray always; above all, to "pray and not faint." Prayer, rightly understood, is but a child going into a parent's presence, or a loyal subject asking audience of his king; only the parent's heart is always bountiful, the king's sceptre is ever stretched out towards us to bid us welcome. If there be no Divine Providence, then, indeed, there can be no prayer; and not to pray at all implies either that we have no need of God, or no faith in Him; but just as we trust in the goodness and wisdom of our Maker will prayer be at once the relief, and the necessity, and the habit, and the strength of our life: and whenever doubts flash across us of God's power to help us—whenever our own will is in cruel and agonising conflict with his will, let us think of the Son of Man in the shadows of Gethsemane, who, within sight of his predestined cross, rested the prayer that it might even then pass away, on the majestic truth that "with God all things are possible;" who nevertheless submitted his own will to the Father's, and in the deepest sense of the words was heard in that He prayed; for in the garden He said, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done;" and when his enemies seized Him, and Simon Peter tried to rescue Him, He answered, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

Only two points remain, one of which contains a caution that may prevent disappointment, the other a truth that will suggest comfort.

Are there any signs, one will ask, by which we may discover the leading of Divine Providence, and which will save us, not only from perplexity and anxiety at the time, but also from actual mistake? The answer is, there have been such signs in the infancy of the Church of God; there are none now. When Israel came out of Egypt a pillar of cloud went before them by day and a pillar of fire was over their head by night. The Shechinah, with its mysterious gleam, flashed on high priests under the early monarchy the Divine Purposes. Under the Judges, seers or prophets had the power of giving information through supranatural means; and it was on an errand of this kind that Samuel first met Saul. But even in the time of

the Herods these signs had passed away. The Lord steadily refused to give signs of his Messiahship other than his own miracles: and the reason He assigned for his refusal—"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," "The kingdom of God is within you"—applies with equal force to the evident fact that the way of God's Providence cannot be known by outward marks or evidences; if it tarry, we must wait for it, though sooner or later it will be made manifest to the obedient and child-like heart. At some times, and under some circumstances, indeed, God's will seems to dart upon us; and we have nothing to do but follow it. But our difficulty is not at all where God works independently of us; it is where He works with us, and we with Him; where events are as much our own bringing about as his, and where in the use of means, at the best imperfect and unreliable, we seem to take all pains sometimes only to go wrong. What rules are there in such a case, beyond diligence, and patience, and obedience, and prayer? Surely none. Diligence in consulting friends (though indeed we cannot possibly do all they bid us), and in procuring information, and in weighing our case on all sides. Patience, for half our mistakes in life come from being in a hurry, and we are just as likely to go wrong if we rush on in advance of God's Providence, as if we lag idly behind it. Obedience, for to be willing to do God's will is the real crux of the matter: too often we consult Him, going with the multitude of our idols, and then we are taken captive in the toils of our own heart; and we deliberately pray ourselves into our mistake. Then prayer, honest, humble, simple, persevering prayer: and we can do no more. But God knoweth this as well as we do; and He who hath promised wisdom to them that ask it, until the time comes will give peace,—when the time comes will give direction. Anything is more possible than that God should not guide the meek in judgment. Nothing is more sure than that, when we have done our best, He will acknowledge and bless it. "I will guide thee with mine eye," as the mere glance of the eye or the expression of a feature in the face of one we love and understand is quite sufficient to indicate to us his wish and to express his mind. So will it ever be between God and his people. Divine Providence guides all who wish to be guided. Yes, Divine Providence must not be held responsible for the mistakes of those who love their own way.

But for those who do not recognise the existence of Divine Providence, whether they are heathens or Christians, strangers to us or friends and kinsfolk,—is there a Providence for them, though they shut their eyes to it? Is there a purpose of Divine love counselling and desiring their good, though they steadily resist it, and will not suffer it to bless them? Nay, for those of ourselves who are conscious of wishing to follow it and yield to it in our best moments, when we disobey it and go wrong, what will be the result to us? and will the sins, and failures, and mistakes, and infirmities of past years never be recovered, never be repaired? Divine Providence is for all men, and rules all men, and provides for all men, and blesses all men in proportion as they are willing to be blessed. If His love is perfected in us, then indeed we are safe and happy; if it is only on his side toward us, and not on ours towards Him, then, though his sun equally shines, his rain equally descends on us; in the *higher purpose* of his mercy He waits to be gracious; standing at the door of our heart and knocking, He remains outside till we let Him in. There are many ways, were they needed, of proving this Providence of universal love. We who love Him now can perhaps recall the time when we did not love Him, did not think of Him, did not even wish to please Him. Yet did He not watch over us then, biding his opportunity? Did our coldness quench the flame of his love, did our turning away make Him less mighty to save? "We love Him because He first loved us." Here is the account that every soul conscious of its acceptance gives to itself of its salvation. But what has been true of us is true of others, and may be true of others, or what a delusion missions must be! God gave his Son to redeem the world, because He loved the world; and those whom He loves He would save. Oh, let us thankfully, unhesitatingly, devoutly, recognise a Divine Providence watching over and waiting for all men, if by all means He may save some; and let this be the ground of our confidence, the strength of our hope, the backbone of our prayers, about those dear to us, who are as yet without God in the world.

As for ourselves, and all our past mistakes, and follies, and blunders, and disasters, "forgetting the things which are behind," we will "reach forth unto those things which are before." Let us beware of fretful, feeble anxiousness, which unnerves us for duty. Let us have a bright, manly, cheerful trust in God, which will encourage ourselves, and animate our neighbours. Perhaps we cannot always be quite right, but an honest purpose will save us from serious mistakes; and it is in human nature, when we have once decided and the result of our decision is yet in the distance, to wish we had decided differently. Be this as it may, God in the end can turn even our failures and mistakes to his glory and our own blessing; his wisdom can overrule our error, and his mercy will forgive our weakness. If, through our own fault, not his, our pastures have not been as green, our waters not as still as they might have been, yet surely as we look back and count up our past blessings, they will make our heart full and our eyes dim. Dark as the day may have been, "at eventide it shall be light." Sometimes our path in life seems like a lane full of windings, where the steep banks shut out the light and air, and all we can do is to trudge steadily on through the thick mire. But if we look high up in front of us we shall see, as Israel saw, the faint blue hills of the Land of Promise rising up against the sky. The path will come out at length in full view of the Celestial City; and at last, at last we shall be at home.

A. W. Thorold.

PREJUDICE; OR, THE BLACK POLYANTHUS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STUDIES FOR STORIES."

Part II.

I do not remember that anything particular happened during the remainder of the day; we were called in to school almost immediately after our conversation in the garden, and, when it was over, Miss Palmer being present, the subject of the black polyanthus could not be alluded to.

It was not till the next afternoon, when Juliet, Margaret, and I, were in the coach-house, feeding our birds, that Miss L'Estrange came in, and inquired what we meant to do about Belle's polyanthus.

"*Do*, Miss L'Estrange," I answered, "what is there to do? If you can gum on every one of the leaves, and all the flowers, so that they can grow again, Belle will be very much obliged to you; but if you cannot, there is nothing to be done, that I can see."

"What a baby you are, little Sophia," said Miss L'Estrange, laughing; "you know as well as I do that you are talking nonsense. I think I shall make Belle quarrel with you! Don't nod your head at me as much as to say, 'Do if you can;' I shall certainly set my wits against yours, if you dare to make game of me, you morsel of a child. Gum them on indeed! Come and sit on my knee."

Miss L'Estrange was sitting on a box, and as I came dancing towards her, she snatched me up, and I felt like a shuttlecock in her hands; she was extremely tall, finely but largely proportioned, and the great fairness of her hair and complexion increased her apparent size. She set me on her knee, and folding one of my feet in her large white fingers, she said,—

"Who suspected *you* of making that footmark, you tiny thing? it would take three feet such as yours to fill it! Come now, tell me why you are so much afraid of an investigation; I saw what a fright you were in yesterday; what was the reason?"

Finding that I made no answer, she said,—

"Juliet and Margaret, just go, my dears, and find Belle and Miss Ashley, and tell them I wish they would come here." The two little girls ran away on their errand, and Miss L'Estrange continued: "Now, Fairy, if you know anything more than we know, of course you ought to tell it."

I assured her that I did not know anything.

"Then," she said, "why are you so anxious that no questions should be asked; don't you think it must be very disagreeable to be suspected?"

"Yes."

"Well, some one is suspected."

"I know."

"We want to decide whether she is suspected wrongfully."

"But perhaps asking questions will make you suspect still more."

"Not if she is innocent; let my curls alone, Fairy, and attend to what I am saying. If she is innocent, she ought to be much obliged to us for our investigations."

"But you know, Miss L'Estrange," said I, trying to convey my confused impressions to her, "you know that none of us like her, and it seems to me that but for that we never should have suspected her."

"You uncharitable little thing! you say we dislike her! well, that is quite true; but we have reasons for disliking her, have we not?"

"Oh, yes, we have; I quite forgot that," said I, not at all aware that we were arguing in a circle, and asserting the reasonableness of our prejudice against her from our belief in things which might themselves be unfounded prejudices.

"You seem to me," observed Miss L'Estrange, "to have a sort of notion that the person in question is innocent."

"No, I haven't exactly," I replied; "I don't think she is a nice girl, and perhaps she has done wrong, but I think we must be doing wrong too."

"Then it is for our sakes, not hers, that you wish us all to be cowards?" she asked.

I considered for awhile, and then replied to the effect that if the investigation came to any decided result, Madame must be told—the suspected person would tell her if she really was innocent; some one of us would tell if she was guilty; and it would be sure to make a great deal of unhappiness and quarrelling. But that if it turned out that the suspected person had been accused and suspected *wrongfully*, Madame would be much more seriously angry with Belle and with us for having made up such a disgraceful charge against her, than she would be with *her* if she had really spoilt the primrose; and, either way, Belle was still no better off, since her plant was spoilt for the season, and could not be replaced.

"What a cautious little thing you are," said Miss L'Estrange, when with much circumlocution I had contrived to convey my meaning to her.

"Belle doesn't care very much about her polyanthus," I observed, not wishing to appear lukewarm in my friend's cause.

"*Care*," repeated Miss L'Estrange, "I should like to know what Belle does care about for five minutes together; no, no, it is not through any fear that she should pine for her lost treasure that I want to have this question settled."

It was always considered a dangerous thing in the school to meddle or interfere with Belle, for though Miss L'Estrange always declared that she should never think of taking her part merely because she was her sister; and though she said she should never take Belle's part unless she was *right*, we did not reap much benefit from this decision, though it sounded fair, because she never thought her *wrong*. Notwithstanding this vehement partizanship, she always spoke of

Belle with a kind of careless slighting manner, and therefore I was not at all surprised on this occasion to hear her assert that it was not for Belle's sake that she wished to have the matter settled.

"And why do you turn round so anxiously, you little thing?" she continued; "are you afraid that Miss Palmer's grey parrot should be listening, and should repeat our conversation to his mistress?"

As if the mention of his name had roused this respectable bird from a sage reverie, he immediately drew back the film from his eyes and screamed out "Paul," a word constantly in his mouth (or rather his beak), and which he meant for Poll; "Paul, Paul," said the parrot, "here's a state of things, ha! ha! ha!"

The parrot could only say two sentences, but one of them ended with this laugh, which was quite contagious; it was exactly like that of an old gentleman laughing through his nose. Our laughter on hearing it made all the canaries begin to sing, and they roused the linnets and the robins, so that by the time Juliet and Margaret returned with all our schoolfellows, excepting the four little ones and Miss Palmer, there was such a din that we could not hear ourselves speak, the parrot's shrill voice screaming above it all, "Here's a state of things, ha! ha! ha!" and then, "Hester, Hester, Paul wants his sop: Hes—ter!"

"Tiresome thing!" cried Miss Ward, stopping her ears; "somebody put an apron over his cage; he calls so loudly that his mistress will be coming to him, and that will never do."

The girls made haste to stop the noise by excluding as much light as they could from the various cages, and presently there was something like quiet, excepting that every now and then the parrot repeated, "Hester, Hes—ter!" with startling distinctness, or burst out laughing in the gravest part of our discourse.

Miss L'Estrange, with me on her lap, was seated on a pile of several boxes, with her back to the wall; the other girls grouped themselves in a semicircle before her, sitting on the floor; and a long discussion began, all about the black polyanthus—who could have done the deed, and why it was likely that Miss Palmer was the doer.

"I often feel afraid of those close silent people," said Miss Ward; "depend upon it that girl has a great deal more in her than we think, Fanny; when she flashes those deep grey eyes of hers upon me, I never feel as if I could meet them and look at her steadily."

"That is exactly my feeling," answered Miss Ashley.

"I am sure she must be very artful," said Belle.

"If she is, Belle," I ventured to remark, "she did not cut your primrose."

"Indeed!" said Miss Ward; "what do you mean, you oracular little creature?"

"I did not say she was artful," I replied; "I don't know whether she is or not; I only say that if she is artful, she is more than a match for us, and therefore she has not chosen to revenge herself in a way that we should all discover at once."

The elder girls all laughed heartily at this, as they generally did when I ventured to give my opinion.

"If she did not do it," said Margaret, "we wish to know who did."

"I think nothing of the footmark," observed Miss Ward, "for you know the younger ones are constantly jumping over each other's gardens, and we cannot be sure how many days it is since that footmark was made; but the polyanthus is cut and left on the mould—is it not natural to think she did it, when there was an obvious motive in her case, and none that we know of in the case of any one else?"

"Of course the motive you allude to is revenge," said Miss L'Estrange.

"To be sure. *If* she did it—which is still a question—but if she did, then nothing can be more easy than to see why. The second class had that morning shown her how mean they thought her behaviour in appropriating their plants; she had been excessively hurt and ashamed at it; it was a sore subject; and when Belle fell over those very plants, she might have thought she did not do it altogether by accident."

"Certainly," said Juliet, half sarcastically, "she might have thought that the second class had arranged that some one should demolish her plants, and had chosen Belle to do it; nothing so natural than that we should choose Belle, for she is twice the weight of any of us."

"Pooh!" said Miss Ward, "we are not joking now, Juliet. Well, she is scolded for leaving her plants on the walk, and then left alone to brood over her misfortune; opposite to her flourishes the favourite plant of the very girl who had tumbled over hers, and who has shown her plainly that she never ought to have possessed them; what more natural than that, in a moment of irritation, she should cut off its head? And if she did, then what more natural than all her subsequent conduct—her low spirits during the rainy weather, her disinclination to go into the garden, her lingering behind, that we might discover what had been done before she came up, her trying to account for the mischief and for the footmark, her confusion when she was shown that it fronted the wrong way——"

"Well, but go on to the end," said Miss L'Estrange. "I think her turning upon us with her 'No one said she did not,' was unnatural; I declare those words haunt me even now."

"Yes, that was unnatural," said Miss Ward frankly. "unless she is a very artful girl indeed; but I am inclined to agree with this little creature, that if she did it she is not artful; it was such a clumsy contrivance—it was striking such an open blow."

"No matter with whom you agree," said Miss Ashley, "we all know what you think, and what we all think. I never liked that girl, and I have reason to like her less and less every day."

"*She did it*," said Miss Morton: and she was generally so silent and cautious, that her words had twice the effect of other people's; and they all nodded assent.

"What does Sophia think?" said Miss L'Estrange, raising my head from her shoulder, and looking into my face.

"Oh," I replied, "I am sure now that it must be as you all say; I did not know before that it was so certain, but now I am quite convinced."

"Well then, the thing is, what shall we do?" asked Belle.

There was a pause, which the parrot filled with bursts of asthmatic laughter, and calls for Hester.

"Shall we tell Madame?" asked Juliet.

"No," said Belle stoutly; "it was my polyanthus, and it ought not to be told unless I choose."

"Very well," said her sister, "but something should be done."

"Yes, we can be cold to her, and never address her by her Christian name."

"And leave her to associate with the little ones, as we are doing now," said Miss Ashley; "why, she must be perfectly aware now that we are all in conclave together somewhere, and I dare say she suspects what we are talking about."

"I am very sorry for her," said Belle; "but she certainly ought to suffer for her behaviour. And yet only suppose, Mary, *if* she never did it after all!"

"*If* the sky were to fall," Miss L'Estrange replied, "then we should catch larks."

"Come now, Belle," said Juliet, "could it have been done without hands?"

"No, of course not."

"Did you do it yourself then? answer me that."

"No, of course not, you absurd creature."

"Did you, Sophia?"

"No."

And so she went all round.

"Did Nannette?"

"No, a thousand times no; nor Pauline, and the other two little ones were in before us."

"Did Madame do it, then?"

"Nonsense, Juliet."

"Well then, Massey might have got up in the night, for we should have seen her if she had done it in the day time; she might have come to Madame in the night, and asked for the key of the house door, saying that she felt it a duty to go and cut Belle's polyanthus."

"There, now, you have named everybody," said Miss Ward, "so be quiet, you ridiculous child."

"Every one but gardener," said Margaret, "and he never comes on wet days."

"And yet somebody did it," said Juliet; "so as we are all tired of the subject, let us drop it; only, by way of reflection, I must say, that this is a wicked world."

"So it is," said Belle.

"And if that canary of yours goes on much longer with his piercing, distracting shrill notes, he must be made an example of, for he is not fit to associate with reasonable creatures."

"Hush!" said Belle, "there is some one at the door."

Miss L'Estrange, as I have said before, was seated against the wall on a pile of empty boxes, having one for a footstool, and me on her lap; she had opened a blue parasol to shade us both from the sun, for just under the roof over her head was a wide low casement window, very dim through dust, and having on its ledge some empty blacking bottles, some dry bulbs, a red saucer full of nails, some bundles of list for the trees, the gardener's ink, a few stumpy pens, and a little cracked slate, with his accounts upon it.

On the floor, in a semicircle, sat our schoolfellows in various attitudes, the sunbeams passing over their heads, or just edging their bright hair with a golden border.

When Belle said "Hush!" I lifted my head from Miss L'Estrange's shoulder; the girls turned on their elbows to see who might be coming; the latch was lifted, and in walked Miss Palmer.

A bag of Indian corn under her arm, and a little pan of sopped bread in her hand, she advanced a step or two before she saw us, and when she did, it was with such a start that it shook some of the bread on to the floor.

She stood still, and those flashing grey eyes swept over us, and seemed to take back to her the inmost thoughts of our hearts; they noted everything in an instant, from the sunbeam on the floor which lay across her knees, to the rows of dried herbs hanging in bundles from the rafters, the green, and yellow, and wickerwork cages, the chalk pictures of little girls that we had drawn in profile on the whitewashed walls, the piles of empty flower-pots in the corners, the sudden silence that had fallen upon us, that it was on account of her entrance, and that the words which preceded it had concerned *her*.

As has before been said, she was exceedingly shy and reserved, but by her behaviour then I learned, as if by instinct (for I was by no means capable of explaining what I saw, or of setting it in language till long after), that her shyness and reserve had arisen from a desire to please, from over-estimation of those about her, and an extreme wish that we might love her; she did not at all fear when there was no hope that she might be loved, and when now, alas! she could neither admire nor esteem.

When the dark grey eyes had passed over the place they again returned to us: no one had stirred, nor spoken; still as a picture we sat before her, and some of us were conscious of a great change in her demeanour since the previous day. She turned without speaking, and advancing to her parrot's cage, took off the apron with which we had covered it, folded it up, fed her bird, and talked to him, as if she was truly unconscious of our presence. Then she quietly came up nearly close to where we were sitting, hung her seed-bag upon a nail, and without looking at us again walked to the door, and shutting it behind her, left us to our meditations.

"Well," exclaimed Miss Morton, when, as if released from a spell, we all changed our position—"Is that hardihood, or is it injured innocence?"

Miss L'Estrange made no answer, but as I reclined against her I perceived that she was agitated.

"I should be extremely sorry to do anything unjust," said Miss Ashley, in an uneasy tone.

Miss L'Estrange was playing with my coral necklace when her schoolfellow spoke, and giving it a nervous twitch the string gave way, and instantly she and I, and the girls below were pelted with a shower like little red hailstones; they shook them out of their

laps, out of their hair, they chased them along the floor, and picked them out of seed-bags and out of flowerpots, but the half were not found; and in an animated search for the remainder the play-hour slipped away, and Miss Palmer and the polyanthus were forgotten.

And now followed two, or perhaps three weeks, which have left no vivid pictures of themselves on my memory, but such as they are I always look back on them with regret.

Children, though they may make rules and resolutions for themselves, do not often keep them consistently; and I believe that our determination to show Miss Palmer how much we were displeased with her would constantly have been forgotten, if she herself had not helped to keep it in our remembrance: when she forgot and talked in a friendly way unawares, some one of us, perhaps, remembered it, and answered with chilling coldness; and then, if we shortly forgot it, any unwonted familiarity seemed to bring it to her mind, and make her instantly shrink back.

Day by day the space between us widened; she would walk for hours together by herself in the shrubbery; and in our own room, while we talked, she would take a book: we were always affectionate and friendly to each other, she was always shut out; we played together, she amused herself; we had always done very well without her, now she was trying hard to do without us.

Madame, besides her little girls, had two sons, Prosper and Emile by name, two troublesome little monkeys, of the respective ages of ten and twelve. It should have been mentioned before, that though she had long kept this school, she had not long been a widow. Her husband, during his lifetime, had superintended the religious training of the pupils; but now this care devolved on the minister of the parish, who once a week had us, class by class, in the vestry, and instructed us, together with two or three farmer's daughters, of about our own ages.

For some reason that I now forget, Prosper and Emile, about this time, came home from school for a few days, and gave considerably more trouble in the house than all the pupils put together. They dug a hole fifteen feet deep in which to bury a dead guinea-pig; they made a dam across the little river, and it overflowed and washed away some newly planted cabbages; they peeped in at the school-room windows, and made us laugh and lose our good marks; they teased our birds, they broke our battledores, they ran over our gardens; they conducted themselves, in short, according to their nature, which they could not help, so let us say no more about it.

In the interval between two sorts of mischief, as Prosper one sunny afternoon lay on his back upon the grass, singing, and tossing up his cap, he bethought himself of Nannette's rabbit, and inquired why he had not seen it among the other pets: Speck's mournful history was soon told: and the young Frenchman, sitting up, shrugged his shoulders and elevated his eyebrows, remarking that if Speck had been lost on those premises, on those premises he must be still.

"Why so?" asked Miss Ashley.

"Isn't there a wall along the side of the yard," said Prosper, "and doesn't a fence join it, and doesn't the water run all along this side of the garden, and the cherry orchard, and the hop plantation?"

"Well?" said Miss Ashley.

"Well; I should hope I know where the fence ends—it ends against the back of the boat-house, which is half out of the water and half in, so Speck must be somewhere in the garden or the plantation, for he cannot swim."

"But he can burrow," said Juliet; "and if not, the hops are growing so tall that you will never find him."

"We shall see," said Prosper; and calling his brother with a loud whoop, they both ran off to the hop-garden together.

"Excellent creatures, both of them," said Miss L'Estrange, "but some people are decidedly most agreeable at a distance."

As she said this, her eyes rested on Miss Palmer, who was standing near; not, I am sure, intentionally, for a gradual sadness and quietness had crept over this poor girl lately, which we all pitied; she, however, on meeting the glance of Miss L'Estrange, coloured, and drew back, evidently taking the remark to herself, for she turned away, and bent her steps to the solitary walk in the shrubbery.

She had just reached it, when, obeying a happy impulse, I ran after her, and catching her just as the shadow of the first laurel was cast upon her, "Miss Palmer," I exclaimed, "what are you going away for?"

She neither stopped nor turned, but walked resolutely into the very thickest of the shadow, till at length I ran before her, stood in the grass-path, and faced her.

She was pale, and perhaps the gloom cast upon her from the trees overhead helped to overcloud her face; but there was an energy in its expression that I did not understand. I saw she had been struggling with herself, for those wonderful eyes of hers flashed and changed their expression every instant; and though I had so bravely intruded upon her solitude, I now felt half afraid of her; she appeared all at once, and by reason of some peculiar insight that I had acquired into her character, to have become much older, far wiser, and incomparably superior to myself.

I thought so at the time, but since then I have thought that the change must rather have been in herself; either the absence of her usual colour, or something which she had just read in the little New Testament that she held tightly in both hands, had given to her features a strange look of awe, which increased as her excitement subsided, and which I cannot describe, though I have seen it characterised as,—

> "That look
> Which some have on their faces, who die young."

Though I had abruptly stopped her, she was too pre-occupied to speak at first, till, being determined she should not think that my friend and champion had intentionally distressed her, I laid both my hands on hers, which were clasped over the little book, and made an attempt to push her gently backwards towards the entrance of the shrubbery. I attempted, but did not succeed, and she looked down gravely into my face,

and said, "What do you wish, Miss West? What do you mean?"

"Oh, Miss Palmer," I exclaimed, "you *know*—you know as well as I do, that Miss L'Estrange did not say that about people who are most agreeable at a distance, meaning or thinking anything about you."

"It does not signify what she meant," she replied, after a pause, "so much as what you mean."

As I continued to lean against her, holding her hands tightly (for I wished to elicit from her some admission that she felt I was right before I let her go) she looked into my eyes, and seemed to be quietly considering my features, and reading all my thoughts, as if learning me by heart. I did not shrink from her scrutiny, and we continued to look at each other till the expression of her eyes softened, and she smiled with that peculiar sweetness seldom seen but in those whose cast of countenance is grave and cold.

"I should be sorry if you thought we wished you to go away," I said, answering her last remark.

"Oh, then, you do care about me?" she answered, quickly.

"Care about you," I repeated; "oh, yes, of course."

I had forgotten at the moment that it was on my champion's account that I had followed her, and that only during the past few minutes I had cared about her for herself.

"I believe, since you assure me of it, that Miss L'Estrange did not allude to me," she then said, (I thought her language had also grown older), and as I released her hands, she put them about my waist and drew me nearer. I saw she wished me to kiss her, and I obeyed the wish, with a sort of consciousness that this was an important kiss to her, but no consciousness at all that during all my future life it was to be of importance to my peace that I should have given it. *(To be continued.)*

ON THE ROCK.

O! IT was lang, lang syne, mother,
When we lived by the sea,
Ye winna' mind it now, mother,
But it's like yestreen to me,
When I was gatherin' shells, mother,
Sae mony and sae fair,
I aye went on and on, mother,
And aye—a wee bit mair.

And a' the sea cam' in, mother,
Roun' by the creek o' Fyle,
And I was left far out, mother,
Alane on a sandy isle.
O! I was wae and eerie, mother,
I gied the wildest cry;
But naething cam' my way, mother,
But a sea-gull swoopin' by.

I saw the waves come washin', mother,
And ripplin' to my feet,
And roun' behind my back, mother,
I saw the waters meet,
Aye lappin' up the sands, mother,
An' I cried, "O maun I die!"
But naething but a gull, mother,
Took ony heed o' me.

There was a wee bit rock, mother,
I stood upon it then,
An' the sea cam' rollin' up, mother,
An' then I cried again:
I stared a dyin' stare, mother,
On the waters round and round,
But seven waves mair, I thought, mother,
The eighth—and I'll be drown'd.

And I was countin' them, mother,
And O! I never kenn'd
Wha brought me hame to you, mother,
But sure it was a friend;
O! I greeted then for joy, mother,
Wi' my head upon your breast;
I thought I'd *never* leave ye mair;
O mother, that was Rest!

But, mother, I am goin' now;
I've been a bairn sin' then,
Wanderin' and wanderin' on, mother,
Seekin' for shells again:
But I forgot the shells, mother,
When a' the waves cam' in;
I thought that I maun perish, mother,
In those dark waves o' sin.

But my feet are on the Rock, mother,
No' a wee bit rock like yon,
But on the *Rock of Ages*, mother,
An' the waves come rollin' on.
The waves have risen and fa'en, mother,
Mony a time sin' then;
I've fear'd to see them sometimes, mother,
But they've aye fa'en back again.

I'm waitin' on the Rock, mother,
And one dear voice I hear—
He will lay me in the boat, mother,
And take His place quite near.
For He is going wi' me, mother:
"I'll be with you," He said;
He calls to me frae the boat, mother,
"It is I—be not afraid."

When I cam' hame to you, mother,
I kenn'd o' naething between;
My feet were on the rock, mother—
My feet were on the green.
My feet are on the Rock, mother—
It may be, afore I ken,
I'll stand on yon sunny shore, mother,
And be at *hame* again.

Ay, in a brighter Hame, mother;
No sea,—no waves o' sin;
A Hame wi' nane goin' out, mother,
But *mony* comin' in.
If tears are there, I'll weep, mother,
Upon my Father's breast;
My heart is o'erflowin' now, mother—
O mother, this is *Rest!*

R. E. L.

Drawn by J. Gordon Thomson. Engraved by W. J. Linton.

"O! I was wae and eerie, mother,
I gied the wildest cry;
But naething came my way, mother,
But a sea-gull sweeping by."

THE WALDENSES.

PART III.—THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE WALDENSIAN CHURCH.

THIS subject is twofold; for at the present hour, besides the position of the Waldensian Church within the valleys, she has a position beyond them. I propose, therefore, in this concluding paper, to notice, first, the present condition of the Waldensian Church in the valleys of Piedmont, and thereafter, her position with respect to God's work in Italy.

It may prove almost a misfortune for a man to have had a very famous ancestry, and the same is true of a nation or a church. The Waldenses have had a past so glorious and wonderful, that probably there are persons who, visiting their valleys, have come away disappointed, just because they went there with extravagant anticipations. We lately heard Dr. Revel, the President of the Waldensian College in Florence, tell, with a smile, how in ancient times the Papists fabricated the most childish stories about his forefathers; how, even in Turin, the ignorant multitude were made to believe that the "heretics" up among the mountains were a race of monsters, with hideous mouths and a single eye which glared in the centre of their foreheads. While we smile at this vision of demons, we must beware of picturing the modern Waldenses to ourselves as something akin to angels. We must not expect to find among the Waldenses, or anywhere else, universal piety, quenchless zeal, spotless purity; and we tell it to the honour of the pastors there, that more than once we have heard them lament that these graces are not more manifest among their people. It is true also, and the Waldenses have no wish to hide it, that their Church during her long and eventful history has passed through not only external but internal vicissitudes. Her light has not always burned with a pure and steady lustre, and the times when it shone brightest were not those of comparative quiet, but when the blasts of persecution blew the fiercest. There was a period towards the end of the last century, and in the earlier portion of the present, when the zeal of the Waldensian Church seemed to cool, and her faith itself to waver: the rationalism of Germany and Switzerland had been imbibed by at least some of the younger pastors, who in these days had to cross the Alps to study theology. In God's mercy that influence was not of long duration. Even at the worst their ancient standards remained sound and scriptural bulwarks of truth, and ere long evangelical professors in Geneva and Lausanne were raised up, and their influence manifested itself in a return to the old faith. A quickening commenced throughout the whole Church in the valleys, and some earnest Christians from England were greatly honoured about forty years ago in strengthening her reviving energies. Since that date, we rejoice to assure our readers that the Waldensian Church has continued steadily to progress, and each new year to develop new fruits in evidence of her internal vitality; so that the stranger who visits the valleys to-day with the simple desire to see the Waldenses as they are, will come away as we did with feelings of deepened affection and respect.

The writer had the privilege, along with deputies from four different Churches in England and Scotland, to be present at the meeting of the Waldensian Synod of 1865. The whole proceedings of that simple but solemn assembly, made up of seventy-two pastors and laymen, indicated a Church whose machinery, organisation, and discipline are in sound working order. I have since received from Italy the official report of that Synod, and one has but to glance over the subjects of each successive day's deliberations, to find abundant evidence that, in her care to inquire into the inner life of the different congregations, and in her sense of duty towards God's work throughout the world, this ancient Church of the Alps is still, as of old, a living one. The Waldensian Church is Presbyterian in form of government, and each pastor has a body of ruling elders, called *anciens*, associated with him in the care of his flock. The Synod or chief court of the Church meets annually for the transaction of the Church's business under the presidency of a moderator, whose term of office is one year. Five members, the moderator being one, are chosen at the Synod to form the *Table*, or executive body, which by the constitution of the Church manages all her affairs during the year, internal and external alike. In a former article I referred to the time-honoured writings which are of authority among the Waldenses, especially the "Noble Lesson," dating from the 12th century. Among her more recent standards, copies of which we procured in the valleys, are the Confession of Faith, compiled in 1655; the Catechism, which has recently been adopted in place of Osterwald's; and the Liturgy; (for, Presbyterian as the Waldensian Church is, her public services are more or less regulated by a book of Common Prayer)—all these are eminently clear in statement and scriptural in substance.

It would be easy to give statistics regarding the actual condition of the Church as it exists at this hour in the valleys; but I believe it will be as instructive, and probably more interesting, to my reader, if I attempt to sketch the state of things as we found them in one of the upper parishes. The fifteen parishes are classed into upper and lower, according as their situation lies nearer or farther from the higher Alps. In the lower parishes—for instance La Tour—one finds a considerable admixture of an extraneous and modern element among the people; and, being desirous to see the native Waldenses in, as far as possible, their primitive state, we were led to visit the parish of Massel in the upper extremity of the Val San Martino, where we spent part of three days, one being a Sunday. As the event proved, we were most wisely directed to Massel. Never can we forget our sojourn in that wild and solitary nook of the Alps, nor the abounding kindness received under the roof of its devoted young pastor, Philip Cardon, and his

genial wife. Living faith, intelligence, and refinement are beautiful in combination anywhere. We found all three in that simple dwelling amid the wilds of Massel, and there, the combination seemed to have a peculiar charm.

The upper portions of the valley of St. Martin are not only beautiful but grand—almost sublime. We had left the vine and mulberry far beneath, and even the walnut and chesnut began here to give place to the shaggy pines which showed themselves high up on the mountain's side, dark-green among the snows. The shadows of evening were around us as we approached the hamlet of poor little wooden cabins called Massel, 5000 feet above the sea-level; and as our path at certain points was but a ledge on the side of almost perpendicular cliffs, it was a matter of some anxiety to traverse it; two of our party, of whom one was a lady, being obliged to employ mules, and a single false step here might have hurled both beast and rider into the foaming Germanasca far below. When Massel came in sight, though the sun had quite left the valley itself, it still tinged with crimson the snowy peaks above the village: and never did a loving welcome and repose seem more grateful than that night. Next day was the Sabbath, and no words can describe the striking character of the scene as we went forth in the early morning from M. Cardon's house, which stands high up on the mountain side. The whole valley seemed pervaded with a sabbatic stillness, which the murmur of the stream below seemed but to make the more profound. The air was deliciously fresh and pure, the foliage in its tender green of early spring; and on either side, the mighty mountains opened up into solemn ravines, at whose extremities sharp peaks of glittering snow and naked rock rose into the blue sky, from which the morning sun was pouring down a flood of light on the whole scene.

> "It seemed as Nature's self would raise
> A temple to her Maker's praise."

And what a welcome contrast this Sabbath morning among the Alps, to the dust, and din, and roar of carriages on a continental Sunday in Naples or in Paris!

The church, or *temple*—a plain unadorned building—stands on the opposite side of the valley, amid a few unlettered grave-stones, where "the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep." From many directions around we saw the people gathering to service in little groups, and on entering the church at ten o'clock we found it filled. The congregation must have numbered 500 at least. The men enter by one door, the women by another, and sit on different sides of the building, according to the ancient, but, as we thought, unreasonable custom of the Waldenses in their worship. The whole aspect of the congregation was grave and thoughtful, the attire of both sexes very homely but clean, the women, younger as well as older, wearing a kind of cap. Bonnets we saw none. The men generally shave the upper lip, and many are by no means dark in complexion. In fact, one looking round the audience might almost have believed he saw a congregation in the Scottish Highlands, or North Wales. The wall opposite the pulpit bore, tastefully painted in colours on the plaster, the ancient and most appropriate device and motto of the Waldensian Church—a candle burning in a candlestick, and around it seven stars, with this motto underneath, "*Lux lucet in tenebris*"—"The light shineth in the darkness."

When we entered, a ruddy flaxen-haired boy was reading aloud a portion of Scripture from a large Bible placed on a table below the pulpit, following it by Osterwald's commentary on the passage. We learned that this youth was that day a substitute for the *regent* or schoolmaster of the parish, whose office it is, in all Waldensian churches, to read the Word of God during the assembling of the congregation. When the pastor ascended the pulpit, he commenced the service by reading the Ten Commandments, which he followed by offering the Confession of Sin contained in the Liturgy. During the reading of the Law and at all the prayers the people stood, while during singing they kept their seats. The book board of the pulpits is to one side, not in front; consequently, perhaps, one never hears a read sermon in a Waldensian *temple*. The congregation sing very slowly, and the tunes seemed chiefly in a minor key; the effect produced reminding us strongly of the Gaelic psalmody in the Scotch Highlands. The morning service over, we were present at a very interesting meeting of the children, who were catechised and instructed in an admirable manner by their pastor.

In the evening we learned much from M. Cardon about the trials and the encouragements of a Waldensian pastor's life. It is the custom to appoint the younger clergy, in the first instance, to the higher parishes, such as his; and when they have borne the laborious fatigues which these entail for a certain number of years, they are then transferred to an easier sphere. The long distances to be travelled on foot, the well-nigh inaccessible paths, the weary winter of seven months, and the deep poverty of almost the whole people, all combine to make a mountain parish in the valleys a trying field of labour. On our way to the Balsille next morning, our friend pointed out to us a spot where, in the former winter, he had well-nigh lost his life, when on a call of duty, by slipping his foot on the treacherous ice of the narrow foot-path. In an instant he was carried over a steep ledge of rock which overhung the torrent below; and had he not providentially been rescued by two of his flock who accompanied him, he had never reached home alive. We could realise his danger all the better when, on returning to his house, he showed us the framework of iron beset with spikes more than an inch long, which, on his winter journeys, he fastens to the sole of his boots, as we do skates, not however to help, but retard his progress. This young minister has had the satisfaction of seeing an end put to some forms of Sabbath desecration which existed formerly in his parish, such as merry-makings on the evenings of the Lord's Day, to which he boldly went, accompanied by the elder of the district, unbidden and unexpected, administering then and there a solemn and well-timed rebuke; and his faithfulness has been blessed and successful. Further, he has had the satisfaction of seeing a growing desire among his flock, within a recent period, for meetings of a different

and much better kind—gatherings in private houses for social prayer. If the Waldensian pastor's work be severe, his worldly recompense is very small. Some few of the pastors are not wholly dependent on their scanty incomes, but most of them are so; and Christians in this land of ours who can spend 20*l.* on a single occasion of sumptuous hospitality, should know that this sum is exactly one-third of the whole income (including house and garden) which these Alpine pastors have for themselves and family. They are "passing rich on *sixty* pounds a year." It may not be wrong to spend 20*l.* on a dinner-party; but surely those who do so, should have something to spare for the Waldensian missions in Italy!

And this reminds me to say a word or two concerning the poverty of the Waldenses as a people. God has recently called them to go forth on a great work in their own land, as we shall see: they are willing to give the agents and the labour in that work, but their poverty absolutely precludes them from supporting these agents; this is what *we* are asked to help them to do. One has but to see the little patches of land from which a family derives its whole subsistence, to learn how poor the generality of them must be. We do not say this to excuse the want of tidiness and cleanliness too apparent in their dwellings; but it quite explains the scanty furniture, and unhealthy colour in many of the children, which it pains one to observe. In the mountain districts we generally found the cottage windows unglazed; but the square sheets of paper which supply the place of glass, and which seemed invariably written leaves of children's "copy-books," give curious evidence that if the Waldenses are poor, they prize and obtain education for their little ones. Wishing to see a truly primitive Waldensian home, the pastor of Massel introduced us to one—a sample of others around—which was nestled at the foot of the historic rock called Balsille, at the head of the Vallée St. Martin. We had to enter this rude wooden cabin by an outside stair—or ladder, rather—at the head of which a low door ushered us into a dark and narrow passage, emerging from which, we found ourselves in a room low-roofed, and dimly lighted by one small window. Here, and in a small closet beyond, the family have their summer quarters; but in winter, from want of fuel, which they cannot afford time to cut, the whole household migrate (and it is the same with half the families in this mountain parish) where?—to the byre or cow-house below; and there, while the snow for six or seven weary months lies several feet deep around, these poor people live and sleep beside their cattle *for the sake of the warmth which the brutes give forth.* To verify this, we entered the cow-house at the foot of the stair outside, and saw the rude bedsteads arranged somewhat as berths are in a ship. The sight was sad enough. Yet these people were God-fearing and intelligent; and in their welcome to their young pastor, as he entered their poor mountain cabin, and his kindly words to them, we were reminded of the intercourse between Felix Neff or Oberlin and their flocks. I should not forget to mention one circumstance peculiarly significant. Amid all the meanness of the abode, we observed in a corner of the little room upstairs, a few shelves, and on these shelves no less than thirty books—larger or smaller—for we had the curiosity to count them; and what was our surprise to find among them, translated by a French Evangelical Society, one or two tracts by Mr. Ryle, and at least one of C. H. Spurgeon's sermons! Here, in a poor hut in a wild gorge of Northern Italy, to find these English worthies was indeed a pleasant surprise. But we were among the Waldenses; and it is as true of them now as of old, "*Lux lucet in tenebris*"—"The light shineth in the darkness."

In Naples, with 500,000 inhabitants, not one person in ten can read; but Naples is a Popish city, and Popery never was partial to educating the masses. In the Waldensian valleys, on the contrary, we found schools everywhere. Will it be believed that in this little territory, some twenty miles long by eighteen broad, while there is a college at La Tour, a Latin grammar-school at Pomaret, and fifteen principal schools, one to each parish, there are upwards of one hundred schools throughout the district, if one includes the smaller side schools, open some three or four or five months in winter, one in each *quartier* of each parish!

In former papers in this Magazine (see SUNDAY MAGAZINE for 1865, pp. 7 and 852) accounts have been given of the educational establishment at La Tour, and of the great services of Dr. Gilly and General Beckwith in connection with these and other Waldensian operations. On these, therefore, we will not enlarge, but proceed to notice our second subject:—The present position of the Waldensian Church with respect to Italy.

The present most hopeful position of the Waldenses has been attained, under Providence, as a result of the great political changes of 1848 and 1859-61. In 1848, Charles Albert, King of Sardinia, granted a free constitution to his subjects: and it was on February 17th of that same year that he passed an ever-memorable decree, emancipating the Waldenses from all civil and political disabilities, and securing to them the free exercise of their worship throughout his kingdom. It was a kingdom of four millions then: it numbers twenty-two millions to-day. Charles Albert was the only Italian sovereign who, in his constitution of 1848, inserted a clause securing *religious liberty* to his subjects; and while God has removed the Italian despots from their places, the son of Charles Albert not merely retains the throne of his sires, but wears the crown of United Italy: so that now the Waldenses, as subjects of Victor-Emmanuel, and by his father's act secured in full liberty of worship, may go forth with an open Bible among the twenty-two millions of their fellow-countrymen, and preach the very faith for which their fathers had to die.

Have they taken that work in hand? What response are they giving to the call of God's Providence? How are they employing their marvellous opportunity? The following table furnishes the reply; and if my reader take the trouble to glance at a map of Italy, he will see the extent of the ground occupied

from the position of these stations. At each of them the Waldensian Church has one or more agents, whose number and special work is indicated below :—

Stations.	Ministers.	Lay Evangelists.	Schoolmasters and Schoolmistresses.
Palermo	1	0	1
Naples	1	2	3
Elba	1	0	1
Leghorn	1	0	2
Pisa	1	0	1
Lucca	1	0	0
Florence	4	0	3
Perugia	0	1	0
Favale	0	0	1
Genoa	1	0	3
San Pietro d'Arena	0	1	1
La Pietra Bassignana	1	1	1
Pinerolo	1	0	1
Turin	2	0	4
Ivrea	0	1	1
Aosta	1	0	1
Courmayeur	0	1	0
Milan	1	0	1
Pavia	0	1	0
Como and Intelvi	1	0	1
Guastalla	0	1	1
Brescia	1	0	0
Nice	1	0	0
	20	9	27

Be it borne in mind that it is but eighteen years since the Waldensian Church found access to any of these stations ; and in respect to the larger number, five years only : yet, wherever she now has an ordained labourer, there is gathered a congregation varying from some forty souls up to four hundred—in some cases the communicants number nearly two hundred, of whom the majority have come out from the Church of Rome.

Where, I ask, on the face of the earth, have we an illustration of Divine Providence more remarkable than the past history and present position of the Waldenses present? Now, at length, we discern God's intention in hiding them so long among their mountain recesses ; in preserving the truth there during the long night of the dark ages, and through the centuries of persecution which followed. He had a work for this people to do in Italy.

When on a bright Sunday morning last May, we approached the spacious building which raises its ornate pinnacles in front of the Corso del Re at Turin, we scarce believed it could be the *Chiesa Valdese*, or Waldensian church, till we saw over the open porch this inscription, carved in large Italian characters : "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." The date of this building is 1853. The service in the morning was French, in the afternoon, Italian. A large congregation of many hundred persons filled the building on both occasions. M. Meille, the pastor, a native of the valleys, is a deeply pious man,—tall, dark, and striking in aspect. He would in any country, and in any language, be esteemed a great preacher ; and apart altogether from the Waldensian population, and the converts from Popery, his presence in Turin is most important ; one proof of which I cannot forbear to mention. A very interesting institution, called "*Artigianelli Valdesi*," exists in that city. It is in fact a home for sixteen poor, friendless Waldensian boys, who are there brought under kind and Christian influence, saved from ruin, and taught a trade—hence the name. To enlarge this institution, a sum of 31,244 francs (about 1250*l.* sterling), was last year placed in M. Meille's hands by one of his congregation, as a thank-offering for spiritual good received under his ministry. The donor was Baron S——, the Russian Ambassador, who, while the Italian court resided at Turin, joined each Lord's Day in the simple worship of the Waldenses.

Returning in the afternoon to the Italian service, conducted by the younger M. Meille, we found a most interesting audience, many of them recent converts from Popery ; and besides the congregation, who were seated, there was a curious peripatetic assemblage of men, women and children, who entered the porch from the open street, attracted by curiosity, and kept coming and going during the whole time of the service. To a stranger it seemed an annoying interruption, but the preacher and the regular congregation were evidently quite accustomed to it. We learned afterwards that these comers and goers are all Roman Catholics. Some stay but a few minutes ; others longer ; while others, arrested and interested, remain to the conclusion of the service, and not a few who are now members in the communion of the Church were thus first gathered in. The singing was inexpressibly touching. Something, no doubt, might be due to the associations of the scene ; but as the swell of those rich Italian voices, which almost drowned the organ, rose in the hymn, "*Di pace al principe*," the effect was thrilling. One felt within that church that the Psalmist's words might have been penned expressly for these Waldenses : "Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads ; we went through fire and through water ; but Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place." How wonderful, that, in the very city from whence, two centuries ago, the Propaganda sent forth an edict to exterminate every Waldensian by fire and sword we should hear the Gospel preached in Italian by a Waldensian ! Looking round the audience we saw some soldiers in uniform ; soldiers of Piedmont here met peacefully to worship God ; and remembering the old persecutions, Isaiah's prophecy came to mind : "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb."

In other papers in this Magazine mention has been made of the little college at La Tour. The new sphere which God's Providence lately called the Waldensian Church to occupy suggested at once the desirableness of transferring the theological department of the college from the valleys to a more central position in Italy. A long-tried friend of the Waldenses, Dr. Stewart, of the Scotch Church at Leghorn, deeply impressed with this necessity, appealed to one or two friends in Britain and America for help to secure a large building which in 1861 was vacant in Florence. The needed 5000*l.* was at once put into his hands, and the Palazzo Salviati secured. It was with no little interest that we visited this building. Half-an-hour previously we had been looking up to the barred window of the prison where, a few years ago, Francesco and Rosa Madiai

had been confined for reading the Word of God—and here, in the same city, and in what had formerly been the palace of a Cardinal, we heard the Word of God publicly expounded to a class of fourteen youths who were to go over the length and breadth of Italy as ministers of the Gospel. Stranger still—the very man to whom they were listening, Professor Geymonat, had been in 1854 himself imprisoned in Florence like the Madiai. In the lower story of this old palazzo we visited the Italian schools of the Waldensian Church, where the New Testament is daily read and taught: here, too, is a printing office—the Claudian Press—where we found eight or nine workmen busily printing the Word of God, the Pilgrim's Progress, Catechisms, and exposures of Popery, all in Italian. These publications are issued unceasingly, and sold at the depots of evangelical books, which are established in Leghorn, Genoa, Milan, Naples, &c., as well as by colporteurs throughout the Italian kingdom. As we emerged from this busy scene into the sunny cortile, or open inner court which one invariably finds in Italian palazzos, it was significant indeed to observe, looking down on us from one of the lofty windows, not the portly form and scarlet cape of old Cardinal Salviati, but the beaming face of Dr. Revel, a descendant of the martyred Valdesi, now President of the College here.

There is much more to tell, but we must draw these sketches to a close. Our aim throughout has been, not merely to enlist the interest of our readers in the marvellous story of the Waldenses, but to press on their attention the special reason why at the present hour we should remember them in our prayers, and afford them the material help they need for the new work which God has given them to do. From the snowy Alps to its most southern extremity, Italy (excluding Venetia and Rome) is now open to the truth. Not indeed that the people are all ready to welcome it. Alas! no. There is everywhere among the masses a woful amount of ignorance, which the priests turn to account by prejudicing them against Evangelical teaching, (witness the recent outrage at Barletta, where the mob, hounded on by the priests, massacred nine persons connected with the Evangelist's meeting :) and sadder than the blind ignorance of the masses, and harder to deal with, is the immorality, the indifference to all religion, and open infidelity of the educated and the refined.

Nevertheless, Italy is at this moment as it never was before opened to the circulation and preaching of God's holy Word. Side by side with that great fact mark this other :—In a remote northern corner of that land God has for long centuries marvellously preserved a community of men who have held a pure faith amid fearful trials, and who constitute at this hour a Christian Church, small indeed and poor, but thoroughly organised and in full working order. These Waldenses have proved their willingness to come forth from their seclusion, now that God has opened the way, and to take their share in the glorious work of Italy's evangelisation. Already they have fifty-six agents in the field. They are willing to give life and labour; they can give no more. They are very far from putting themselves forward as the only agents suitable for this great enterprise: they welcome other Christian agencies, and feel that all are too few. But this they do claim,—a pre-eminent fitness for the work: and it is the truth and justice of this claim which we anxiously press on our readers. The Waldenses are Italians by birth, and by civil rights and privileges. They are Italians, who, in Italy, since the days of the Primitive Church, have opposed the tyranny of Rome, and resisted it even unto blood. They possess standards eminently scriptural. They constitute no undefined religious society, but an organised Church; and we maintain, that if all this be borne in mind, it were to ignore the clearest indications of God's Providence not to give them the chief place in our sympathies, and the chief share of our contributions for the evangelisation of long-benighted Italy.

A special appeal is at this moment made by the Waldensian Church to British Christians. To continue even her present amount of Evangelistic work in Italy, an annual sum of 4000*l.* is needed from this country. If we refuse it, some of her stations must be closed. Silver and gold the Waldenses have little of; but what they have—the men and the work—they give freely. Surely this is an occasion when the Apostolic injunction will touch the consciences and open the hands of many amongst us: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

In the following passage, not more striking than true, Mr. Ruskin addresses a class of persons becoming each season more numerous; and as bearing on my present subject—the duty we owe to Christian brethren on the Continent—I venture to append it here :—

"There has now (1857) been peace between England and the Continental powers about thirty-five years, and during that period the English have visited the Continent at the rate of many thousands a year, staying there, I suppose, on the average, each two or three months; nor these an inferior kind of English, but the kind which ought to be the best—the noblest born, the best taught, the richest in time and money, having more leisure, knowledge, and power, than any other portion of the nation. These, we might suppose, beholding, as they travelled, the condition of the States in which the Papal religion is professed, and being, at the same time, the most enlightened section of a great Protestant nation, would have been animated with some desire to dissipate the Romanist errors, and to communicate to others the better knowledge which they possessed themselves. I doubt not but that He who gave peace upon the earth, and gave it by the hand of England, expected this much of her, and has watched every one of the millions of her travellers as they crossed the sea, and kept count for him of his travelling expenses, and of their distribution, in a manner of which neither the traveller nor his courier were at all informed. I doubt not, I say, but that such accounts have been literally kept for all of us, and that a day will come when they will be made clearly legible to us, and when we shall see added together, on one side of the account-book, a great sum, the certain portion, whatever it may be, of this thirty-five years' spendings of the rich English, accounted for in this manner :—

". . . To shell cameos and bits of mosaic bought at Rome, so much ; to coral horns and lava brooches bought at Naples, so much ; to glass beads at Venice, and gold filagree at Genoa, so much ; to pictures, and statues, and ornaments, everywhere, so much ; to avant-couriers and extra post-horses, for show and magnificence, so much ; to great entertainments and good places for seeing sights, so much. This, I say, will be the sum on one side of the book ; and on the other will be written—

"To the struggling Protestant Churches of France, Switzerland, and PIEDMONT, so much.

"Had we not better do this piece of statistics for ourselves, in time?"

D. K. Guthrie.

A FEAST OF ISRAEL.

It must have been a very beautiful sight to witness the tribes of Israel going up to "the sanctuary" to worship the Lord of Hosts on the Feast of the Passover. As this first and greatest of the three festivals of the Law fell to be held in spring, nature and religion united to cheer the heart of the people, and to tune it, like a sacred harp, for the celebration of the praise of Jehovah. So early as in February (*Adar*), the Levites sped through the country in all directions, preparing the way for the expected travellers. The roads and bridges were inspected, the wells and tanks were cleaned and repaired, and the adjacent fields carefully examined, lest the feelings of the pious might be offended by the sight of anything unlawful. The graves were fenced in or whitened, so as to be conspicuous at a distance, lest any of the Lord's guests should be defiled by touching them unawares. For it was emphatically enjoined in the Law that no unclean person should eat of the paschal lamb. Should any one unfortunately be in that state, an opportunity was given him to eat it the next month, which was called the Lesser Passover. This, however, was regarded as a poor compensation for the loss of those enjoyments which the Great Passover alone could furnish. To go up to Jerusalem with the families of the house of Jacob ; to walk with beloved friends across the hills and valleys of Judah, now blooming with the fresh life of spring ; to see the Holy City clad in its most beautiful attire, and peopled at this time with thousands and hundreds of thousands of the tribes of Israel ; to witness the worship of the Lord in its highest splendour ; to hear the songs and rapturous responses of the priests and the Levites, and the *hallels* of the innumerable multitude ; to enjoy the merry din and bustle of so many cheerful guests, young and old, rich and poor, from far and near,—all this was too grand and too impressive not to be looked forward to throughout the year as one of the greatest blessings and privileges which a son of Abraham could enjoy while he was in the land of the living.

The Passover, which lasted seven days, commenced on the 15th of Nisan, and ended on the 21st, but the 14th used to be included in the number of the sacred days, since on the close of that day the paschal lamb was to be killed. In Egypt, where the feast was celebrated for the first time, the lamb was chosen from the flock as early as the 10th of the month. This custom, it seems, obtained in Palestine as long as the people continued to kill the lamb in their own houses, according to the original precept in Exodus xii. This precept, however, was modified by a later commandment in Deut. xvi. 5, 6. The people were instructed by it that, after they had taken possession of the promised land, they should not "sacrifice the passover within any of their gates, but at the place which the Lord should choose to place his name in." But this modification, it would appear, was not carried into practice even after the Temple was built, and the worship of the Lord centred there. The people continued to kill and eat the sacrifice in their own houses on the evening of the 14th, and to go up to Jerusalem on the 15th to celebrate the Passover on the ensuing days, "the days of the unleavened bread." It was, most likely, owing to this disregard of the Law that the influence of the Passover gradually declined during the reign of the kings of Judah. Not until Hezekiah's attention was drawn to this neglect was a reform commenced (2 Chron. xxx.). We are informed that this reform met with considerable opposition from many who were loth to abandon the old habit. The posts, whom the king had sent from city to city, "they laughed to scorn, and mocked." It was his great and pious grandson Josiah who succeeded in carrying out the reform in its full extent. He restored the Passover, "so that it was done in such a sort as it was written." The people no more killed the paschal lambs within their own gates, but brought them to Jerusalem, and killed them there. From those days, too, the lawyers and pharisees took charge of the organisation of that great solemnity. They drew up a set of rules and regulations, describing in the minutest detail every thing to be observed, not only during the days of the festival, but for a considerable time before, in order to secure perfect observance, according to the Law. It was required by this code that the Passover should be held every year in Israel, and it was so as long as there was a Temple in Jerusalem. We find those regulations fully recorded in the Talmud. It is strange that though the Jews held stubbornly to the old habit of killing the paschal lamb in their houses before the Temple was built, they are now very averse to that habit, and have been ever since the Temple was destroyed. The Jews in the present day observe "the feast of the unleavened bread," but keep no true Passover, no lamb being killed. This is all the more remarkable, in that the paschal lamb is the only sacrifice they could have safely continued, since according to its original institution it could be offered by every master of a family without the aid of a priest and without an altar. But just as God once caused Caiaphas to prophesy what he did not mean, and as He caused Pilate to write what he did

not understand, so He has caused the Jews to confirm that which they do not believe; for by doing away with the offering of the paschal lamb altogether they have confirmed the truth of God, that the true Passover is sacrificed, thus rendering all other sacrifices worthless and absurd.

Through the reform of Josiah, the killing and eating of the lamb was confined to the Holy City, and the Israelite after that, as was to be expected, postponed the selection of a faultless male lamb till after his arrival in town. His care was all the greater, however, for the utensils which were to be used in the sacrifice, and which he had to carry along with him on his journey to the sanctuary and back. Many days before the festival commenced, the household was busy from dawn till dusk. A large kettle, which was never used on any other occasion, was filled with water and hung over the fire. Meanwhile, all the utensils of silver, copper, and tin, which had to be used for the sacrifice and in the eating of it, were scoured smooth and shining, and when the water was declared to be fully boiling, they were dipped into the steaming fluid, and then quickly washed over again with cold water. Iron implements were put in the fire till they were red hot. Iron mortars were filled with red hot coals, which were kept glowing till a thread wound round the outside of the mortar was burnt away. Wooden utensils were cleaned, or, as the term was, made *kausher*, by means of a red-hot stone, which was rubbed across them after they had been dipped in boiling water. The earthen wares had to be all new, and to be declared *kausher*,—thrice dipped into boiling water. Similar were the purifications prescribed for the table at which the family was to eat the paschal lamb, and similar were the requirements regarding the forms or stools on which they were to sit or to recline, the table utensils, and every other article of furniture which they were to use during a stay of at least eight days at Jerusalem. And they had to carry all those things up to the city and back, during a journey which lasted many days, across hills and through valleys, over rivers and rivulets; sometimes through charming scenes, and sometimes also through waste sun-burnt districts.

It was certainly no trifling matter for the master of a family to resolve on going up with his wife and children to Jerusalem to this feast; and we need not therefore marvel to learn that in the days of backsliding and idolatrous apostacy, those solemn observances were altogether neglected. Still, when the people were in the right spirit, they must have enthusiastically enjoyed those journeys, for they lay close to the very heart of their national life, and no doubt they were fully conscious of their blessings as the chosen and redeemed people of a holy and loving God. To our Western feelings, especially now that the comforts of travelling are carried to such a pitch of perfection, it would be strange to break up our household, and to travel with our family, carrying a quantity of furniture, some sixty or eighty miles, not for the purpose of permanently remaining, but merely on an annual visit to the metropolis. But to Orientals, and especially to Hebrews, who never could wholly forget their nomadic extraction, such a pilgrimage was nothing extraordinary. Of course the journey was accomplished in caravan manner; and dull, monotonous, and unsafe as travelling in that country was for single persons, it was very interesting, diversified, and agreeable when performed in company. And the Passover journeys must have been especially so. One was not then compelled to go with any caravan that might turn up, but could join a company after one's own tastes and inclinations. Many weeks before the journey, kindred families, living in the same neighbourhood, and united by ties of friendship, or by still higher sympathies, made arrangements to form a caravan, and the cheerful activity and intercourse these arrangements must have caused to the females and the young people may be imagined. The day appointed for the departure having arrived, the families which had agreed to form a caravan met together early in the morning, a little before sunrise, before the house of the eldest of them. Suddenly a merry noise turned the quiet of the morning into something of the lively din of a market day. The neighing of horses was heard, and the braying of mules and asses, as, burdened with the furniture and the provisions, they were ready for the road, while men, women, and children, assembling in cheerful confusion, welcomed one another with loud greetings, such as, "The Lord bless thee! The Lord preserve thy going out and thy coming in!" Then the eldest of the company, having offered up a short prayer or pronounced a blessing, recited, or rather chanted, the first verse of the 122nd Psalm, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of the Lord," and the whole party responded in chorus, "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem!" the fresh morning breeze carrying the merry tones across the fields to neighbouring farms, where other companies were assembling, and preparing for the same journey. Meanwhile the sun, risen higher, tinges the tops of the vine-clad hills with gold and purple, and the women and children are lifted on the backs of their beasts. Each one takes the place assigned to him or her, the eldest takes the lead ahead, the women with the children are placed behind him, and are shut in on both sides by the men, who ride or walk on the left and right, while the servants, with the beasts of burden, bring up the rear. And now, when the sun has dispelled the clouds, and is pouring down streams of gold upon pasture and vineyard, on hill and valley, all rejoicing in the fresh blessings of another spring, the roads, far and near, are seen to be dotted with journeying companies, whose bright-coloured dresses contrast strongly with the verdure of the terraced slopes around, and whose noisy joyful chatting, and harmonious choruses, mingle with the thousand cheerful voices of nature rising on all sides, from lea and lawn, and bush and grove. It is then that the unparalleled "Songs of degrees" (Ps. cxx.—cxxxiv.) are heard resounding through the land, pouring down into the valleys from the tops of the hills, and rising up again from the bottom of the valleys in cheerful response. One company is singing "Hail and peace" to another, and receiving in return a cordial "The

Lord bless thee! The Lord be thy sun and shield." It seems indeed as if the whole of Palestine, from Dan to Beersheba, and from the river to the shores of the sea, were one great concert-room, and all Israel one choir bursting out into chants of praise to Jehovah. What an impression this must have made on the hearts of those pilgrims, as they travelled through the charming districts perfumed with the fragrance of the slopes of Hermon, with the mountains of Zion before them, when they heard the song rise from a thousand tongues, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment of Aaron, . . . as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descendeth upon the mountains of Zion."

Arrived at Jerusalem the pilgrim family repaired to the house of the friend who was to accommodate them. It should be noticed that the host was remunerated by a present of the skin of the lamb, the oven in which it was roasted, and some of the vessels used on the occasion. Those who could find no accommodation in the town, pitched their tents outside the walls, so that Jerusalem from a distance looked like a beleaguered city. Then the lamb was bought which had to be killed in the Temple between three and five o'clock in the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan, for thus the pharisees and rabbinists understood the expression in Exodus xii. 6, "between two evenings." Meanwhile careful preparations were made for the celebration of the feast of unleavened bread, which was deemed to begin so early as on the 14th, because the bread was *baked* on that day, though not eaten before the paschal meal. Everybody on this day cleaned himself, cut his nails and hair, and took a bath, according to the precept in Exodus xix. 10. The most important business of the day was the careful searching of the house for the purpose of clearing away even the slightest particle of leavened bread that might be left, and preventing the possibility of any one committing a most serious offence against the Law, for it was written, "Every soul that eats anything leavened in these days shall be cut off from Israel." So after every one, brush and towel in hand, had carefully examined and cleaned all the rooms, cupboards, presses, boxes, and corners in the house, the master closed the proceedings by carrying the leavened matter which might have been found, in a closed box, to some remote spot, where it was burnt. He then solemnly pronounced over it the following words: "May everything leavened, save this, which may have been left in my house, without my knowledge, be scattered and made like unto the dust of the earth." Early in the morning the house-mother baked the bread or cakes, which were usually of wheat-flour, or, in default of that, of barley, rye, or oat-meal. She laid aside a portion of the dough and uttered these words: "Praise be unto thee, O Lord our God, who hast commanded us to prepare an unleavened cake." This cake was then taken to the Temple for the consumption of the priests.

At three o'clock in the afternoon the sounds of the trumpets, bursting down upon the town from the Temple, announced the commencement of the festival. The walls of the court of the Temple were hung with many-coloured tapestry, and nothing was spared to render the appearance of the building as splendid as possible. The usual evening sacrifice having been offered, the priests ordered the heads of the families, who were crowding outside the gates, each carrying a living lamb on his shoulder, to enter in. As the court could not possibly contain all of them, they were distributed into three divisions, and the first division having entered, the gates were shut. The sight which then presented itself to the eye must have been very imposing and solemnising. Two parallel rows of priests, all of them dressed in their festival robes, were seen forming a long procession, which extended from the court up to the entrance of the Temple, properly so-called. Those priests who formed the row on the left-hand side held each of them a silver basin in his hand; those in the opposite row held golden basins. Each head of a family then slew his lamb in order, and the priest who was nearest to him received the blood in his basin, which he handed to the next priest, who gave his empty basin in return. The blood having been in this way handed up to the last priest, who stood next to the altar, it was thrown out towards its base in a single jet, whence it ran off by tubes. Levites were spread through the crowd to assist the heads of families in killing the lambs, it being required that the work of the three divisions should be accomplished before five o'clock—within the space of two hours. At the same time the number of the persons who were to eat each lamb was ascertained. This number was not allowed to be under ten or above twenty. The slain lambs were suspended on the hooks which were on the pillars and walls of the court, skinned and cut up, and the fat given to the priests, who sent it up to the altar in the same way as they had sent up the blood. Here the fat was salted and thrown into the fire. Meanwhile the master of the family wrapped the lamb in its skin and carried it home. A spit, made of the wood of the pomegranate, was thrust lengthwise through the carcase, and the animal was thus put into an oven or sort of stove specially constructed for the purpose. It was so placed as not to touch the side of the oven, lest the cooking should be partially affected by hot earthenware and not wholly by fire, according to Exodus xii. 9. Two things were above all others to be observed: 1st, that no bone should be broken; and 2ndly, that the flesh should be thoroughly roasted. He who transgressed in either of these points was liable to a penalty of forty stripes.

Meanwhile the lamps were lighted and the table spread. Upon the males only was it obligatory to partake of the meal; the females were neither excluded nor compelled to be present. The roasted lamb occupied the middle of the table, right before the master of the family. A basin filled with bitter herbs, and another basin filled with a sweet sauce, were placed on either side. If the family was in good circumstances, each guest had a cup placed next to the piece of unleavened bread that was before him. If they were poor people, one cup had to serve for all, and went round from hand to hand. The latter was apparently the case

with that company of poor Galileans, who on the memorable and solemn evening before the Crucifixion, for the first time ate the body and drank the blood of the true Paschal Lamb. The master of the family, having pronounced a short benediction, opened the meal by filling the *first* cup with wine, which was mostly red. This having been drunk, they then ate the bread and the bitter herbs, which were dipped in the sweet sauce. The *second* cup being filled, the eldest son, to fulfil the commandment implicitly contained, as was thought, in Exodus xii. 26, asked his father what the meaning of this festival repast was; whereupon the father told the story of the destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians, and the miraculous way in which the Lord rescued his people out of the hand of the angel of destruction, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, the mighty king. The "great *hallel*" (Ps. cxiii.—cxviii.) was then sung, during which the lamb was distributed among the guests, and the *third* cup filled. This was called by the special name of "the cup of benediction," because it was the cup that accompanied the lamb when being eaten. As the Apostle Paul gives the same name to the cup drunk by the Church at the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. x. 16), we may conclude that the Lord instituted that ordinance while He was filling the *third* paschal cup. After the eating of the lamb, the singing of the "great *hallel*" was continued; and then the *fourth* or last cup was filled. A short hymn closed the solemnity. In some families a *fifth* cup was added, on which occasion the so-called "greater *hallel*" (*i.e.* Ps. cxx.—cxxxvii.) used to be sung.

According to our manner of reckoning, this supper took place at the close of the 14th of Nisan, but as the Jews calculated the day from sunset to sunset,—*i. e.* 6 p.m.,—the paschal meal really began on the 15th of Nisan. Though the guests were all dressed in their travelling costume, and had their loins girded up to remind each other of the haste with which their fathers ate the first Passover on their flight from the land of bondage, yet no hurry took place in the eating of this commemorative repast. Nor was there any occasion for hurry, since the people had to repair to the Temple again about midnight. The whole evening, from sunset till about eleven o'clock, was consequently devoted to this supper; full scope being given for every one of the guests to contribute all in his power towards making this solemn religious feast at the same time a happy, cheerful, family repast. Here all cares were for a while dismissed, and each member of the company was called upon to assist in realising the peace and joy that became a family rescued by the mighty arm of the living God, and numbered amongst the generations in whom the Lord of Hosts is well pleased. We may imagine the lively conversation that was kept up among the dozen or score of persons, who, all united by one spirit, and believing in one God, here found an opportunity for expressing to one another those sentiments of cordial fellowship, which can nowhere be expressed so well as around the table of a family festival. For though the bread which was being eaten was called "the bread of affliction" (Deut. xvi. 3), yet no affliction needed to be felt in these happy circles, the affliction which gave the name to the bread being long past, leaving behind it abundant reason for thanks to Him who had delivered them out of it. This was not a fast, but a feast; and so every soul was invited to rejoice. Hymns were sung, and stories were told, and pithy sentences uttered, and riddles propounded,—this last being an innocent sport of which the Eastern mind is very fond, and in which the Eastern genius is peculiarly skilled. Thus in cheerful, cordial talk, the hours fled away, till the sound of the Temple trumpet called the happy guests to the sanctuary to return their thanks to the great Benefactor. During that night the Temple presented a spectacle not less lively than that of the preceding day. Few persons in Jerusalem went to bed. Everybody went to the Temple, the spacious courts of which were crowded. Nor did anybody go with empty hands. Of all the peace-offerings that were offered in the course of the year, these were undoubtedly the richest. A large portion of them fell to the priests; the rest was taken to the court of the women, where it was boiled. The families ate it in the eating-rooms of the Temple or took it home, but in no case was it permitted to be eaten outside the town.

The 15th of Nisan being the first of the days of unleavened bread, was regarded as an exceedingly holy day. And so was the 21st, or the last day. All the seven days of the feast were called Sabbaths, but the first and the last were called "great Sabbaths." The people were permitted to go to their daily labour (though most probably under considerable restrictions) on the five intervening days; but no work was done on the first or the last. Neither, if one of these five intervening days happened to be a Saturday, was there, of course, any work done on it. The seven days were also marked out by special sacrifices. Besides the usual daily burnt-offering, a feast-offering was offered every day, and this consisted of two young bullocks, a ram, and seven lambs of the first year as a burnt-offering, together with meat and drink-offerings, and a goat as a sin-offering. In addition to these public offerings, many offered private voluntary peace-offerings, taken either from the flock or the herd.

Connected with this festival there was a solemn thanksgiving to God for the blessings bestowed upon the crops, and a humble supplication for the success of the now-beginning harvest. Thus the Passover was also a harvest-feast. In the night of the 16th of Nisan some deputies of the Sanhedrim went to a field in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and cut a sheaf of barley, which, with the observance of several minute ceremonies, was dedicated to God as a wave-offering. It was from this moment that the fifty days were counted to the days of Pentecost. This solemnity was not exactly prescribed in the Law, but it was perfectly in accordance with the precept given in Lev. xxiii. 10, &c., and especially so with the spirit and meaning of the Passover. It was meet to remind the people of the truth that the God who had rescued them from the sufferings of Egypt and from the death-angel was the same who caused their food to spring up from the earth. There was a beautiful analogy between the exodus of the

children of Israel out of Egypt and the spring. The revival of creation from the cold death-like winter-sleep was a striking illustration of the revival of Israel as the free people of God from the tomb of Egyptian bondage. When offering the first sheaf on the feast of Passover, they gratefully remembered that God on that memorable evening, when all the first-born in Egypt were slain, had by a great deed confirmed his saying to Pharaoh: "Israel is my son, even my *first-born.*" It was on that evening that God had chosen them as the first-fruits of the nations, and that, as He brings up the life-sustaining bread from the dark bosom of the earth, so He had called them out of the dark pit of ignorance, idolatry, and slavery, to be a source of blessing and salvation, a quickening and nutritious bread as it were, to the other nations of the world. This great truth, however, was not fully understood in Israel until the true Passover was offered, and the only true deliverance from the only real slavery was consummated.

There were several interesting features in the symbolic character of the Passover suggestive of profound spiritual truths, and which revealed the heart of God in all the riches of its love. First it proclaimed, in the most graphic way, the great fundamental truth, that, boundless as God's willingness is to save sinners, yet salvation can only rest upon the firm foundation of perfect righteousness. There can be no manifestation of love at the cost of justice and holiness. The Passover was a *sacrifice.* God expressly called it by that name. (Exod. xii. 27.) It was a *bloody* sacrifice, in which the blood occupied, not a secondary, but the very first place; it was the *conditio sine qua non* of the redemption. Whatever may have been the spiritual privileges which Israel possessed as God's chosen people, none of these could have saved them from the sword of the angel of death. Their houses were not spared on account of their being children of Abraham, nor on account of their being circumcised, nor on account of any virtue or righteousness of their own. Notwithstanding all this, they would certainly have been struck with desolation, had the blood of the slain paschal lamb been missing from their door-posts. It is difficult to conceive how the truth that without sacrificial blood there is no salvation could have been proclaimed more emphatically. This was the manifestation of the great truth of God's eternal and unchangeable *justice.* But, at the same time, there was as emphatic a manifestation of God's eternal and unchangeable *love* to his people. It was not *their* blood which God desired to see. He provided *another* blood to be shed in the place of theirs. This fact could not fail to set the spiritually-minded a-thinking seriously over grave questions. That the blood of lambs could not save indeed, must have been perceived by such men as David and Isaiah. They must have been looking out for a Lamb which God himself was to provide. At length this Lamb appeared in the flesh. And with a shout of joyful surprise John cried, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world."*

The paschal lamb was the first sacrifice which Israel as a nation offered at the command of God. It was previous to all the other sacrifices which were instituted under the Law. It was consequently the fundamental sacrifice, upon which the whole sacrificial system was based, and from which it sprang up like the tree with its branches from the one root. And this fundamental sacrifice was not offered by an ordained *priest* but by *every head of a family.* Here was another great truth taught to the people. "Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests," said the Lord to them (Exod. xix. 6). Every time that the Jew slew and ate his paschal lamb he was reminded of his sacerdotal dignity. When assembled with his family round the paschal table, he was in the midst of them as a real priest of God, not merely in the figurative but in the true sense of the word. If he fully realised that fact, he could not be doubtful as to the place which was assigned to him as the head of a household in relation to God, nor could he be ignorant of the duties which hence devolved upon him in relation to his family. A better institution for securing the holy character of the latter could not be imagined. The family, again, when seated at the paschal table was made conscious of the fact that God had, in the most immediate way possible, united them with Himself. There was no mediator between them and God except—the lamb. There were no priests except the family themselves. All the other priests were instituted *after* the institution of the general priesthood. And they were also done away with, while the general priesthood continued. For the paschal lamb continued also. It is seated in the throne of God—the crucified Mediator between God and man.

This feeling of union in God as one family was strongly confirmed by the precept that the lamb must be eaten in a company. God is not a God of isolation. His feelings are social because He is love. Godly as it may look to some, yet there is nothing god-like in a hermit's life. A man who wants to enjoy God only for himself is least of all enjoyed by God. God is nowhere more pleased than where brethren dwell together in unity. It is there He "commandeth the blessing, even life for evermore."

And God desires a true, firm union; not a merely accidental, transient union, which may be broken at any moment. No bone of the lamb was to be broken. It must lie before the eyes of the guests as *one whole* thing, emblematic of the inseparable union which binds them together as a family of God. Just so the bread at the Lord's Supper, which symbolizes the body of the true paschal lamb, is *one* bread, and "we being many," says the Apostle, "are one bread and one

* The author of "Ecce Homo" sees in John's exclamation, "Behold the Lamb of God!" only an allusion to the 23rd Psalm. According to his interpretation of the passage, John only compared Christ with a lamb in virtue of the meekness and gentleness of his character. This would undoubtedly have been the case if John had been a heathen, *e.g.*, a disciple of Socrates. But John was a Jew, who from his childhood had every year eaten the paschal lamb, and had seen thousands of lambs slain at the altar as sacrifices for the sins of the people. In the mouth of such a man the expression "a lamb of God that taketh away sins" means something more than simply "a meek creature." It is very easy to make of the Gospels just what we please, if we do not care for the claims of history, and allow Jews to speak and to think like heathens. The Christ of Renan is a heathenish caricature of the Christ of the Gospels. "Ecce Homo" is an attempt to make that caricature available for the Christian Church.

body, for we are all partakers of that one bread." At the same time this union guarded against uniformity, or a fusion of the many into one. It was not the head of the family only who was permitted to partake of the lamb and to drink the cup. All the guests partook of it, each one showing by his act his cordial union with the whole body of the family.

The Passover meal was highly suggestive of the truth that God and his people have nothing to do with the corruption that is in the world. During seven days the people ate no other but sweet, unleavened bread. Leavened bread is impure bread, bread in a state of fermentation, — *i.e.*, corruption and decomposition. The Passover was, as it were, a teacher of God crying all through Israel: "Take heed and beware of the leaven of Egypt, of the sin and corruption of the unholy, ungodly world. Let all that you feed upon, body and soul, be pure and clean. For I am holy, and there is neither sin nor darkness in me." And this teaching was re-echoed and perpetuated by another messenger of God, who, while pointing at the true Passover, said: "Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

JOHN DE LIEFDE.

SELF-WILL.

I WOULD open out my life,
All my secret cares,
What the burden of my strife,
Where the growing tares.
Saviour, do not turn away,
Hear a wilful child to-day.

Bright and happy should I be,
Could I learn to wait!
Good in all things I should see,
And the journey straight,
Would I but my God believe,
And his blessed love receive.

But I cannot learn to say
"Let Thy will be done!"
And I do not really pray
That the fight be won.
Love of self and love of pride
Still the face of Jesus hide.

I would work, when Thou hast said
"Rest thee, and be still!"
Or I toss me on my bed,
Fretting that I 'm ill.
Gifts I have I do not use,
Gifts I have not, these I choose.

Yet the earth consents to wait
For the showers of spring,
And the birds defer to mate,
And the larks to sing,
Till the winter time is past,
And the trees are budding fast.

Thou, O Lord, hast waited long,
Sinful souls to save;
Make me in Thy patience strong,
All my lot to brave.
Teach me how to pray like Thee,
Then the Father I shall see.

Let my fondest hopes depart,
Or my days be few,
Only come into my heart,
Gladness to renew.
Then when all things pass away,
Bright will dawn my heavenly day.

Thee for life and death I choose,
All to Thee resign;
Then, whatever else I lose,
Thou wilt still be mine.
Where is there a Friend like Thee,
Who can love us perfectly!

A. W. T.

A VISIT TO THE RAUHE HAUS AT HORN.

At five o'clock on the second morning of our voyage from Leith to Hamburgh—Friday, 19th August, 1864—the engines were stopped for a few minutes, and we heard in our berths the tramp of seamen and the hauling of ropes on the deck overhead. For want of a more likely suggestion, I concluded that a pilot must have been taken on board, although I was aware we were still at a considerable distance from the coast. Again, however, after an interval of an hour, the same thing happened. A third time, after I had come on deck, the engines were stopped, and then I discovered the cause of the phenomenon. The way of the ship was diminished in order to afford an opportunity of throwing the lead, so as to mark the soundings with greater exactness. The captain, an intelligent and polite officer, kindly explained to me the reason of the operation.

A bank of great extent lies here, in the course of a ship bound from Leith to the Elbe. Its slopes are gradual and regular; the soundings are minutely marked in the charts, at some places twenty-five fathoms, at others twenty, and at others fifteen. The point which navigators endeavour first to make is Heligoland, a small rock projecting from the sea, about thirty miles from the mouth of the Elbe. As the currents are variable, and the object small, seamen often experience difficulty in making the point; and the difficulty would be much greater if the bank were not in the neighbourhood. When they cannot see their way above the water, they feel their way on the bottom. The position and shape of the bank being known, to ascertain the depth under her keel determines the position of the ship.

But after we were in full sight of Heligoland, about twelve miles ahead, the master continued to throw the lead and to mark the soundings. Why? He did not then need to feel the shape of the bottom in order to determine his course, for the island was full in view in broad daylight: but he might need such measurements on some darker and sterner day; therefore he made his observations, and laid up the results in store for a future time of need. Wise navigator! Would that landsmen, as they sail across the sea of life to an eternal shore, would go and do likewise.

At the distance of a few miles, Heligoland presented the appearance of a large baronial mansion, built of red sandstone, rising sheer from a boundless lawn of level green. I played with this illusion until I almost believed it.

A small town of lively white houses nestles on the level ground, under shelter of the rock; and a few more adventurous mansions are perched on the side of the steep. Over all floats the British flag. We ought to bear ourselves modestly and gently among foreigners. We sometimes complain that they do not like us; but is there not a cause? We plant our foot on every land and every sea, with more regard to our own interests than either to the prejudices or the honour of other nations. The Channel Islands, bristling with British cannon, embosomed within a bay of France; Gibraltar, a strong hand on the throat of Spain; Heligoland, a British watch-tower at the gates of Germany; and many other advanced posts, seized and held without much regard to the wishes of our neighbours, prompt to jealousy and breed dislike. In these circumstances, it is the bounden duty of Queen Victoria's subjects, when they travel abroad, to avoid all haughty airs and irritating language. If we will retain our iron hand, we should at least cover it with a velvet glove, that our intercourse with neighbours may be pleasant and profitable.

Hamburgh is a great and crowded seaport. If Count Bismarck and his royal master could contrive to annex it, they would add a bright jewel to the Prussian crown. If the chief seaport of Germany were safely enclosed in the embrace of that ambitious monarchy, it would bring as dower to the successful suitor a large augmentation of influence in the counsels of peace, and of power in the event of war.

In the general aspect of the city, one feature arrests and surprises a stranger more than all beside. When you leave the river, and penetrate through the dense narrow streets that line its banks; when you begin to emerge into the opener and higher parts of the city, where the better-off classes reside, and expect to see something analogous to the parks and gardens of London and Edinburgh, you find lakes instead of lawns, water in lieu of grass. Immense sheets of water burst upon the view here and there, with palatial residences surrounding them, the white walls and glittering windows of the houses mirrored in the lake. In summer, when I saw these liquid play-grounds, small fairy steamers flitted to and fro like grasshoppers, delivering their passengers at one wharf, and puffing away to another. Small boats and gigs, propelled by rowers, old and young, male and female, made the surface of the lake literally alive. In winter, no doubt, when the boats are resting, the human passengers move about as thickly and as quickly on the surface of the ice. These intramural lakes, while they adorn the scene, serve as spaces for healthful exercise to the citizens.

For me, however, the chief object of interest at Hamburgh was Wichern's celebrated reformatory, the Rauhe Haus. The city, with its "sins and sorrows," affords, alas! a continual and abundant supply of the raw material, in the shape of neglected miserable children; and the Rauhe Haus is a grand factory, where the wretched *débris* of humanity, which the sea of dissolute society casts up on its shores, is done again into civilised and Christianised forms by the skill of trained educators and the power of Christian love.

How long, O Lord! how long, shall the wickedness of the wicked busy itself in providing work for the loving hearts and labouring hands of Christ's disciples? Patience! The Master did not disdain to visit this world—to become a man and die, in order that He might gather wrecks from that heaving sea. The servants must imbibe his spirit and follow his steps; the

saved must in their turn be saviours. For this very end they are left awhile in the body, that they may save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins.

On the morning of Saturday, the only day that I could devote to Hamburgh, I started, under the kind guidance of Dr. Craig, missionary of the Irish Presbyterian Church, to visit the Rauhe Haus at Horn. I shall not give here even the briefest sketch either of the history or the character of that remarkable institution. It has become familiar as a household word in this country since the publication of Mr. Stevenson's book, and it has been still further elucidated in the recent work of Mr. de Liefde.* Assuming that my readers already possess a knowledge of its early struggles and its later triumphs, I shall submit some notes of my own visit, and the impressions that I received from the scene.

In the first instance we were placed under the direction of one of the Candidats, and under his guidance we visited all the homes and workshops devoted to the boys. The distinguishing principle of the institution is that, instead of all the inmates being kept in one large building, classified according to age and attainments, they are distributed in about a dozen comparatively small houses, at some distance from each other, and arranged, as closely as circumstances admit, after the pattern of families. Brothers who are full-grown young men, under training for various missionary fields, dwell in the house, with a number of boys under their instruction, and a young minister superintends the whole. Here is a department of training for the ministry, which cannot be obtained in our colleges. The charge of one of these homes for a time must be well fitted to give a young man an experience which will be useful afterwards in every department of the ministry.

In this way, when it is by Christian wisdom and energy turned to account, even the wickedness of the wicked becomes an instrument of good. The miserable results of vice become in the Reformatory the means of educating missionaries, who shall hereafter contend with vice on its own field. Thus, the very filthiness of the dissolute city is compelled incidentally to give keener edge to instruments that shall be employed to cleanse that filthiness away; as the physical refuse of the city, when thrown back on the fields, increases the supply of the people's bread.

In these days, when men, feeling themselves brimful of philosophy, are much moved to part with what little of faith they once possessed, it is eminently instructive to notice, from the whole history of the Rauhe Haus, and similar monuments of Christian love, that faith in Christ, like the living stream, has set and kept all the mills going. With Wichern and his coadjutors in the real work of saving the lost, it is not a choice between praying and working. They pray and work; they work and pray. Those who work, do not cease to pray; and those who pray do not therefore cease to work. A loving Christianity seldom falls into any difficulty regarding the spheres appropriate to these two departments. If the lights are burning, there is no risk of a collision in the channel. I suppose those who do not pray are very apt to glide into the opinion that prayer is not fitted to have any effect on the various ills that flesh is heir to; and those who do not work upon the sores of the world are very apt to glide into the opinion that no amount of effort would produce any appreciable improvement. The grand lesson taught by the Horn Reformatory is, that when vice and ungodliness are bringing society to ruin, it is Christian Faith that hastes to the rescue. Wichern's saying is: Jesus Christ is the founder of the Rauhe Haus.

The most interesting and impressive memory of the scene that I retain is an interview with Wichern himself, its founder, and still its head. Although he now holds an elevated official station under the Prussian Government, he retains his house among the cottages of the Reformatory, and resides there some months of every year. He received us with the utmost kindness, and explained all his projects with enthusiasm. He bears the marks of a quarter of a century of heavy care and toils in the most difficult of all problems; but his eye retains its fire, and his step does not falter. His personal presence accords with the station he holds in popular esteem as the most eloquent man in Germany.

First of all he volunteered to lead us over those homes of the Reformatory that we had not yet seen. These happened to be the division appropriated to girls. When we came within reach of a troop of girls engaged in some species of industry, it was very curious, sometimes even ludicrous, to observe the struggle between reverence and familiarity that distracted these poor outcast maidens, when their father, and in a sense their saviour, passed by. They looked unutterable things from beneath their eyebrows, and smiled indescribable smiles when he jauntily hailed them as he quickly passed. I observed on several occasions, that of any band of girls that we approached, the one that stood on the flank nearest him held out her hand with a sort of girlish blush, and touched his; but none of the rest left rank—all seemed to count that they obtained in common the benefit of the vicarious salutation. Oh, that man is greatly beloved, greatly honoured. What are titles and coronets in comparison with the ardent love lavished on the great philanthropist from the full hearts of those emancipated immortals who consciously owe their redemption under God to him?

We returned to Dr. Wichern's house, and there he displayed with boyish glee a grand set of plans, just received from Berlin, representing a reformatory for that city on a great scale, on the model of the Rauhe Haus. This is the King's home, and that other Swiss cottage among the trees is the Crown Prince's, and so on; each separate family home of the projected establishment is the donation of some member of the Royal house, or of the wealthy aristocracy of the capital. With a humorous twinkle in his eye, Dr. Wichern gravely reminded us that the trees and shrubs that constituted on the plans a fairy surrounding to the several cottages had not yet grown. They effloresced as yet only on paper; but there was an earnest intention of carrying them into fact. It is to be hoped

* "Praying and Working." By W. Fleming Stevenson. London: Alexander Strahan.
"Six Months among the Charities of Europe." By John de Liefde, 2 vols. London: Alexander Strahan.

that the warlike ambition of Prussian statesmen will not divert them from that more blessed conquest that, under the lead of Wichern, they had at that date honourably begun.

A band of the Brothers from the Rauhe Haus had been in the Danish war, and the old man was eloquent in the narrative of their services on many bloody fields, not as soldiers, but as angels of mercy hovering over the contending hosts, and ministering to the wants, both bodily and spiritual, of the wounded on either side. Often these devoted men had carried wounded soldiers from where they fell under fire, and yet not one of them was hurt.

When I mentioned to Dr. Wichern that we in England and Scotland were very generally familiar with his work, through the exposition of it given in Mr. Stevenson's "Praying and Working," he paused, clenched his hand, and said with great solemnity and emphasis, "No man—no man (*Nein Mensch*), whether native or foreigner, has so well appreciated our work, both in its general features as a reformatory, and in the peculiarities which distinguish it from others." I think it my duty to bear my simple testimony to the fact, that in the opinion of Wichern himself, Mr. Stevenson has caught up his ideas, and communicated his conceptions to the British nation, with an accuracy that even among his own countrymen has never been surpassed.

As music holds a higher place among the reformatory and educational agencies in the Rauhe Haus than is conceded to it in similar institutions in our own country, I shall subjoin some account of their "song-book," printed by the inmates in their own establishment, which I bought in their shop and carried home.

On its title-page is a well executed device, representing a good shepherd with a wearied lamb on his shoulders, and a musical reed in his outstretched hand. To this device Dr. Wichern refers in the preface, as the appropriate symbol of the institution. Music mingles with every department of this reclaiming and reforming work. While the shepherd seeks and finds and carries home the lost, he holds the reed as an instrument in his hand. Christians who have tried this species of work know right well that music has not power to renew an evil heart; but wise men do not discard it as a servant because it possesses not the Master's life-giving power.

The design of the collection is thus expressed by Wichern in the preface:—"Whoever would understand this little book, must accept it as 'our songs' (*unsere lieder*); that is, as the songs which are sung by the inmates of the Rough House, and must imagine himself among that earnest and happy company to whom an earnest and happy song is a true heart's joy. When the sun shines from the blue heavens so clearly and cheerfully through the foliage; when the noise of the hammer and the plane is heard from the workshops; when we wander merrily and happily over the wide fields, and through the shady woods of Wandsbeck; when the holiday evening in summer assembles the boys in the beautiful chesnut grove, like a palace built of leaves and branches, where they swing in the boughs, and hold jubilee on the loftiest summits; when the girls sit at their noiseless work, or admire the beauty of their little flower-gardens, or rest under the shade of the pines;—then song rings heartily out from every breast, and every singer does his best. Whoever makes these songs resound in his heart as the unpretending utterance of such heartfelt joy in a life like this, will with us rejoice in them, with us sing them, and with us take now this, and now that one for his own, if he has not done so long before.

"The whole book bears the marks of its original design. As our first intention was simply to multiply for our own use copies of the songs which are sung here every day and every evening, very little order has been maintained in the collection. Every one is at liberty to arrange the songs according to his own taste: the main point is that each should sing with his whole heart, making that word of the poet his own:

> I sing as the bird sings
> That dwells among the branches.

. . . May it bear its part in the restoration of the frequently disturbed and even destroyed harmony between the peculiarly Christian and the national life:—a pair which should not stand over against each other as strangers, but mingle and unite, so that through their union they may work out the true regeneration of our people. May this little book also show what a healing, reviving, sunny life-power flows from a chorus of healthful song."

Wichern's idea, it will be observed, is to allow ordinary songs and specifically spiritual hymns to mingle and alternate as they do in the life of Christians. It is a precious conception, and worthy of earnest regard for all who are engaged in the spiritual training of the young, to weave the hymns of Christian faith as threads through all the web of common life. The songs of "Unsere Lieder," accordingly, in every case accompanied by the music, range through all the scale, from ordinary ballads of children's play or patriots' aspiration, up to the most elevated anticipations of triumphing Faith. I subjoin some specimens of these several classes, transferring the tone as well as the measure of the original as fully as I can into our vernacular, that the reader may obtain a more vivid idea than any description could convey of the instruments which, with the aid of music, have been employed with great success by our neighbours in reclaiming and elevating neglected youth. The first is a simple moral ballad of the Fatherland; the second is a gentle apostrophe to God's glorious works; and the third is the bold out-breathing of a fully-assured faith:—

I.

Sat a band of German princes
Once at Worms, in Kaisersaal,
Counting wealth and subjects, praising
Each his own land over all.

Proudly spake the prince of Sachsen,
"My dominion and its worth!
Why, the mountains teem with silver;
I draw treasures from the earth."

"See my land's exub'rant richness,"
Said the ruler of the Rhine;
"Golden harvests in her valleys,
On her hill-slopes luscious wine."

"Pop'lous cities, well-stored cloisters,"
Ludwig lord of Baiern cries
"For my country over others
Justly claims the foremost prize."

Up spake Everard the bearded,
Wurtemberg's loved chieftain then:
"My land owns nor mines, nor cities
Charged with myriads of men;

"Yet it holds a hidden jewel,
This,—that wheresoe'er I tread,
On the breast of every subject
I can safely lay my head."

Then confessed the lord of Sachsen,
Lord of Baiern, lord of Rhine,
"Bearded count, thou art the richest;
Ours is dross, the gem is thine."

II.

When I behold the stars of night
That stud the sky with golden light,
Serene delight from heaven distils,
And peace divine my bosom fills.

And when their loving eyes meet mine,
I fain would rise to where they shine,
Behold their glory face to face,
And run with them their nightly race.

The moon, a beauteous silver boat,
On seas celestial seems to float;
While marshalled hosts their order keep,
To waft her through the silent deep.

Like watchmen, marching to and fro,
Around the world they gladly go;
To souls distressed a comfort given,
To hopeful hearts a type of heaven.

But farewell now, ye stars of night,
In watch so true, in sheen so bright;
While you aloft your vigils keep,
I softly close my eyes in sleep.

III.

Set me free; set me free,
That my Saviour I may see;
For my weary spirit longeth
Straight to join the crowd that throngeth
Round Him on yon glassy sea.

Sweetest light; sweetest light,
Through the dark clouds shining bright;
When shall life's bonds burst asunder,
That with all the holy yonder,
I may stand before Thy sight?

Ravishing; ravishing
Are the praises angels sing:
Over hills and valleys soaring,
Had I wings, I'd stand adoring
There this night our common King.

What surprise; what surprise
Waits in Zion my opening eyes;
City this that hath foundations,
Blessed home of ransomed nations,
There even now my treasure lies.

Paradise; Paradise,
What an ecstacy is this!
Trees of life in glory gleaming,
Heaven, indeed, and not a dreaming!
Bring us, Lord, to Paradise.

Christian hymns, in which the land of Luther has been peculiarly fertile, have, under Providence, performed an important function in keeping alive the people's faith in many parts of Germany, when another Gospel was taught in the schools and preached from the pulpits. In our own country, as well as in America, a revived spiritual life has of late years expressed and exercised itself through hymns constructed on New Testament models, and filled with the name and the doctrines of Christ. From the Scriptures, as the only fountain, should flow the streams alike of prayer and of praise; but while it draws all from the source of inspiration, the life of individual believers or of congregated churches should be permitted, as to form, to grow freely. It does not conduce to the health and comeliness of either the spiritual or the vegetable life, to crop the tree too closely in.

This notice of the Rough House song-book may be appropriately closed with lines from Karl Bormann—inserted by Wichern in front of all, by way of prologue—lamenting the decay of song, both common and sacred, as at once a symptom and a cause of national degeneracy. The verses, though aimed at the backslidings of our continental neighbours, may be useful in pointing out our own defects, and in prompting us to reform and revival.

Once in the German countries, folk were so rich in song,
That heart-warm music greeted you where'er you passed along.
In song they wept, in song they prayed to God on high who saves;
At marriages they sang in choir, and by their open graves;
The countryman behind his plough, the shepherd on the lea
The maiden at her spinning-wheel, sang all right merrily.
When little children played, the ring to tiny music ran,
And louder, stronger notes arose from every labouring man.
By whom the music was composed, no one could understand;
It sprang, like blossoms, from the ground, and passed from hand to hand;
Till on a dark night lately, a robber, shrewd and deft,
Forth from the people's hearts and lips their sweet song-treasure reft,
Leaving instead mere cunningness, with envy gaunt combined,
And loud fantastic murmurings within an empty mind.
The people have been poisoned, and they faint beneath their pains,
Their hearts are stunned, their lips are mute, the venom's in their veins.
Oh, Lord! to Thee melodious sounds the motion of the spheres,
The grasshopper and cricket make sweet music in thine ears;
Think Thou on a bewitchèd race throughout our Fatherland,
And break the ban from off their hearts by Thy almighty hand.
Let my dear people throw again into that song their voice,
Wherein all being jubilant before their God rejoice.
Give us again our Psalms, with their spirit-stirring glow,
That chase the devil out of us, and work his kingdom woe.

WILLIAM ARNOT.

THE SURPRISE OF THE CHRISTIAN'S END.

"When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream."—*Psalm* cxxvi. 1.

Not without awe can we approach the subject proposed to us. We are to speak of things not yet known by experience to the living. May we not fear that at the close of this meditation we shall have to use the confession of the Patriarch, and say, "I have uttered that I understood not: things too wonderful for me, which I knew not?"

And yet the meditation of death is an employment profitable for the living. Philosophers said of old, that the one business of life was "to practise dying and the having died;" to learn, by study and discipline, how to meet the article of death and the state of death—the moment of dying, and its consequences. A noble saying! a glorious conception! But that which philosophy could only say and not do, the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ has put it within our reach both to say and to do. We are permitted to pass within the veil which separates the invisible world from the material, and so to realize, not by bold conjecture, but by the light of revealed truth, something at least of that which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, but which God hath prepared, in the world that shall be, for them that love Him.

We do not encourage that sort of meditation of death which busies itself with its circumstances or its accompaniments. There are *some* things about death, which are only gloomy, only mournful. We advise no one to dwell amidst the accidents of death, its last unconscious gaspings, or the things which happen to the body when the soul is gone from it. Of the two, the practice of the state of death is more profitable than the practice of the act of dying. To place ourselves in thought as we shall be, as the immortal part of us will be, when dissolution is accomplished; when the last struggle is over, and the body is left, a dead weight, without sense or motion, upon the bed which was the arena of the closing conflict; to place ourselves in thought as we shall be when all this is ended, and the spirit is gone forth, gone back, gone home, to God who gave it—this is full of profit. From such meditations we return to the world of business and of society, wiser if graver men, better able to estimate things that are by the measure of things that shall be, and to weigh the perishable and the transitory in the balances of the permanent and the eternal.

The thought which I propose for your meditation at this time is briefly expressed in the words, "The surprise of the Christian's end." "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion;" when the Lord brought back from the land of their exile his banished and scattered ones; when He gathered once again, in a home never to be desolated, those who had been wandering, each for his threescore years and ten or fourscore years, through the waste howling wilderness of this world; "then were we like unto them that dream." It was like a dream too delightful to be true: we felt as if it must be an imagination and an illusion soon to be dissipated and broken. But, no: the other was the illusion, this is the reality. Earth and earthly life was the shadow; death brings us into the substance and verity of things hoped for. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness."

In what is to be said we speak of "the Christian." We speak not to-day—we hope we need not speak to-day—of the moment after death as it is for the ungodly or the unbelieving. We speak of those who, having been redeemed, as all the world has been redeemed, by the sacrifice of the death of Christ; having been baptized, as all the Church has been baptized, in an ordinance given as a connecting link between the world-wide redemption and the individual man; have also, by the grace of God, been brought to personal repentance, personal faith, and personal holiness; have lived, whether steadily from early years, or by a marked change, at some later point of life, in a devout and diligent use of all the means of grace private and public, in a faithful (however imperfect) discharge of every known duty, and in an inward communion, carefully cherished, with God himself through his Son Jesus Christ by his Holy Spirit. Such a person is a Christian indeed. Such a person is one who "overcometh:" one who "lives, because Christ lives:" one who "knows in whom he has believed," and finds Him "able to keep his deposit,"—the soul which he has committed to Him "against the day" of his appearing and his kingdom.

And when we speak of the "end" of such a person, we do not forget—the subject shows that we do not forget—that that end is much more truly his beginning. Viewed from below, it is an end; viewed from above, it is a beginning. Now first will he see that life of his which was "hidden with Christ in God:" now first will he find himself safe and free; old things indeed passed away, and God himself making all things new.

"The surprise of the Christian's end."

God grant that in what we say on this subject we may be describing that which we ourselves shall one day know! God save us all from the sad and mournful unreality, of peeping between the rails of a forbidden Paradise, at joys and blessings in which we are never to expatiate! Rather may He quicken in us such a longing for the thing described as shall make us resolve, in his strength, to live for it now and in death to find it!

1. The surprise of the Christian's end will be, first of all, the surprise of *change*.

Not without difficulty had he risen, while upon earth, to the conception of a spiritual existence. In earlier years the world had hemmed him closely in: he saw things only through its medium, and practically deemed it the only truth, the only reality. Even when he began to know Christ, it was at first

but (as St. Paul writes) "after the flesh," in a worldly way, with many admixtures of earth and earthly regards, with many lingering infirmities and still besetting sins. Which of us can say that, even now, a spiritual existence is a strongly apprehended fact for him? How many live and die carnal, sensual, earthly!

Think then of the dead Christian's surprise when he awakes up to an existence wholly and only spiritual. Who among the living can do more than guess, roughly and darkly guess, at the nature of the change thus indicated?

View it in two aspects. Two things are gone, which made up, but a moment before, or but a few hours before, all but the whole of being.

One of these is *the world*. The world is gone: annihilated for him: reduced to non-being and to nothingness. O, where now are the attractions of the world? its vast bazaar of riches, honours, and pleasures? It is as though they had all perished in one fire; a little heap of ashes all that remains. And yet for those things a whole generation is still living, labouring, suffering, sinning on. What could he not tell them, might he but return to them from the dead? That little moment, that brief act—the one spent, the other done, within the four curtains of a common bed—has consumed a whole Babylon of lying vanities. What has become of those ambitions once so powerful? of those luxuries once so delightful? of that public opinion, that voice of men, once so impressive, so decisive, so formidable? Gone, perished, silenced, despised! That public opinion itself must stand at the bar of God: who can tremble at it? But, alas! we tremble still, and even if one came unto us from the dead, he would vainly bid us to disregard it.

But there, but then, in the departed state, in the moment after death, the world is gone, and is not. Can it be, the Christian may say to himself, that I, even I, who heard the voice of God, and saw the vision of the Most High; I, whose eyes were open even then to ruin and to salvation, who walked by a different rule and sought another honour; yet was influenced by a power so transitory, so fallacious? What a change! Now, great Babylon is fallen, is fallen: now, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, reigneth alone!

The other thing which is gone is *the body*. I know not how to speak of that change. The Christian awakes only a spirit. For the time he is "unclothed:" he is not yet "clothed upon." Even when he is clothed upon, it will be with a spiritual body, of which we speak not for the present. At present, the body is gone. How shall he speak of himself? Shall he dare any longer to use the word "I," to think of "himself" as still existing in a state so changed? This body, given to me as an instrument, made too often by me a dictator; this body, meant for me to use as my lodging-house, as my worship, as my temple; a place to labour in for God, to rest in with God, to worship in before God; but turned by me too often into a banqueting-room of waste and excess, into a palace of self and sin—now it is demolished, it is laid in ruin, it lies there on that bed, and I am here. I am without it. I have left it behind me. No longer will its wants call me; no longer will its limits confine me; no longer will its languors enfeeble, or its infirmities fetter me. Now I am all spirit. O marvellous change! O the novelty, the strangeness, the wonder! How shall I know myself in my transfiguration? Lord Jesus, who hast died, who hast awakened, who hast gone before me into the Hades of the blessed, undertake for me!

2. The surprise of the Christian's end will be a surprise of *safety*. The change which has passed upon him is from buffeting into repose, from toil to rest, from danger to security.

You can fancy a man who has passed through some fearful peril; some sickness which seemed to be unto death; some accident, by flood or fire, which appeared to be death itself; some operation through which few men pass alive; some judicial trial, or a charge false but specious, under which for a whole day, through every conflict of evidence and every fluctuation of judgment, a man has awaited the issue with an agonized and tortured mind. And through it all he has emerged into safety. The sickness has taken its decisive turn, and the turn is to life. The fire-escape has arrived in time; the drowning man is recovered; the verdict of acquittal has been pronounced at evening. Those are examples, in a lower sense, of the surprise of safety.

But how shall it be, the moment after death, for the Christian? O what a surprise of calm, of escape, of security and serenity, of perfect peace! What a contrast to any one day which he has ever lived before! When did he ever before awaken to a consciousness of secure repose? Has he ever before known what it was to have no warfare to wage, no enemy to encounter, no ambush and no treachery and no mutiny to apprehend? Has he ever ventured to dream of such a condition below, without soon suffering for it, without bitterly regretting and repenting of it? Had he not learned, by painful experience, to associate the thought of security with the thought of danger—the dream of safety with the awakening to defeat? Was it not his one aim, his one work below, to keep himself from expecting, almost from desiring repose? And now, without fear of deception, without fear of presumption, without fear of disguised hostility or lurking treachery, it is his business to rest—it is his business to enjoy—it is his business to surrender himself to the sense of safety. The world is not, and the body is not, and, for him, the devil is not: his power touches not those who rest in Christ from their labours: "the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them." Yet a little while, and he who has here been faithful unto death will find himself safe for ever, and be satisfied as he awakes and wonders!

3. The surprise of which we speak will be a surprise of *explanation*.

We have known, some of us, what it is to pore long over a difficult passage in some foreign or ancient author, seeing no light, and at last despairing of arriving at the truth contained in it. And yet we could see all the time that there was a meaning in the words, deep and important, could we but catch it. The celebrity of the writer, our own experience of his profound wisdom, our own delight in his magnificent

mind, assured us of the value of each sentence that he had left on record: it may be that some flash of genius was emitted already from that page of which yet the full sense was hidden. We have closed the book, athirst and unsatisfied. Another day we have returned to the study: and then, as we calmly read, with fresh faculties, the passage before so unintelligible, it came into our mind clear, orderly, and beautiful, and we wondered that we could ever have found it obscure.

I speak after the manner of men, to illustrate, by a poor simple parallel, what I have called the surprise of explanation. Even thus will it be with the Christian in that end which is also his beginning. How will the Book of God spread itself open to him when he reads it in his new condition? I might speak of the Book of Revelation; of those divine truths which he has read and pondered and lived by below, but in which there were, to the end, many "things hard to be understood"—things which, with the Angels themselves, he rather "desired to look into" than fathomed in their depth or comprehended in their consistency. How will the work of redemption and the work of grace, the dispensations of God towards fallen man, unfold themselves before him when for the first time he studies them in God's presence!

But I would rather speak now of another book of God; the record, preserved in memory, of God's dealings personally with him. Who has not been perplexed and staggered here below by some things which have befallen him? Who has not sometimes said to himself, "If the Lord be with me, why then is all this befallen me?" Not so much—for that, perhaps, he could always understand—Why have I been so severely tried, why have I had so many sorrows, why have the strokes of Divine chastisement fallen upon me so heavily and so thickly? but rather, How can it be that I, a believer (as I trust) in Christ Jesus, a child of God through faith, a partaker in some degree of the influences of his Spirit, should have been left thus uncheered by the light of his comfort, thus "hardly bested" in the midst of my foes, thus lagging, loitering, and backsliding in the path of duty and of obedience?

Will not these things, in every part, come back upon him then with what has been termed the surprise of explanation? Will he not say, I see now how paltry was that "honour" from which "the Lord kept me back"—I see now how injurious might have been that happiness which was so often stretched out to me and as often withdrawn—I see now how dangerous for me would have been that rapid advance, that triumphant progress, even along the road of grace, which I once thought it hard should be denied me? If the enemy had been put out before me all at once, might not the beasts of the field have increased upon me? If victory over sin had been sudden and instantaneous, might not the poisonous after-growth of spiritual pride have made havoc altogether of watchfulness, of humility, and of the Christian mind?

And thus the surprise of change, and the surprise of safety, will be accompanied, in the Christian's end, by the surprise of explanation. He will see, as before he could only believe, that God in all things had done well. The mind of that God, reverenced and admired and loved above all things, will evermore be flashing forth afresh from the pages of memory, illuminating the dark and explaining the enigmatical.

4. There will be the surprise, too, of *reunion*.

We know what the joy of meeting after separation is below. We know, all of us, the start of delightful surprise with which, in the street or by the way, we meet again a friend long unseen, one with whom we once held sweet converse, one whose very sight recalls scenes of youthful happiness, or faces and forms long lost but never forgotten. How much more, if the sight of that friend recalls the recollection of dangers together faced and conquered, of hairbreadth escapes or formidable conflicts which we once shared as brothers, and the memory of which is precious in proportion to their severity. Poor and valueless will all such earthly reunions appear to him who has been "counted worthy to obtain that world." We know not that there is much written in Scripture on the future meeting and co-existence in heaven of human friends and kinsmen. Questions are often asked on this subject, in the anxiety and affection of recent bereavement, which a minister of God cannot confidently answer. Sometimes he does best to reply in the safest and most certain of all assurances, "Whatever will be for your true happiness in that world, God will give it you." And those who possess anything of true and living faith will desire that no earthly tie should predominate in their thought of future blessedness over the great central bond in which alone all else are one. That dying Christian did but express a feeling in which all ought to participate who, when reminded by surrounding friends of the happiness on which he was entering, when he should see this person and that—sister, and child, and wife—whom he had loved and lost below, replied in one word to every such suggestion, "Yes, but I shall see Jesus!" In that one divine union every human reunion will be well-nigh merged and lost.

And yet we doubt not that such reunions will be among the surprises of the Christian's end. And O think what it will be to him to find his new home peopled already with familiar forms! souls washed, like his own, in the blood of Christ—possessed, like his own, by the Holy Spirit—perfected, like his own, through suffering—saved, like his own, with a salvation never to be forfeited—admitted, like his own, through the gate of death into joys ever-growing, ever new—purified from all admixture of evil, beyond sorrow, beyond separation, beyond change for ever!

5. There is one point in our subject which the Scripture itself has drawn out for us; the surprise of *recompense* and of *reward*.

Our Lord himself has recorded, in the third of his memorable parables in the 25th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, with what astonishment in the great day of account his servants will hear of deeds done by them in the body; deeds of love and service to Him their Lord and King, of which they themselves had been utterly unconscious. Even thus will it be, doubtless, in the moment of his awakening, with all that a Christian has done through his Master's grace in the days of his flesh. How will he find in that hour that nothing had been overlooked, nothing forgotten, of all that had been truly done for Christ!

Every hearty prayer and every earnest effort, every struggle with self, every victory over sin, every endeavour to benefit man and to bring honour to God, will then be seen to have borne its proper fruit, and to be blessed with its due recompense of reward. He may say to himself then, How has much come to little, and little come to much! That which I once thought great is now seen to be little—earth and its glories, self and its achievements; and that which I once thought little is now seen to have been great—small sacrifices, humble toils, trifling conquests, common duties. The Christian woman, who was inclined to rate highly her wise words, her extended influences, her charitable exploits, will find then that what God reckoned far above these—that which has survived all these, that which is rewarded when these are disregarded—was that "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" which the Word of God should have taught her was in his sight of great price. And the Christian minister may find in that day that his persuasive reasonings, his eloquent sermons, if not lost upon others, have been lost to him; and that, in their stead, that which has survived the great change is rather some secret wrestling with himself in the privacy of his chamber, and some unseen unnoticed visit, when inclination strongly drew another way, to an abode of poverty, of sickness, of sin. Great may be the surprises which have been enumerated in other kinds; but greatest, perhaps, to a humble Christian, the discovery of his own reward; the discovery that the words of Scripture which tell, or seem to tell, of a recompense for every deed, were, for good as for evil, literally true; the discovery that God had marked indeed what man never saw, and crowned with his eternal blessing deeds which the doer had forgotten.

6. There will be the surprise, too, of *anticipation*. When the change from life to death is accomplished, how will the one remaining change foretold to us start forth into prominence! The soul divested of the body will understand—it may be for the first time—why Resurrection should be described in Scripture as the one hope of man. So long as the gate of death has yet to be passed through, it is natural that the expectation of what lies next beyond death should predominate in our minds over an event more distant. Many men say, *Death*, and then *Heaven*. Few, comparatively, distinguish, in their thoughts, between the paradise of the separate soul and the heaven of the reconstructed man. But, the gate of death once passed, the soul finds, not without wonder, that there is a difference between being "unclothed" by death, and "clothed upon" by resurrection. Then the surprise of repose is largely tinged also with the surprise of expectation; promises, read with little intelligence below, become invested with a new meaning; the comfort of rest is itself found to be but a transition—a reparative process, not a permanent condition; and hope works again, as once with reference to the state after death, so now with regard to the state after resurrection; the souls beneath the altar are heard crying, "How long, O Lord?" and need to be calmed with the assurance that they are but waiting, through the long-suffering of God, for others not yet perfected.

7. Finally, the surprise of the Christian's end—of the moment after death—is, above all, and as the root of all, a surprise of *contemplation*.

"As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness." "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." "I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ." "While we are at home in the body," so long, and only so long, "we are absent from the Lord." "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

I suppose that there is no one of us who can understand as yet what will be the surprise of seeing Christ. After all that we have read of his works and of his words, of his life and of his death, which of us has formed to himself any real image of his Saviour? most of all of his Saviour in that body of glory in which He rose and ascended, in which He reigns and makes his intercession? Which of us, might I not almost ask, if the sight of the Lord Jesus Christ himself were suddenly vouchsafed to him, would not echo the language on earth of a loved and loving disciple, and say, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord?" Yes, great as may be the change required in other respects before any one of us could acceptably enter that wonderful world after death; in this surely it is greatest of all—the power to bear God's manifested presence in the person of Jesus Christ.

And may I not well make it this application of the subject on which we have dwelt, that it urge us to a deeper and more personal acquaintance now, while the life of earth lasts, with that Divine Saviour whose presence is the very life of heaven; urge us to make sure of our ground, as his faithful and loving servants in this world, for the expectation—without which it were good for us if we had not been born—that "when He shall appear we shall be like Him;" that when we depart hence, we shall behold his face, and be satisfied, as we awake, with his likeness?

C. J. Vaughan.

NOTES FOR READERS OUT OF THE WAY.

Within a few weeks of each other, two of the most notable "representative men" of the age have passed away—William Whewell, Master of Trinity, and John Keble, author of the "Christian Year." As unlike to one another as possible in many things, in one great feature they were alike—in their loyalty to Divine Revelation. The one a philosopher, the other a poet; the one devoted to science, and full of its pushing spirit, the other of intensely æsthetic taste and reverential temperament; the one a vigorous man of action, the other retiring and contemplative—they have both left their mark deep on the age, and they both claim honour from posterity as having resisted tendencies that might have drawn the one to scepticism, and the other to Rome. Of Keble it has been well said by a Nonconformist journalist, "He was a

Tractarian; he was a Sacerdotalist; he was a very rigid ecclesiastic. In almost everything that relates to Church life and outward Christian worship on earth he was opposed to us and to that which we most cherish. Yet, if we were to single out one man in the Established Church who was almost a personification of the Christian graces, we should single out John Keble. He was as gentle as the gentlest woman, and as spiritual as a saint. He was a saint,—a good and holy man, with some human weakness; but perhaps as little of sin as any man who has lived in these times. But it is less as a man than as a poet that we know him. Who does not know and has not sung his hymns? No recent English collection of Christian hymns could be without some of Mr. Keble's; and they are therefore to be found in nearly all the books used in Nonconformist places of worship. Keble is to the Christian Church what Tennyson is to all of our own age, whether of Christ or not—the poet of lofty spirituality. We wish he had not so often sung in such sectarian dress, but we have always forgotten the dress when we have heard the song."

The last thing that Dr. Whewell had read to him was the chapter in the Acts on the death of Stephen; and the last words that fell from his lips, and probably the last thought that occupied his mighty intellect was the prayer of the proto-martyr, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Whatever may be the ultimate fruits of Dr. Pusey's Eirenikon, it seems at present as if war, not peace, were to be the result of its publication. A somewhat fierce strife has been raging between the representatives of English and Continental Popery, regarding the great question so amply discussed in it—the worship of the Virgin. Dr. Newman, it will be remembered, tried as much as possible to do away with the effect of Dr. Pusey's array of quotations that showed so clearly the blasphemous nature of the claims set up by Popish writers innumerable on behalf of the Virgin. They were mostly popular writers, he said, not recognised authorities; what was objectionable was but a little part of what they had written; much of it that had an ugly look might be explained if the connection and purpose were taken into account, and so forth. Still Dr. Newman had to confess that Dr. Pusey's quotations had horrified him. He was obliged to disown with disgust some five-and-twenty or thirty sentences and phrases, and to say "that as spoken by man to man in England in the nineteenth century, and according to that literal sense which they bear in the mouths of Englishmen and English women, I consider them calculated to prejudice inquirers, to frighten the unlearned, to unsettle consciences, to provoke blasphemy, and to work the loss of souls." In a letter to the *Tablet*, Dr. Newman has even published Bishop Challoner's anathema:—"Cursed be every goddess-worshipper that believes the Blessed Virgin Mary to be more than a creature, but worships her or puts his trust in her more than God, that believes her above her Son, and that she can in anything command Him." Such plain and honest speaking is not suffered by Dr. Newman's co-religionists to pass without challenge. He has been charged with having "put up our Mother in a public place, and taken her prerogatives to pieces, not reverently, not lovingly, not devotionally, but coldly, dogmatically and drily." He is especially reprehended for having made a comparison between Anglican and Continental devotion disparaging to the latter, although the Pope, the bishops, and nearly all the "Catholic world" have been nurtured amid its influences. Meanwhile, the pamphlets and manifestoes of other Popish writers indicate no disposition towards compromise on this or any other point. Archbishop Manning, in his Pastoral on the "Reunion of Christendom," gives no hint of a disposition to negotiate with the Anglican Church as a branch of the Church Catholic, or to do more than smooth the way for the return of her erring sheep one by one to the true fold. Canon Oakeley, in his review of Dr. Pusey, repeats the old topics, rebukes Anglican blindness and perverseness, and affirms as "a simple fact," what Dr. Newman rejects as a "horrible notion," that the blood of the Virgin is partaken of in the holy Eucharist. Father Faber is most loudly uncompromising of all. "Beware," he says, "beware of representing the Church of God as abating one jot or tittle of the greatest of those prerogatives which seemed most arrogant and most preposterous even in the Middle Ages; beware of representing her as having changed one atom in this her temper and her spirit; we must adhere strictly and zealously to high principle. Truth—and remember this is one great distinction between Catholics and heretics—Truth is not ours, but God's; Truth is not ours to bate and pare down."

The Queen has given a pleasing and characteristic evidence at once of her desire to give honour to whom honour is due, and of her sympathy with well-considered plans for elevating the condition of the poor, by the letter she has written to Mr. Peabody, whose munificent gift of a quarter of a million sterling for the benefit of the poor of London we have adverted to on former occasions. Large-hearted men will feel glad that in thus expressing her royal regard and gratitude to an American citizen, the Queen has woven a friendly bond between the two great sections of the Anglo-Saxon family, at a time when not a little had occurred to disturb the cordiality of their feelings; while their pleasure will not be less at so pronounced an instance of the policy which has been so characteristic of her Majesty, of conferring honour on those who have been eminent benefactors of the masses of her subjects. The sympathy of the Queen with "the poor and needy," and her appreciation of well-devised schemes for their temporal good, are universally known, and constitute one of the firmest foundations of the national attachment both to her person and to her throne.

The negotiations for union between four branches of the Presbyterian Church in Great Britain have now reached the furthest point which can be attained by the private negotiations of committees, and in a few weeks more the scheme will probably be launched on the sea of public discussion. The negotiating bodies are—the Free Church of Scotland, numbering

about 900 congregations; the United Presbyterian Church, mainly in Scotland, but partly in England, numbering about 600; the English Presbyterian Church, numbering about 100; and the Cameronian, or Reformed Presbyterian Church, numbering about 50. It is understood that in committee a satisfactory conclusion has been reached on the points requiring to be adjusted. In a matter like this, where there are a good many divergent interests and feelings, and a good deal of *vis inertiæ* has to be overcome, the friends of union will probably take their stand with great firmness and earnestness on the great Christian duty of seeking and realising a visible and incorporating union, wherever such union is practicable. Meanwhile, symptoms are beginning to show themselves of the possibility of the question assuming still larger dimensions. The Rev. J. O. Dykes, who was lately obliged, through ill-health, to resign his charge as colleague of Dr. Candlish in Edinburgh, and who is at present in Australia, in lately addressing the General Assembly there, formed by the union of the churches representing the Established, the Free, and the United Presbyterian, said: "I wish from my heart that we had one Church at home to correspond with the one Church here. In one particular, at least, you are ahead of us at home. In one thing we may envy you. In one thing we trust and try to walk in your steps. You are united. We at home have begun (I think I may say) to feel our way in that direction also. Indications of this are abroad. The Church I represent has been you know for years in close and earnest conference with another represented by many of you, and with two lesser Churches, with considerable promise, it would seem, of coming to an issue. *I do not disguise that to me, as to many, this would be still more desirable were that basis broadened, or were there any likelihood that it would be, so as to embrace all Scotch Presbyterians.*" Although Mr. Dykes, fortified by his Australian experience, has been the first to broach this comprehensive scheme, it is understood, as he remarks, that in Scotland others are familiar with the aspiration, and very probably it will find utterance when the subject comes to be publicly ventilated.

An important meeting has been held in Belfast on the subject of ministerial support in the Irish Presbyterian Church. The members of that Church, it is acknowledged among themselves, do not contribute for the support of their ministers in the proportion which they ought to observe. The ministry is consequently in a somewhat impoverished state, a fact which is not creditable to a Church in which there are 130,000 communicants, many, if not most, of whom are in circumstances of tolerable comfort. The meeting seemed to point to the desirableness of a General Fund, corresponding to the Sustentation Fund in the Free Church of Scotland. The *Regium Donum*, it was said, while an utterly inadequate means of support, relieved the people from the sense of responsibility, and some of the speakers did not hesitate to say that in their judgment they would get on better without it.

From the Report of the Belfast Branch of the Bible and Colportage Society of Ireland, we are glad to observe that the book agent and the colporteur continue to prosecute their labours with encouraging success. The number of colporteurs has not been increased during the year, but some of them seem to be penetrating more into Roman Catholic strata, and leaving useful deposits there. The work is only in its infancy, and yet the results have been considerable. In seven years the Belfast branch has sold nearly a million and a half of publications, of which upwards of 67,000 have been Bibles and Testaments.

A very interesting movement has been inaugurated in Paris towards a new translation of the Bible into French. The interest created by this movement is the more remarkable that France is so little of a Bible-reading country. Even in the Sunday-schools of the country there is little familiarity with Bible language and Bible narratives, and such is the general ignorance, that in a popular journal a writer lately felt it necessary to explain to his readers that "the Bible is called the Old Testament," and that the "New Testament is the second portion of the Bible, and was written after the death of Christ." M. Petavel, a Swiss minister in London, having called a meeting in the Grand Hall of the Sorbonne on the 22nd March, it was filled to overflowing, and among those present were politicians, senators, priests, pastors, and Jews. It was explained that the undertaking was to be prosecuted on the neutral ground of literature and philology, and that doctrine was to be avoided. This accounts for the cordial co-operation of so many discordant religionists. It is interesting to remark that while the popularity of the undertaking is probably due indirectly in some measure to the work of Renan, a severe rebuke administered to him by M. Thierry, the President (brother of the historian), is said to have been received by the meeting with sympathy, amounting to enthusiasm. M. Guizot and the Comte de Montalembert have declined to join the Society. The "Monde," the ultramontane clerical paper, is vehemently opposed to the project. It is strongly denounced by the Cardinal-Archbishop of Lyons, who, in claiming for the Church the sole authority over the sacred text, exemplifies the unchanging opposition of Rome to the popular use of the Word of God.

While the savants of the metropolis are co-operating for a revised translation, it is pleasant to find that the version in ordinary circulation is from time to time accomplishing its blessed work. In France much is done by the agency of colporteurs for promoting the reading and the pondering of the Bible. At the head of the agency of the British and Foreign Bible Society in France is the distinguished M. de Pressensé, so well known as an author, and of whose new work on the Life of Jesus Christ, we subjoin a notice further on. M. de Pressensé bears testimony to the increasing facilities and encouragements which colporteurs are receiving from the authorities, as well as the success of their labours. The following interesting extract shows how the opposition of infidelity is sometimes vanquished:—

"It is a year ago since a colporteur, who is stationed in one of the most important manufacturing towns in the east of France, met in a workshop with

a young man, who attracted his attention by his serious manner, and the whole of his behaviour. He offered the Bible to him, at the same time endeavouring to convince him of the great moral benefit which its perusal would be calculated to confer on him. To his great regret, he was at once repulsed, though, it is true, with a certain kind of courtesy ; but this was soon followed by a succession of impious expressions, which were truly of a character to take away anything like perseverance from a champion less determined than our friend. He did not, therefore, leave the young man; and, after a lengthened conversation, he succeeded in persuading his antagonist to provide himself with a Bible, in order that he might search out for himself the truths about which he had never previously read, and also to meet with the colporteur that they might discuss the doctrines of the Bible together. These meetings took place at certain intervals, but without any of them being of such a character as to warrant the least hope that the young man had attained to better thoughts in regard to religion. All at once the colporteur learned that the young man had been compelled to return to his native place, owing to some family matters, and that there was no prospect of his coming back to the factory. Our colporteur took pains to inquire whether he had carried his Bible away with him ; and the affirmative answer which he received encouraged him, and led him to pray daily on behalf of the young man. More than a year after all this had occurred, the same colporteur whilst prosecuting his work in the department where he is now stationed, reached a town filled with factories. He entered one of them, situated in an isolated part of the town, and the gates of which were open. The men were all at their meals. Looking into a corner of the work-room, his eyes rested on a man who seemed to take no part in the noisy conversation of his companions, for his back was turned on them. He was, in fact, occupied with reading. The colporteur went towards him, and before he was able to see the face of the reader, he discovered, to his great joy, that the Bible was the book which he was reading. He uttered an exclamation of pleasure, on which the man turned round. No ! he could not be mistaken ! it was the young infidel, for whose conversion he had so unceasingly prayed for more than a year ! and from whom he then learned, that, being powerfully impressed by the warm appeals to which he had been almost compelled to listen, he began seriously to read the Bible, as well as to pray, and that, after a time, the Lord had graciously opened his eyes and his heart ; that now the Word of God was the food of his soul, and that his most ardent desire was to make known its contents to all the world."

Whoever have been accustomed to think of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew and similar atrocities as belonging to a dark age that can never return, must have been rudely startled out of the pleasant dream by the tragedy of Barletta. For some time evangelical operations have been going on in that town, as along the whole of the Adriatic, not without results. On the 19th March, a raving crowd, led by priests, passed through the streets with an enormous Christ (image) for ensign, shouting furiously, "Death to the Protestants ! Death to foreigners ! Live the faith ! Live Jesus Christ !" The crowd rushed into the houses of Protestants, consigning everything to destruction. The first accounts, by which a man was thrown from the third story of a house, three women murdered three persons, and so on, seem to have been exaggerated ; but according to the Rev. W. Arthur, who was in Milan at the time, six lives have been taken, and of these one was burned or half burned along with the furniture of his house. The Protestant minister, M. Giannini, escaped by the roof of the house. A list, it is said, was found of the names of 200 suspected or odious persons. This murderous outrage has excited universal horror. In the Italian Parliament it was alluded to by the ministry in a tone that did it honour. The mass of the Italian people seem to have no sympathy with it. But it shows what murderous hatred may lodge in the bosoms of a disappointed priesthood, and what inflammable and excitable materials an uneducated and fanatical Italian populace form. It is not considered that the cause of religion will suffer from these proceedings in the end.

The correspondent of "Evangelical Christendom," writing before the outbreak of this riot, refers to the labours of the Rev. Theodore Meyer, of Ancona, who superintends a whole staff of colporteurs ranging over the whole shore-line of the Adriatic. Barletta is one of the towns which are thus visited, and where a number of Bible readers are found. The labours of these colporteurs are full of adventure ; some of them are converted priests ; and they are doing a great work in sowing seed and preparing the way for the establishment of Gospel ordinances.

The work is going forward in Milan and other great towns. There are 1000 church members in Milan, gathered from all ranks of the citizens ; two evangelical journals are printed in the city, and a great evangelical light radiates in all directions, to Pavia, Bergamo, Brescia, Caravaggio, Cremona, and especially northwards to Como, Intra, and many a village in the valleys which run down from the great Alpine chain. In writing to the *Watchman* about the Barletta massacre, Mr. Arthur takes notice of the extraordinary progress of the evangelical cause in Milan. Six years ago, he says, he could find no meeting of native Italian evangelicals, except a dozen or so in a private house. Now, within two days, he had seen a school examined, a prayer-meeting of five deacons or leaders in a private room ; and three public meetings ; one of forty, chiefly men ; one of twenty, nearly all women ; and one of about 280, chiefly men ; all these were on week days ; on Good Friday and Sunday he expected to see more.

According to a correspondent of the *Times*, "the year 1867 is destined to behold Spiritual Rome putting forth all her strength and displaying herself in all her grandeur. In the first place there is to be a canonization, of how many saints we know not as yet, but certainly of one Polish, and one Neapolitan saint. Then in the month of June is to be celebrated the Centenary of the Martyrdom of St. Peter. That this would take place has been already reported, but

the date was undecided until lately, it having been under discussion whether 1865, 1866, or 1867 was the correct year. The best authorities, or perhaps political circumstances, have solved this numerical difficulty, and June of 1867 will witness certainly one of the most effective ecclesiastical spectacles that has ever been presented to the world. At the same time, too, it is decided to hold an Ecumenical Council, in itself a great event, to which the Roman Catholic prelates from all parts of the world will be invited, and indeed invitations to distant parts are said to have been already sent. What, therefore, is the strength of the purely spiritual element, as understood by the successor of St. Peter, will stand a chance of being tried on this great occasion. The idea of the Centenary originated, it is said, with the Pope, who, true Italian as he is, was much impressed by the meeting last year to celebrate the Centenary of Dante. Hence he adopted and applied it to another and a higher subject, hoping, no doubt, in this way to rally the Catholic world to the defence of the waning fortunes of the Holy See."

That no part of the spiritual pretensions of the Pope is abated in consequence of recent temporal calamities, is evident from the unblushing terms of a reply lately given to an address from strangers. "I alone," he said to such, "despite my unworthiness, am the successor of the Apostles, the Vicar of Jesus Christ; I alone have the mission to guide and direct the bark of Peter; I am the way, the truth, and the life. They who are with me are with the Church; they who are not with me are out of the Church, they are out of the way, the truth, and the life. Let men well understand this, that they be not deceived or led astray by *soi-disant* Catholics, who *desire and teach something quite different* from what the Head of the Church desires and teaches."

The missionary records of the month bring before us an unusual number of casualties, which if they do not hinder the proper work of missions, try the faith and patience both of missionaries and missionary directors. It is not very long since the cyclone did much damage to missionary buildings in Calcutta and its neighbourhood. The Moravian Brethen at Baziya, in South Africa, have encountered a somewhat similar catastrophe in the shape of a whirlwind, which in a moment levelled church, dwelling-house, and outbuildings with the ground. Happily no life was lost, though the missionary with his wife and daughter were thrown down beneath the ruins. The accident seems to have had some comic features as well as tragic; for some of the household effects, such as a pair of boots, were brought back from distances of two or three miles, and, as the missionary was writing home, people were continually arriving, bringing articles of every description, which they had picked up while searching the country in the direction taken by the whirlwind. The Wesleyan Mission has lost the ship "John Wesley," under very remarkable circumstances. It was totally wrecked on a reef in the Tonga Islands last November. When the vessel had been for two hours bumping against the reef, she gave a great crash, broke her back, and filled rapidly. At that very moment a great earthquake took place, followed by some great waves, which raised the wreck up, carried her inside the reef, and left her in less than three feet water. All lives were saved by this remarkable means.

In adverting to the disruption of the Brahma Somaj at Calcutta, in a former number, we adverted to the more free social intercourse between Hindu and Christian ladies, as a remarkable evidence of the decreasing influence of caste. From the "Indian Mirror," as quoted by the "Friend of India," it appears that such intercourse is advancing. The "Mirror" describes a meeting of native ladies held at the house of Dr. Robson, of the Free Church Mission, the first of its kind in the country. "There were seventeen ladies present, of whom the majority were Brahmicas. The proceedings commenced with a display of various figures on the wall by means of the magic lantern. Dr. Robson then exhibited the air pump and illustrated some of the elementary principles of pneumatics; he also performed about a dozen brilliant and amusing experiments with oxygen, phosphorus, and sulphur. After these experiments were over, the ladies enjoyed most unreserved and hearty interchange of thoughts and feelings with some of their European sisters, who were also present on the occasion, and who, with characteristic cordiality, did all in their power to sustain the liveliness of the meeting with music and conversation. The native ladies enjoyed to their hearts' content the rich fund of instruction and amusement to which they were treated, and though the meeting broke up at 10 p.m., they parted from their European sisters with the greatest reluctance. That such meetings are admirably calculated to impress our countrywomen with a taste for scientific truths, and at the same time improve their tastes and habits by bringing them into free and familiar intercourse with pious and enlightened Christian women, it is impossible to deny; and we should very much like to see them placed on a permanent footing."

The accounts of the progress of Christianity in Madagascar continue to be of the most cheering and satisfactory character. Mr. Toy, of the London Missionary Society, writes: "On Christmas Day alone I baptised 221 adults, and again on Sunday last nearly seventy more. I have never seen anything like it. The work is evidently from God. All these are now under instruction once a week by myself, and again by the native preachers and deacons. I have divided them among several, in order more successfully to instruct them, and to investigate their characters previous to admission into church fellowship, each teacher having from twelve to fifteen under his charge. Of course it is to be expected that some are not genuine. I have, therefore, as much on my hands as my strength will allow, almost more than I know how to get through. I may just add that among those recently baptised are the eldest son of the Prime Minister, the eldest son of the Chief Secretary of State, and several sons of other high officers; also Rainivoninahitrianarivo (well known to Mr. Ellis), a near relation of the Prime Minister, and Ramaniraka, Under-Secretary of State. Mr. Briggs has also bap-

tised several sons of the high officers, and Razanakombana, son of one of those who visited England in the time of the early missionaries."

Among recent books, we give a prominent place to the eagerly expected work of M. de Pressensé,—"Jesus Christ, his Life, Times, and Work." The fame of M. de Pressensé's critique on the work of Renan—generally acknowledged to have been among the ablest that appeared—raised no ordinary degree of expectancy in connection with the more complete treatise with which he has been engaged for some time. Though it professes not to be a reply to any work, it is obviously designed to present a complete and correct view of the life and work of our Blessed Lord, in contrast to the deeply erroneous as well as the sadly imperfect views of them that have lately come from various quarters. The writer, like Renan, visited Judea and Galilee, but "not that he might garnish his work with lavish descriptions of nature, and merge in the dazzling radiance of the East that calm and quiet beauty of the Gospel which belongs not to this world; but that he might engrave, as deeply as possible, that seal of reality which is the token of every true history." Of the five books into which the work is divided, the first dwells on preliminary considerations,—the supernatural, the religions of the past, the decline of Judaism, and the sources of the life of Christ. In the second book, Christ's preparation for his work is considered; then, in three books, "The Time of Public Favour; The Period of Conflict; and The Great Work—Death and Victory." It is refreshing to meet with the work of an able and excellent author, whose appreciation of our Lord Jesus Christ, both in his person and in his work, is at once profound and discriminating, and whom no doubts or difficulties hinder from claiming the honour due to the Name that is above every name. In point of learning, intellectual power, and that point and brilliancy of diction for which the French language is so remarkable when wielded by a master, the merit of this work is remarkably high. Many passages are of the greatest beauty, and verify the closing apostrophe of the writer. "At times I have seemed, in the brief illumination of some blessed hour, to see Thee in Thy Divine Majesty—Thy brow radiant with love and grief, and crowned with that spotless purity which has terrors only for the proud, because it is inseparable from Thy sovereign love. I have seemed to see Thee on the shores of the lake Thou lovedst, or in the villages of Galilee, or in the midst of that retinue of the afflicted and despised who formed Thy guard of honour in Thy royal progress of mercy. But when I have sought to fix the holy vision, the pencil has trembled in my unskilful hands, and I have only been able to give a dim outline of that which had bound me in the dust in adoration before Thee." It must be added, that in several points of importance, M. de Pressensé's views are not such as will find acceptance with the more orthodox section of readers in this country, although abroad they may be looked on as less unsatisfactory.

By far the most copious and varied account of the social and religious customs of the Chinese that has yet appeared, will be found in two well-filled volumes, by the Rev. Justus Doolittle, of the Fuhchau Mission of the American Board, entitled "Social Life of the Chinese: with some Account of their Religious, Governmental, Educational, and Business Customs and Opinions." Fourteen years' residence in Fuhchau have given Mr. Doolittle opportunities of observation of which he has availed himself with remarkable diligence. The ways and customs delineated are often very unique and characteristic; and while some favourable features are worthy of all commendation, the general impression of the people which this work conveys is not flattering. Several chapters of the work are devoted to missionary topics, and the author strongly urges Christians at home to persevere in efforts and prayers for the conversion of China. He finds a bond of communion, and therefore a memento of duty in the circumstance that Western Christians are almost universally tea-drinkers, and ought, therefore, to think much of the country to which they owe "the cup that cheers but not inebriates." And as Saturday evening in the West corresponds with Sunday morning in China, he particularly urges that Saturday evening should be a time for special prayer for China, particularly its missionary labourers.

Two volumes have appeared almost simultaneously, one in Edinburgh, the other in Glasgow, consisting of Lectures for the Times, preached by half-a-dozen of the ministers and professors of either city, entitled respectively, "Christianity and Modern Speculation," and "Divine Revelation Explained and Vindicated." The Lectures originated in the conviction that when men's minds are so much agitated on questions of vital importance, and when so much that is fitted to unsettle them is printed in newspapers and elsewhere, it becomes the leaders of religious thought to take special measures to give a wholesome direction to honest inquirers. The Lectures were very popular as delivered, and many of them are able discussions of the subjects treated in them. The characteristic differences of the two cities will be found reflected in their respective volumes,—Edinburgh maintaining the truth as firmly, yet with more freedom of thought and calmness of vision; Glasgow, the old stronghold of the Covenant, with, perhaps, a little more tendency to dogmatism, and a larger mixture both of the excellencies and the defects of Puritanism. The Glasgow volume bears throughout the impress of local controversy; that of Edinburgh has a wider and more catholic sweep.

"The Judgment Books," by Alexander Macleod, D.D., is a fresh and powerful practical volume, in which the author, more successful, as we think, in the practical illustration and enforcement of great truths, than in the establishment of the exegetical theory of the Apocalyptic "books," which is the framework of his treatise, brings out the many forms in which the laws of retribution assert themselves here and hereafter. Full of the freshest and best things in modern literature, the author throws a great wealth of illustration over his subject. Perhaps the style is just a little too modern; on such a subject it would be an advantage to have somewhat more of the solemn tone and stately tread of some of the grand old writers of former days.

Drawn by Robert Barnes. Engraved by J. Swain.

ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

[See page 569.

ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BY THE VICAR.

XXI.

As the winter went on, it was sad to look on the evident though slow decline of Catherine Weir. It seemed as if the dead season was dragging her to its bosom, to lay her among the leaves of past summers. She was still to be found in the shop, or appeared in it as often as the bell suspended over the door rang to announce the entrance of a customer; but she was terribly worn, and her step indicated much weakness. Nor had the signs of restless trouble diminished as these tide-marks indicated ebbing strength. There was the same dry fierce fire in her eyes; the same forceful compression of her lips; the same evidences of brooding over some one absorbing thought or feeling. She seemed to me, and to Dr. Duncan as well, to be dying of resentment. Would nobody do anything for her? I thought. Would not her father help her? He had got more gentle now; whence I had reason to hope that Christian principles and feelings had begun to rise and operate in him; while surely the influence of his son must, by this time, have done something not only to soften his character generally, but to appease the anger he had cherished towards the one ewe-lamb, against which, having wandered away into the desert place, he had closed and barred the door of the sheep-fold. I would go and see him, and try what could be done for her.

I may be forgiven here if I make the remark that I cannot help thinking that what measure of success I had already had with my people, was partly owing to this, that when I thought of a thing and had concluded it might do, I very seldom put off the consequent action. I found I was wrong sometimes, and that the particular action did no good; but thus movement was kept up in my operative nature, preventing it from sinking towards the inactivity to which I was but too much inclined. Besides, to find out what will not do, is a step towards finding out what will do. Moreover, an attempt in itself unsuccessful may set something or other in motion that will help.

My present attempt turned out one of my failures, though I cannot think that it would have been better left unmade.

A red rayless sun, which one might have imagined sullen and disconsolate because he could not make the dead earth smile into flowers, was looking through the frosty fog of the winter morning as I walked across the bridge to find Thomas Weir in his workshop. The poplars stood like goblin sentinels, with black heads, upon which the long hair stood on end, all along the dark cold river. Nature looked like a life out of which the love has vanished. I turned from it and hastened on.

Thomas was busy working with a spokeshave at the spoke of a cart-wheel. How curiously the smallest visual fact will sometimes keep its place in the memory, when it cannot with all earnestness of endeavour recall a thought—a far more important fact. That will come again only when its time comes first.

"A cold morning, Thomas," I called from the door.

"I can always keep myself warm, sir," returned Thomas, cheerfully.

"What are you doing, Tom?" I said, going up to him first.

"A little job for myself, sir. I'm making a few bookshelves."

"I want to have a little talk with your father. Just step out in a minute or so, and let me have half-an-hour."

"Yes, sir, certainly."

I then went to the other end of the shop, for, curiously, as it seemed to me, although father and son were on the best of terms, they always worked as far from each other as the shop would permit, and it was a very large room.

"It is not easy always to keep warm through and through, Thomas," I said.

I suppose my tone revealed to his quick perceptions that "more was meant than met the ear." He looked up from his work, his tool filled with an uncompleted shaving.

"And when the heart gets cold," I went on, "it is not easily warmed again. The fire's hard to light there, Thomas."

Still he looked at me, stooping over his work, apparently with a presentiment of what was coming.

"I fear there is no way of lighting it again, except the blacksmith's way."

"Hammering the iron till it is red-hot, you mean, sir?"

"I do. When a man's heart has grown cold, the blows of affliction must fall thick and heavy before the fire can be got that will light it.—When did you see your daughter Catherine, Thomas?"

His head dropped, and he began to work as if for bare life. Not a word came from the form now bent over his tool as if he had never lifted himself up since he first began in the morning. I could just see that his face was deadly pale, and his lips compressed like those of one of the violent who take the kingdom of heaven by force. But it was for no such agony of effort that his were thus closed. He went on working till the silence became so lengthened that it seemed settled into the endless. I felt embarrassed. To break a silence is sometimes as hard as to break a spell. What Thomas would have done or said if he had not had this safety-valve of bodily exertion, I cannot even imagine.

"Thomas," I said, at length, laying my hand on his shoulder, "you are not going to part company with me, I hope."

"You drive a man too far, sir. I've given in more to you than ever I did to man, sir; and I

don't know that I oughtn't to be ashamed of it. But you don't know where to stop. If we lived a thousand years you would be driving a man on to the last. And there's no good in that, sir. A man must be at peace somewhen."

"The question is, Thomas, whether I would be driving you *on* or *back*. You and I too *must* go on or back. I want to go on myself, and to make you go on too. I don't want to be parted from you now or then."

"That's all very well, sir, and very kind, I don't doubt; but, as I said afore, a man must be at peace *somewhen*."

"That's what I want so much that I want you to go on. Peace! I trust in God we shall both have it one day, *somewhen*, as you say. Have you got this peace so plentifully now that you are satisfied as you are? You will never get it but by going on."

"I do not think there is any good got in stirring a puddle. Let by-gones be by-gones. You make a mistake, sir, in rousing an anger which I would willingly let sleep."

"Better a wakeful anger, and a wakeful conscience with it, than an anger sunk into indifference, and a sleeping dog of a conscience that will not bark. To have ceased to be angry is not one step nearer to your daughter. Better strike her, abuse her, with the chance of a kiss to follow. Ah, Thomas, you are like Jonas with his gourd."

"I don't see what that has to do with it."

"I will tell you. You are fierce in wrath at the disgrace to your family. Your pride is up in arms. You don't care for the misery of your daughter, who, the more wrong she has done, is the more to be pitied by a father's heart. Your pride, I say, is all that you care about. The wrong your daughter has done, you care nothing about; or you would have taken her to your arms years ago, in the hope that the fervour of your love would drive the devil out of her and make her repent. I say it is not the wrong, but the disgrace you care for. The gourd of your pride is withered, and yet you will water it with your daughter's misery."

"Go out of my shop," he cried; "or I may say what I should be sorry for."

I turned at once and left him. I found young Tom round the corner, leaning against the wall, and reading his Virgil.

"Don't speak to your father, Tom," I said, "for a while. I've put him out of temper. He will be best left alone."

He looked frightened.

"There's no harm done, Tom, my boy. I've been talking to him about your sister. He must have time to think over what I have said to him."

"I see, sir; I see."

"Be as attentive to him as you can."

"I will, sir."

It was not alone resentment at my interference that had thus put the poor fellow beside himself, I was certain: I had called up all the old misery—set the wound bleeding again. Shame was once more wide awake and tearing at his heart. That *his* daughter should have done so! For she had been his pride. She had been the belle of the village, and very lovely; but having been apprenticed to a dressmaker in Addicehead, had, after being there about a year and a half, returned home, apparently in a decline. After the birth of her child, however, she had, to her own disappointment, and no doubt to that of her father as well, begun to recover. What a time of wretchedness it must have been to both of them until she left his house, one can imagine. Most likely the misery of the father vented itself in greater unkindness than he felt, which, sinking into the proud nature she had derived from him, roused such a resentment as rarely if ever can be thoroughly appeased until Death comes in to help the reconciliation. How often has an old love blazed up again under the blowing of his cold breath, and sent the spirit warm at heart into the regions of the unknown! She never would utter a word to reveal the name or condition of him by whom she had been wronged. To his child, as long as he drew his life from her, she behaved with strange alternations of dislike and passionate affection; after which season the latter began to diminish in violence, and the former to become more fixed, till at length, by the time I had made their acquaintance, her feelings seemed to have settled into what would have been indifference but for the constant reminder of her shame and her wrong together, which his very presence necessarily was.

They were not only the gossips of the village who judged that the fact of Addicehead's being a garrison-town had something to do with the fate that had befallen her; a fate by which, in its very spring-time, when its flowers were loveliest, and hope was its strongest for summer, her life was changed into the dreary wind-swept, rain-sodden moor. The man who can *accept* such a sacrifice from a woman,—I say nothing of *wiling* it from her—is, in his meanness, selfishness, and dishonour, contemptible as the Pharisee who with his long prayers devours the widow's house. He leaves her desolate, while he walks off free. Would to God a man like the great-hearted, pure-bodied Milton, a man whom young men are compelled to respect, would in this our age, utter such a word as, making "mad the guilty," if such grace might be accorded them, would "appal the free," lest they too should fall into such a mire of selfish dishonour!

XXII.

About this time my father was taken ill, and several journeys to London followed. It is only as vicar that I am writing these memorials—for such they should be called, rather than *annals*, though certainly the use of the latter word has of late become vague enough for all convenience—therefore I have said nothing about my home-relations; but I must just mention here that I had a half-sister, about half my own age, whose anxiety during my father's illness rendered my visits more frequent than perhaps they would have been from my own. But my sister was right in her anxiety. My father grew worse, and in December he died. I will not eulogise one so dear to me. That he was no common man will appear from the fact of his uncon-

ventionality and justice in leaving his property to my sister, saying in his will that he had done all I could require of him, in giving me a good education; and that, men having means in their power which women had not, it was unjust to the latter to make them, without a choice, dependent upon the former. After the funeral, my sister, feeling it impossible to remain in the house any longer, begged me to take her with me. So, after arranging affairs, we set out, and reached Marshmallows on New Year's Day.

My sister being so much younger than myself, her presence in my house made very little change in my habits. She came into my ways without any difficulty, so that I did not experience the least restraint from having to consider her. And I soon began to find her of considerable service among the poor and sick of my flock, the latter class being more numerous this winter, on account of the greater severity of the weather.

I now began to note a change in the habits of Catherine Weir. As far as I remember, I had never up to this time seen her out of her own house, except in church, at which she had been a regular attendant for months. Now, however, I began to meet her when and where I least expected—I do not say often, but so often as to make me believe she went wandering about frequently. It was always at night, however, and always in stormy weather. The marvel was, not that a sick woman could do so—for a sick woman may be able to do anything—but that she could do so more than once: that was the marvel. At the same time, I began to miss her from church.

Possibly my reader may wonder how I came to have the chance of meeting any one again and again at night and in stormy weather. I can relieve him from the difficulty. Odd as it will appear to some readers, I had naturally a predilection for rough weather. I think I enjoyed fighting with a storm in winter nearly as much as lying on the grass under a beech-tree in summer. Possibly this assertion may seem strange to one likewise who has remarked the ordinary peaceableness of my disposition. But he may have done me the justice to remark at the same time, that I have some considerable pleasure in fighting the devil, though none in fighting my fellow-man, even in the ordinary form of disputation, in which however it is not heart's blood, but soul's blood, that is so often shed. Indeed there are many controversies far more immoral, as to the manner in which they are conducted, than a brutal prize-fight. There is a pleasure of its own in conflict; and I have always experienced a certain indescribable, though I believe not at all unusual exaltation, even in struggling with a well-set, thoroughly roused storm of wind and snow or rain. The sources of this by no means unusual delight, I will not stay to examine, indicating only that I believe the sources are deep.—I was now quite well, and had no reason to fear bad consequences from the indulgence of this surely innocent form of the love of strife.

But I find I must give another reason as well, if I would be thoroughly honest with my reader. The fact was, that as I had recovered strength, I had become more troubled and restless about Miss Oldcastle. I could not see how I was to make any progress towards her favour. There seemed a barrier as insurmountable as intangible between her and me. The will of one woman came between and parted us, and that will was as the magic line over which no effort of will or strength could enable the enchanted knight to make a single stride. And this consciousness of being fettered by insensible and infrangible bonds, this need of doing something with nothing tangible in the reach of the outstretched hand, so worked upon my mind, that it naturally sought relief, as often as the elemental strife arose, by mingling unconstrained with the tumult of the night.—Will my readers find it hard to believe that this disquietude of mind should gradually sink away as the hours of Saturday glided down into night, and the day of my best labour drew nigh? Or will they answer, "We believe it easily; for then you could at least see the lady, and that comforted you"? Whatever it was that quieted me, not the less have I to thank God for it. All might have been so different. What a fearful thing would it have been for me to have found my mind so full of my own cares, that I was unable to do God's work and bear my neighbour's burden! But even then I would have cried to Him, and said, "I know thee that thou art *not* a hard master."

Now, however, that I have quite accounted, as I believe, by the peculiarity both of my disposition and circumstances, for unusual wanderings under conditions when most people consider themselves fortunate within doors, I must return to Catherine Weir, the eccentricity of whose late behaviour, being in the particulars discussed identical with that of mine, led to the necessity for the explanation of my habits given above.

One January afternoon, just as twilight was folding her grey cloak about her, and vanishing in the night, the wind blowing hard from the south-west, melting the snow under foot, and sorely disturbing the dignity of the one grand old cedar which stood before my study window, and now filled my room with the great sweeps of its moaning, I felt as if the elements were calling me, and rose to obey the summons. My sister was, by this time, so accustomed to my going out in all weathers, that she troubled me with no expostulation. My spirits began to rise the moment I was in the wind. Keen, and cold, and unsparing it swept through the leafless branches around me, with a different hiss for every tree that bent, and swayed, and tossed in its torrent, as I made my way to the gate and out upon the road, by which, turning to the right, away from the village, I sought a kind of common, open and treeless, the nearest approach to a moor that there was in the county, I believe, over which such a wind swept unstayed by house, or shrub, or fence, the only shelter it afforded lying in the inequalities of its surface.

I had walked with my head bent low against the blast, for the better part of a mile, fighting for every step of the way, when, coming to a deep-cut in the common opening at right angles from the road, whence at some time or other a large quantity of sand had been carted, I turned into its defence to recover my breath, and listen to the noise of the wind in the

fierce rush of its sea over the open channel of the common. And I remember I was thinking with myself: "If the air would only become faintly visible for a moment, what a sight it would be of waste grandeur with its thousands of billowing eddies and self-involved, conflicting, and swallowing whirlpools from the sea-bottom of this common!" when, with my imagination resting on the fancied vision, I was startled by such a moan as seemed about to break into a storm of passionate cries, but was followed by the words:

"O God! I cannot bear it longer. Hast thou *no* help for me?"

Instinctively almost, I knew that Catherine Weir was beside me, though I could not see where she was. In a moment more, however, I thought I could distinguish through the darkness—imagination no doubt filling up the truth of its form—a figure crouching in such an attitude of abandoned despair as recalled one of Flaxman's outlines, the body bent forward over the drawn-up knees, and the face thus hidden even from the darkness. I could not help saying to myself, as I took a step or two towards her, "What is thy trouble to hers!"

I may here remark that I had come to the conclusion from pondering over her case, that until a yet deeper and bitterer resentment than that which she bore to her father was removed, it would be of no use attacking the latter. For the former kept her in a state of hostility towards her whole race: with herself at war she had no gentle thoughts, no love for her kind; but ever

She fed her wound with fresh-renewed bale

from every hurt that she received from or imagined to be offered her by anything human. So I had resolved that the next time I had an opportunity of speaking to her, I would make an attempt to probe the evil to its root, though I had but little hope, I confess, of doing any good. And now when I heard her say, "Hast thou *no* help for me?" I went near her with the words:

"God has, indeed, help for his own offspring. Has He not suffered that He might help? But you have not yet forgiven."

When I began to speak, she gave a slight start: she was far too miserable to be terrified at anything. Before I had finished, she stood erect on her feet, facing me with the whiteness of her face glimmering through the blackness of the night.

"I ask Him for peace," she said, "and he sends me more torment."

And I thought of Ahab when he said, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?"

"If we had what we asked for always, we should too often find it was not what we wanted, after all."

"You will not leave me alone," she said. "It is too bad."

Poor woman! It was well for her she could pray to God in her trouble; for she could scarcely endure a word from her fellow-man. She, despairing before God, was fierce as a tigress to her fellow-sinner who would stretch a hand to help her out of the mire, and set her beside him on the rock which he felt firm under his own feet.

"I will not leave you alone, Catherine," I said, feeling that I must at length assume another tone of speech with her who resisted gentleness. "Scorn my interference as you will," I said, "I have yet to give an account of you. And I have to fear lest my Master should require your blood at my hands. I did not follow you here, you may well believe me; but I have found you here, and I must speak."

All this time the wind was roaring overhead. But in the hollow was stillness, and I was so near her, that I could hear every word she said, although she spoke in a low compressed tone.

"Have you a right to persecute me," she said, "because I am unhappy?"

"I have a right, and more than a right, I have a duty to aid your better self against your worse. You, I fear, are siding with your worse self."

"You judge me hard. I have had wrongs that——"

And here she stopped in a way that let me know she *would* say no more.

"That you have had wrongs, and bitter wrongs, I do not for a moment doubt. And him who has done you most wrong, you will not forgive."

"No."

"No. Not even for the sake of Him who, hanging on the tree, after all the bitterness of blows and whipping, and derision, and rudest gestures and taunts, even when the faintness of death was upon Him cried to his Father to forgive their cruelty. He asks you to forgive the man who wronged you, and you will not—not even for Him! Oh, Catherine, Catherine!"

"It is very easy to talk, Mr. Walton," she returned with forced but cool scorn.

"Tell me, then," I said, "have *you* nothing to repent of? Have *you* done no wrong in this same miserable matter?"

"I do not understand you, sir," she said, freezingly, petulantly, not sure, perhaps, or unwilling to believe, that I meant what I did mean.

I was fully resolved to be plain with her now.

"Catherine Weir," I said, "did not God give you a house to keep fair and pure for Him? Did you keep it so?"

"He lied to me," she cried fiercely, with a cry that seemed to pierce through the storm over our head, up towards the everlasting justice. "He lied, and I trusted. For his sake I sinned, and he threw me from him."

"You gave him what was not yours to give. What right had you to cast your pearl before a swine? But dare you say it was *all for his sake* you did it?"

She made a broken gesture of lifting her hands to her head, let them drop by her side, and said nothing.

"You knew you were doing wrong. You felt it even more than he did. For God made you with a more delicate sense of purity, with a shrinking from the temptation, with a womanly foreboding of disgrace, to help you to hold the cup of your honour steady, which yet you dropped on the ground. Do

not seek refuge in the cant about a woman's weakness. The strength of the woman is as needful to her womanhood, as the strength of the man is to his manhood; and a woman is just as strong as she will be. And now, instead of humbling yourself before your Father in heaven, whom you have wronged more even than your father on earth, you rage over your injuries and cherish hatred against him who wronged you. But I will go yet further, and show you in God's name, that you wronged your seducer. For you were his keeper, as he was yours. What if he had found a noble-hearted girl who also trusted him entirely—just until she knew she ought not to listen to him a moment longer? who, when his love showed itself less than human, caring but for itself, rose in the royalty of her maidenhood, and looked him in the face? Would he not have been ashamed before her, and so before himself, seeing in the glass of her dignity his own contemptibleness? But instead of such a woman he found you, who let him do as he would. No redemption for him in you. And now he walks the earth the worse for you, defiled by your spoil, glorying in his poor victory over you, despising all women for your sake, unrepentant and proud, ruining others the easier that he has already ruined you."

"He does! he does!" she shrieked, "but I will have my revenge. I can and I will."

And, darting past me, she rushed out into the storm. I followed, and could just see that she took the way to the village. Her dim shape went down the wind before me into the darkness. I followed in the same direction, fast and faster, for the wind was behind me, and a vague fear which ever grew in my heart, urged me to overtake her. What had I done? To what might I not have driven her? And although all I had said was true, and I had spoken from motives which, as far as I knew my own heart, I could not condemn, yet, as I sped after her, there came a reaction of feeling from the severity with which I had displayed her own case against her. "Ah! poor sister," I thought, "was it for me thus to reproach thee who hadst suffered already so fiercely? If the Spirit speaking in thy heart could not win thee, how should my words of hard accusation, true though they were, every one of them, rouse in thee anything but the wrath that springs from shame? Should I not have tried again, and yet again, to waken thy love? and then a sweet and healing shame, like that of her who bathed the Master's feet with her tears, would have bred fresh love, and no wrath."

But again I answered for myself, that my heart had not been the less tender towards her that I had tried to humble her, for it was that she might slip from under the net of her pride. Even when my tongue spoke the hardest things I could find, my heart was yearning over her. If I could but make her feel that she too had been wrong, would not the sense of common wrong between them help her to forgive? And with the first motion of willing pardon, would not a spring of tenderness, grief, and hope, burst from her poor old dried-up heart, and make it young and fresh once more? Thus I reasoned with myself as I followed her back through the darkness.

The wind fell a little as we came near the village, and the rain began to come down in torrents. There must have been a moon somewhere behind the clouds, for the darkness became less dense, and I began to fancy I could again see the dim shape which had rushed from me. I increased my speed, and became certain of it. Suddenly, her strength giving way, or her foot stumbling over something in the road, she fell to the earth with a cry.

I was beside her in a moment. She was insensible. I did what I could for her, and in a few minutes she began to come to herself.

"Where am I? Who is it?" she asked, listlessly.

When she found who I was, she made a great effort to rise, and succeeded.

"You must take my arm," I said, "and I will help you to the vicarage."

"I will go home," she answered.

"Lean on me now, at least; for you must get somewhere."

"What does it matter?" she said, in such a tone of despair, that it went to my very heart.

A wild half-cry, half-sob followed, and then she took my arm, and said nothing more. Nor did I trouble her with any words, except, when we reached the gate, to beg her to come into the vicarage instead of going home. But she would not listen to me, and so I took her home.

She pulled the key of the shop from her pocket. Her hand trembled so that I took it from her, and opened the door. A candle with a long snuff was flickering on the counter; and stretched out on the counter, with his head about a foot from the candle, lay little Gerard, fast asleep.

"Ah, little darling!" I said in my heart, "this is not much like painting the sky yet. But who knows?" And as I uttered the common-place question in my mind, in my mind it was suddenly changed into the half of a great dim prophecy by the answer which arose to it there, for the answer was "God."

I lifted the little fellow in my arms. He had fallen asleep weeping, and his face was dirty, and streaked with the channels of his tears. Catherine had snuffed the candle, and now stood with it in her hand, waiting for me to go. But, without heeding her, I bore my child to the door that led to their dwelling. I had never been up those stairs before, and therefore knew nothing of the way. But without offering any opposition, his mother followed, and lighted me. What a sad face of suffering and strife it was upon which that dim light fell! She set the candle down upon the table of a small room at the top of the stairs, which might have been comfortable enough but that it was neglected and disordered. And now I saw that she did not even have her child to sleep with her, for his crib stood in a corner of this their sitting-room.

I sat down on a hair-cloth couch, and proceeded to undress little Gerard, trying as much as I could not to wake him. In this I was almost successful. Catherine stood staring at me without saying a word. She looked dazed, perhaps from the effects of her fall. But she brought me his nightgown notwithstanding. Just as I had finished putting it on, and was rising

to lay him in his crib, he opened his eyes, and looked at me; then gave a hurried look round, as if for his mother; then threw his arms round my neck and kissed me. I laid him down and the same moment he was fast asleep. In the morning it would not be even a dream to him.

"Now," I thought, "you are safe for the night, poor fatherless child. Even your mother's hardness will not make you sad now. Perhaps the Heavenly Father will send you loving dreams."

I turned to Catherine, and bade her good-night. She just put her hand in mine; but, instead of returning my leave-taking, she said:

"Do not fancy you will get the better of me, Mr. Walton, by being kind to that boy. I will have my revenge, and I know how. I am only waiting my time. When he is just going to drink, I will dash it from his hand. I will. At the altar I will."

Her eyes were flashing almost with madness, and she made fierce gestures with her right arm. I saw that argument was useless.

"You loved him once, Catherine," I said. "Love him again. Love him better. Forgive him. Revenge is far worse than anything you have done yet."

"What do I care! Why should I care?"

And she laughed terribly.

I made haste to leave the room and the house; but I lingered for nearly an hour about the place before I could make up my mind to go home, so much was I afraid lest she should do something altogether insane. But at length I saw the candle appear in the shop, which was some relief to my anxiety; and reflecting that her one consuming thought of revenge was some security for her conduct otherwise, I went home.

That night my own troubles seemed small to me, and I did not brood over them at all. My mind was filled with the idea of the sad misery which, rather than in which, that poor woman was; and I prayed for her as for a desolated human world whose sun had deserted the heavens, whose fair fields, rivers, and groves were hardening into the frost of death, and all their germs of hope becoming but portions of the lifeless mass. "If I am sorrowful," I said, "God lives none the less. And his will is better than mine, yea is my hidden and perfected will. In Him is my life. His will be done. What, then, is my trouble compared to hers? I will not sink into it and be selfish."

In the morning my first business was to inquire after her. I found her in the shop, looking very ill, and obstinately reserved. Gerard sat in a corner, looking as far from happy as a child of his years could look. As I left the shop he crept out with me.

"Gerard, come back," said his mother.

"I will not take him away," I said.

The boy looked up in my face, as if he wanted to whisper to me, and I stooped to listen.

"I dreamed last night," said the boy, "that a big angel with white wings came and took me out of my bed, and carried me high, high up—so high that I could not dream any more."

"We shall be carried up so high one day, Gerard, my boy, that we shall not want to dream any more. For we shall be carried up to God himself. Now go back to your mother."

He obeyed at once, and I went on through the village.

XXIII.

I WANTED just to pass the gate, and look up the road towards Oldcastle Hall. I thought to see nothing but the empty road between the leafless trees, lying there like a dead stream that would not bear me on to the "sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice" that lay beyond. But just as I reached the gate, Miss Oldcastle came out of the lodge, where I learned afterwards the woman that kept the gate was ill.

When she saw me she stopped, and I entered hurriedly, and addressed her. But I could say nothing better than the merest commonplaces. For her old manner, which I had almost forgotten, a certain coldness shadowed with haughtiness, whose influence I had strongly felt when I began to make her acquaintance, had returned. I cannot make my reader understand how this could be blended with the sweetness in her face and the gentleness of her manners; but there the opposites were, and I could feel them both. There was likewise a certain drawing of herself away from me, which checked the smallest advance on my part; so that—I wonder at it now, but so it was—after a few words of very ordinary conversation, I bade her good-morning and went away, feeling like "a man forbid"—as if I had done her some wrong, and she had chidden me for it. What a stone lay in my breast! I could hardly breathe for it. What could have caused her to change her manner towards me? I had made no advance; I could not have offended her. Yet there she glided up the road, and here stood I, outside the gate. That road was now a flowing river that bore from me the treasure of the earth, while my boat was spell-bound, and could not follow. I would run after her, fall at her feet, and intreat to know wherein I had offended her. But there I stood enchanted, and there she floated away between the trees; till at length she turned the slow sweep, and I, breathing deep as she vanished from my sight, turned likewise, and walked back the dreary way to the village. And now I knew that I had never been miserable in my life before. And I knew, too, that I had never loved her as I loved her now.

But, as I had for the last ten years of my life been striving to be a right will, with a thousand failures and forgetfulnesses every one of those years, while yet the desire grew stronger as hope recovered from every failure, I would now try to do my work as if nothing had happened to incapacitate me for it. So I went on to fulfil the plan with which I had left home, including, as it did, a visit to Thomas Weir, whom I had not seen in his own shop since he had ordered me out of it. This, as far as I was concerned, was more accidental than intentional. I had, indeed, abstained from going to him for a while, in order to give him time *to come round;* but then circumstances which I have recorded intervened to prevent me; so that as yet no advance had been made on my part any more than on his towards a reconciliation; which, however, could have been such only on one side, for I had not

been in the least offended by the way he had behaved to me, and needed no reconciliation. To tell the truth, I was pleased to find that my words had had force enough with him to rouse his wrath. Anything rather than indifference! That the heart of the honest man would in the end right me, I could not doubt: in the meantime I would see whether a friendly call might not improve the state of affairs. Till he yielded to the voice within him, however, I could not expect that our relation to each other would be quite restored. As long as he resisted his conscience, and knew that I sided with his conscience, it was impossible he should regard me with peaceful eyes, however much he might desire to be friendly with me.

I found him busy, as usual, for he was one of the most diligent men I have ever known. But his face was gloomy, and I thought or fancied that the old scorn had begun once more to usurp the expression of it. Young Tom was not in the shop.

"It is a long time since I saw you, now, Thomas."

"I can hardly wonder at that," he returned, as if he were trying to do me justice, but his eyes dropped, and he resumed his work, and said no more. I thought it better to make no reference to the past even by assuring him that it was not from resentment that I had been a stranger.

"How is Tom?" I asked.

"Well enough," he returned. Then, with a smile of peevishness not unmingled with contempt, he added: "He's getting too uppish for me. I don't think the Latin agrees with him."

I could not help suspecting at once how the matter stood—namely, that the father, unhappy in his conduct to his daughter, and unable to make up his mind to do right with regard to her, had been behaving captiously and unjustly to his son, and so had rendered himself more miserable than ever.

"Perhaps he finds it too much for him without me," I said, evasively; "but I called to-day partly to inform him that I am quite ready now to recommence our readings together; after which I hope you will find the Latin agree with him better."

"I wish you would let him alone, sir—I mean, take no more trouble about him. You see I can't do as you want me; I wasn't made to go another man's way; and so it's very hard—more than I can bear—to be under so much obligation to you."

"But you mistake me altogether, Thomas. It is for the lad's own sake that I want to go on reading with him. And you won't interfere between him and any use I can be of to him. I assure you, to have you go my way instead of your own is the last thing I could wish, though I confess I do wish very much that you would choose the right way for your own way."

He made me no answer, but maintained a sullen silence.

"Thomas," I said at length, "I had thought you were breaking every bond of Satan that withheld you from entering into the kingdom of heaven; but I fear he has strengthened his bands and holds you now as much a captive as ever. So it is not even your own way you are walking in, but his."

"It's no use your trying to frighten me. I don't believe in the devil."

"It is God I want you to believe in. And I am not going to dispute with you now about whether there is a devil or not. In a matter of life and death we have no time for settling every disputed point."

"Life or death! What do you mean?"

"I mean that whether you believe there is a devil or not, you *know* there is an evil power in your mind dragging you down. I am not speaking in generals; I mean *now*, and you know as to what I mean it. And if you yield to it, that evil power, whatever may be your theory about it, will drag you down to death. It is a matter of life or death, I repeat, not of theory about the devil."

"Well, I always did say, that if you once give a priest an inch he'll take an ell; and I am sorry I forgot it for once."

Having said this, he shut up his mouth in a manner that indicated plainly enough he would not open it again for some time. This, more than his speech, irritated me, and with a mere "good morning," I walked out of the shop.

No sooner was I in the open air than I knew that I too, I as well as poor Thomas Weir, was under a spell; knew that I had gone to him before I had recovered sufficiently from the mingled disappointment and mortification of my interview with Miss Oldcastle; that while I spoke to him I was not speaking with a whole heart; that I had been discharging a duty as if I had been discharging a musket; that, although I had spoken the truth, I had spoken it ungraciously and selfishly.

I could not bear it. I turned instantly and went back into the shop.

"Thomas, my friend," I said, holding out my hand, "I beg your pardon. I was wrong. I spoke to you as I ought not. I was troubled in my own mind, and that made me lose my temper and be rude to you, who are far more troubled than I am. Forgive me!"

He did not take my hand at first, but stared at me as if, not comprehending me, he supposed that I was backing up what I had said last with more of the same sort. But by the time I had finished he saw what I meant; his countenance altered and looked as if the evil spirit were about to depart from him; he held out his hand, gave mine a great grasp, dropped his head, went on with his work, and said never a word.

I went out of the shop once more, but in a greatly altered mood.

On the way home, I tried to find out how it was that I had that morning failed so signally. I had little virtue in keeping my temper, because it was naturally very even; therefore I had the more shame in losing it. I had borne all my uneasiness about Miss Oldcastle without, as far as I knew, transgressing in this fashion till this very morning. Were great sorrows less hurtful to the temper than small disappointments? Yes, surely. But Shakspeare represents *Brutus*, after hearing of the sudden death of his wife, as losing his temper with *Cassius* to a degree that bewildered the latter, who

said he did not know that *Brutus* could have been so angry. Is this consistent with the character of the stately-minded *Brutus*, or with the dignity of sorrow? It is. For the loss of his wife alone would have made him only less irritable; but the whole weight of an army, with its distracting cares and conflicting interests, pressed upon him; and the battle of an empire was to be fought at daybreak, so that he could not be alone with his grief. Between the silence of death in his mind, and the roar of life in his brain, he became irritable.

Looking yet deeper into it, I found that till this morning I had experienced no personal mortification with respect to Miss Oldcastle. It was not the mere disappointment of having no more talk with her, for the sight of her was a blessing I had not in the least expected, that had worked upon me, but the fact that she had repelled or seemed to repel me. And thus I found that self was at the root of the wrong I had done to one over whose mental condition, especially while I was telling him the unwelcome truth, I ought to have been as tender as a mother over her wounded child. I could not say that it was wrong to feel disappointed or even mortified; but something was wrong when one whose especial business it was to serve his people in the name of Him who was full of grace and truth, made them suffer because of his own inward pain.

No sooner had I settled this in my mind than my trouble returned with a sudden pang. Had I actually seen her that morning, and spoken to her, and left her with a pain in my heart? What if that face of hers was doomed ever to bring with it such a pain—to be ever to me no more than a lovely vision radiating grief? If so, I would endure in silence and as patiently as I could, trying to make up for the lack o. brightness in my own fate by causing more brightness in the fate of others. I would at least keep on trying to do my work.

That moment I felt a little hand poke itself into mine. I looked down, and there was Gerard Weir looking up in my face. I found myself in the midst of the children coming out of school, for it was Saturday, and a half-holiday. He smiled in my face, and I hope I smiled in his; and so, hand in hand, we went on to the vicarage, where I gave him up to my sister. But I cannot convey to my reader any notion of the quietness that entered my heart with the grasp of that childish hand. I think it was the faith of the boy in me that comforted me, but I could not help thinking of the words of our Lord about receiving a child in his name and so receiving Him. By the time we reached the vicarage my heart was very quiet. As the little child held by my hand, so I seemed to be holding by God's hand. And a sense of heart-security, as well as soul-safety, awoke in me; and I said to myself,—Surely He will take care of my heart as well as of my mind and my conscience. For one blessed moment I seemed to be at the very centre of things, looking out quietly upon my own troubled emotions as upon something outside of me—apart from me, even as one from the firm rock may look abroad upon the vexed sea. And I thought I then knew something of what the Apostle meant when he said, "Your life is hid with Christ in God." I knew that there was a deeper self than that which was thus troubled.

I had not had my usual ramble this morning, and was otherwise ill-prepared for the Sunday. So I went early into the church; but finding that the sexton's wife had not yet finished lighting the stove, I sat down by my own fire in the vestry.

Suppose I am sitting there now while I say one word for our congregations in winter. I was very particular in having the church well warmed before Sunday. I think some parsons must neglect seeing after this matter on principle, because warmth may make a weary creature go to sleep here and there about the place: as if any healing doctrine could enter the soul while it is on the rack of the frost. The clergy should see—for it is their business—that their people have no occasion to think of their bodies at all while they are in church. They have enough ado to think of the truth. When our Lord was feeding even their bodies, he made them all sit down on the grass. It is worth noticing that there was much grass in the place—a rare thing I should think in those countries—and therefore, perhaps, it was chosen by Him for their comfort in feeding their souls and bodies both. If I may judge from experiences of my own, one of the reasons why some churches are of all places the least likely for anything good to be found in, is, that they are as wretchedly cold to the body as they are to the soul—too cold every way for anything to grow in them. *Edelweiss*, "Noble-white"—as they call a plant growing under the snow on some of the Alps—could not survive the winter in such churches. There is small welcome in a cold house. And the clergyman, who is the steward, should look to it. It is for him to give his Master's friends a welcome to his Master's house—for the welcome of a servant is precious, and now-a-days very rare.

And now Mrs. Stone must have finished. I go into the old church which looks as if it were quietly waiting for its people. No. She has not done yet. Never mind.—How full of meaning the vaulted roof looks! as if, having gathered a soul of its own out of the generations that have worshipped here for so long, it had feeling enough to grow hungry for a psalm before the end of the week.

Some such half-foolish fancy was now passing through my tranquillized mind or rather heart—for the mind would have rejected it at once—when to my—what shall I call it?—not amazement, for the delight was too strong for amazement—the old organ woke up and began to think aloud. As if it had been brooding over it all the week in the wonderful convolutions of its wooden brain, it began to sigh out the *Agnus Dei* of Mozart's Twelfth Mass upon the air of the still church, which lay swept and garnished for the Sunday.—How could it be? I know now; and I guessed then; and my guess was right; and my reader must be content to guess too. I took no step to verify my conjecture, for I felt that I was upon my honour, but sat in one of the pews and listened, till the old organ sobbed itself into silence. Then I heard the steps of the sexton's wife vanish from the church, heard her lock the door, and

knew that I was alone in the ancient pile, with the twilight growing thick about me, and felt like Sir Galahad, when, after the "rolling organ-harmony," he heard "wings flutter, voices hover clear." In a moment the mood changed; and I was sorry, not that the dear organ was dead for the night, but actually felt gently mournful that the wonderful old thing never had and never could have a conscious life of its own. So strangely does the passion—which I had not invented, reader, whoever thou art that thinkest love and a church do not well harmonize—so strangely, I say, full to overflowing of its own vitality, does it radiate life, that it would even of its own superabundance quicken into blessed consciousness the inanimate objects around it, thinking what they would feel had they a consciousness correspondent to their form, were their faculties moved from within themselves instead of from the will and operation of humanity.

I lingered on long in the dark church, as my reader knows I had done often before. Nor did I move from the seat I had first taken till I left the sacred building. And there I made my sermon for the next morning. And herewith I impart it to my reader. But he need not be afraid of another such as I have already given him, for I impart it only in its original germ, its concentrated essence of sermon these four verses:

Had I the grace to win the grace
Of some old man complete in lore,
My face would worship at his face,
Like childhood seated on the floor.

Had I the grace to win the grace
Of childhood, loving shy, apart,
The child should find a nearer place,
And teach me resting on my heart.

Had I the grace to win the grace
Of maiden living all above,
My soul would trample down the base,
That she might have a man to love.

A perfect grace I could not win
Knocks now at my half-open door:
Ah, Lord of glory, come Thou in,
Thy grace divine is all and more.

This was what I made for myself. I told my people that God had created all our worships, reverences, tendernesses, loves. That they had come out of his heart, and He had made them in us because they were in Him first. That otherwise He would not have cared to make them. That all that we could imagine of the wise, the lovely, the beautiful, was in Him, only infinitely more of them than we could not merely imagine, but understand, even if He did all He could to explain them to us, to make us understand them. That in Him was all the wise teaching of the best man ever known in the world and more; all the grace and gentleness and truth of the best child and more; all the tenderness and devotion of the truest type of womankind and more; for there is a love that passeth the love of women, not the love of Jonathan to David, though David said so; but the love of God to the men and women whom He has made. Therefore, we must be all God's; and all our aspirations, all our worships, all our honours, all our loves, must centre in Him, the Best.

XXIV.

Feeling rather more than the usual reaction so well-known to clergymen after the concentrated duties of the Sunday, I resolved on Monday to have the long country walk I had been disappointed of on the Saturday previous. It was such a day as it seems impossible to describe except in negatives. It was not stormy, it was not rainy, it was not sunshiny, it was not snowy, it was not frosty, it was not foggy, it was not clear, it was nothing but cloudy and quiet and cold and generally ungenial, with just a puff of wind now and then to give an assertion to its ungeniality. I should not in the least have cared to tell what sort the day was, had it not been an exact representation of my own mind. It was not the day that made me such as itself. The weather could always easily influence the surface of my mind, my external mood, but it could never go much further. The smallest pleasure would break through the conditions that merely came of such a day. But this morning my whole mind and heart seemed like the day. The summer was thousands of miles off on the other side of the globe. Ethelwyn, up at the old house there across the river, seemed millions of miles away. The summer *might* come back; she never would come nearer: it was absurd to expect it. For in such moods stupidity constantly arrogates to itself the qualities and claims of insight. In fact, it passes itself off for common sense, making the most dreary ever appear the most reasonable. In such moods a man might almost be persuaded that it was ridiculous to expect any such poetic absurdity as the summer, with its diamond mornings and its opal evenings, ever to come again; nay, to think that it ever had had any existence except in the fancies of the human heart—one of its castles in the air. The whole of life seemed faint and foggy, with no red in it anywhere; and when I glanced at my present relations in Marshmallows, I could not help finding several circumstances to give some appearance of justice to this appearance of things. I seemed to myself to have done no good. I had driven Catherine Weir to the verge of suicide, while at the same time I could not restrain her from the contemplation of some dire revenge. I had lost the man upon whom I had most reckoned as a seal of my ministry, namely Thomas Weir. True there was Old Rogers; but Old Rogers was just as good before I found him. I could not dream of having made him any better. And so I went on brooding over all the disappointing portions of my labour, all the time thinking about myself, instead of God and the work that lay for me to do in the days to come.

"Nobody," I said, "but Old Rogers understands me. Nobody would care, as far as my teaching goes, if another man took my place from next Sunday forward. And for Miss Oldcastle, her playing the *Agnus Dei* on Saturday afternoon, even if she intended that I should hear it, could only indicate at most that she knew how she had behaved to me in the morning, and thought she had gone too far and been unkind, or perhaps was afraid lest she should

be accountable for any failure I might make in my Sunday duties, and therefore felt bound to do something to restore my equanimity."

Choosing, though without consciously intending to do so, the dreariest path to be found, I wandered up the side of the slow black river, with the sentinel pollards looking at themselves in its gloomy mirror, just as I was looking at myself in the mirror of my circumstances. They leaned in all directions, irregular as the headstones in an ancient churchyard. In the summer they looked like explosions of green leaves at the best; now they looked like the burnt-out cases of the summer's fireworks. How different, too, was the river from the time when a whole fleet of shining white lilies lay anchored among their own broad green leaves upon its clear waters, filled with sunlight in every pore, as they themselves would fill the pores of a million-caverned sponge! But I could not even recall the past summer as beautiful. I seemed to care for nothing. But the first miserable afternoon at Marshmallows looked now as if it had been the whole of my coming relation to the place seen through a reversed telescope. And here I was *in* it now.

The walk along the side was tolerably dry, although the river was bank-full. But when I came to the bridge I wanted to cross—a wooden one—I found that the approach to it had been partly undermined and carried away, for here the river had overflowed its banks in one of the late storms; and all about the place was still very wet and swampy. I could therefore get no further in my gloomy walk, and so turned back upon my steps. Scarcely had I done so, when I saw a man coming hastily towards me from far upon the straight line of the river walk. I could not mistake him at any distance. It was Old Rogers. I felt both ashamed and comforted when I recognized him.

"Well, Old Rogers," I said, as soon as he came within hail, trying to speak cheerfully, "you cannot get much farther this way—without wading a bit, at least."

"I don't want to go no further now, sir. I came to find you."

"Nothing amiss, I hope?"

"Nothing as I knows on, sir. I only wanted to have a little chat with you. I told master I wanted to leave for an hour or so. He allus lets me do just as I like."

"But how did you know where to find me?"

"I saw you come this way. You passed me right on the bridge, and didn't see me, sir. So says I to myself, 'Old Rogers, summat's amiss wi' the parson to-day. He never went by me like that afore. This won't do. You just go and see.' So I went home and told master, and here I be, sir. And I hope you're noways offended with the liberty of me."

"Did I really pass you on the bridge?" I said, unable to understand it.

"That you did, sir. I knowed parson must be a goodish bit in his own in'ards afore he would do that."

"I needn't tell you I didn't see you, Old Rogers."

"I could tell you that, sir. I hope there's nothing gone main wrong, sir. Miss is well, sir, I hope?"

"Quite well, I thank you. No, my dear fellow, nothing's gone main wrong, as you say. Some of my running tackle got jammed a bit, that's all. I'm a little out of spirits, I believe."

"Well, sir, don't you be afeard I'm going to be troublesome. Don't think I want to get aboard your ship, except you fling me a rope. There's a many things you mun ha' to think about, that an ignorant man like me couldn't take up if you was to let 'em drop. And being a gentleman, I do believe, makes the matter worse betuxt us. And there's many a thing that no man can go talkin' about to any one but only the Lord himself. Still you can't help us poor folks seeing when there's summat amiss, and we can't help havin' our own thoughts any more than the sailor's jackdaw that couldn't speak. And sometimes we may be nearer the mark than you would suppose, for God has made us all of one blood, you know."

"What *are* you driving at, Old Rogers?" I said with a smile, which was none the less true that I suspected he had read some of the worst trouble of my heart. For why should I mind an honourable man like him knowing what oppressed me, though, as things were, I certainly should not, as he said, choose to tell it to any but one?

"I don't want to say what I was driving at, if it was anything but this—that I want to put to the clumsy hand of a rough old tar, with a heart as soft as the pitch that makes his hand hard—to trim your sails a bit, sir, and help you to lie a point closer to the wind. You're not just close-hauled, sir."

"Say on, Old Rogers. I understand you, and I will listen with all my heart, for you have a good right to speak."

And Old Rogers spoke thus:

"Oncet upon a time, I made a voyage in a merchant barque. We were becalmed in the south seas. And weary work it wur, a doin' of nothin' from day to day. But when the water began to come up thick from the bottom of the water-casks, it was wearier a deal. Then a thick fog came on, as white as snow a'most, and we couldn't see more than a few yards ahead or on any side of us. But the fog didn't keep the heat off; it only made it worse, and the water was fast going done. The short allowance grew shorter and shorter, and the men, some of them, were half-mad with thirst, and began to look bad at one another. I kept up my heart by looking ahead inside me. For days and days the fog hung about us as if the air had been made o' flocks o' wool. The captain took to his berth, and several of the crew to their hammocks, for it was just as hot on deck as anywhere else. The mate lay on a spare-sail on the quarter-deck, groaning. I had a strong suspicion that the schooner was drifting, and hove the lead again and again, but could find no bottom. Some of the men got hold of the spirits, and *that* didn't quench their thirst. It drove them clean mad. I had to knock one of them down myself with a capstan-bar, for he ran at the mate with his knife. At last I began to lose all hope. And still I was sure the schooner was slowly drifting. My head was like to burst, and my tongue was like a lump of holystone in my mouth. One morning, I had just, as I thought, lain down on

the deck to breathe my last, hoping I should die before I went quite mad with thirst, when all at once the fog lifted, like the foot of a sail. I sprung to my feet. There was the blue sky overhead; but the terrible burning sun was there. A moment more and a light air blew on my cheek, and, turning my face to it as if it had been the very breath of God, there was an island within half a mile, and I saw the shine of water on the face of a rock on the shore. I cried out, 'Land on the weather-quarter! Water in sight!' In a moment more a boat was lowered, and in a few minutes the boat's crew, of which I was one, were lying, clothes and all, in a little stream that came down from the hills above.—There, Mr. Walton! that's what I wanted to say to you."

This is as near the story of my old friend as my limited knowledge of sea-affairs allows me to report it.

"I understand you quite, Old Rogers, and I thank you heartily," I said.

"No doubt," resumed he, "King Solomon was quite right, as he always was, I suppose, in what he *said*, for his wisdom mun ha' laid mostly in the tongue—right, I say, when he said, 'Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth;' but I can't help thinking there's another side to it. I think it would be as good advice to a man on the other tack, whose boasting lay far to windward, and he close on a lee-shore wi' breakers—it wouldn't be amiss to say to him, 'Don't strike your colours to the morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.' There's just as many good days as bad ones; as much fair weather as foul in the days to come. And if a man keeps up heart, he's all the better for that, and none the worse when the evil day does come. But, God forgive me! I'm talking like a heathen. As if there was any chance about what the days would bring forth. No, my lad," said the old sailor, assuming the dignity of his superior years under the inspiration of the truth, "boast nor trust nor hope in the morrow. Boast and trust and hope in God, for thou shalt yet praise Him, who is the health of thy countenance and thy God."

I could but hold out my hand. I had nothing to say. For he had spoken to me as an angel of God.

The old man was silent for some moments: his emotion needed time to still itself again. Nor did he return to the subject. He held out his hand once more, saying—

"Good day, sir. I must go back to my work."

"I will go back with you," I returned.

And so we walked back side by side to the village, but not a word did we speak the one to the other, till we shook hands and parted upon the bridge, where we had first met. Old Rogers went to his work, and I lingered upon the bridge. I leaned upon the low parapet, and looked up the stream as far as the mists creeping about the banks, and hovering in thinnest veils over the surface of the water, would permit. Then I turned and looked down the river crawling on to the sweep it made out of sight just where Mr. Brownrigg's farm began to come down to its banks. Then I looked to the left, and there stood my old church, as quiet in the dreary day, though not so bright, as in the sunshine: even the graves themselves must look yet more "solemn sad" in a wintry day like this, than they look when the sunlight that enfolds them proclaims that God is not the God of the dead but of the living. One of the great battles that we have to fight in this world—for twenty great battles have to be fought all at once and in one—is the battle with appearances. I turned me to the right, and there once more I saw, as on that first afternoon, the weathercock that watched the winds over the stables at Oldcastle Hall. It had caught just one glimpse of the sun through some rent in the vapours, and flung it across to me, then vanished again amid the general dinginess of the hour.

XXV.

I HAVE said, near the beginning of my story, that my parish was a large one: how is it that I have mentioned but one of the great families in it, and have indeed confined my recollections entirely to the village and its immediate neighbourhood? Will my reader have patience while I explain this to him a little? First, as he may have observed, my personal attraction is towards the poor rather than the rich. I was made so. I can generally get nearer the poor than the rich. But I say *generally*, for I have known a few rich people quite as much to my mind as the best of the poor. Thereupon, of course, their education would give them the advantage with me in the possibilities of communion. But when the heart is right, and there is a good stock of common sense as well,—a gift predominant, as far as I am aware, in no one class over another, education will turn the scale very gently with me. And then when I reflect that some of these poor people would have made nobler ladies and gentlemen than all but two or three I know, if they had only had the opportunity, there is a reaction towards the poor, something like a feeling of favour because they have not had fair play—a feeling soon modified, though not altered, by the reflection that they are such because God who loves them better than we do, has so ordered their lot, and by the recollection that not only was our Lord himself poor, but He said the poor were blessed. And let me just say in passing that I not only believe it because He said it, but I believe it because I see that it is so. I think sometimes that the world must have been especially created for the poor, and that particular allowances will be made for the rich because they are born into such disadvantages, and with their wickednesses and their miseries, their love of spiritual dirt and meanness, subserve the highest growth and emancipation of the poor, that they may inherit both the earth and the kingdom of heaven.

But I have been once more wandering from my subject.

Thus it was that the people in the village lying close to my door attracted most of my attention at first; of which attention those more immediately associated with the village, as, for instance, the inhabitants of the Hall, came in for a share, although they did not belong to the same class.

Again, the houses of most of the gentlefolk lay considerably apart from the church and from each other. Many of them went elsewhere to church, and

I did not feel bound to visit those, for I had enough to occupy me without, and had little chance of getting a hold of them to do them good. Still there were one or two families which I would have visited oftener, I confess, had I been more interested in them, or had I had a horse. Therefore, I ought to have bought a horse sooner than I did. Before this winter was over, however, I did buy one, partly to please Dr. Duncan, who urged me to it for the sake of my health, partly because I could then do my duty better, and partly, I confess, from having been very fond of an old mare of my father's, when I was a boy, living, after my mother's death, at a farm of his in B—shire. Happening to come across a gray mare very much like her, I bought her at once.

I think it was the very day after the events recorded in my last chapter that I mounted her to pay a visit to two rich maiden ladies, whose carriage stopped at the Lych-gate most Sundays when the weather was favourable, but whom I had called upon only once since I came to the parish. I should not have thought this visit worth mentioning, except for the conversation I had with them, during which a hint or two were dropped which had an influence in colouring my thoughts for some time after.

I was shown with much ceremony by a butler, as old apparently as his livery of yellow and green, into the presence of the two ladies, one of whom sat in state reading a volume of the *Spectator*. She was very tall, and as square as the straight long-backed chair upon which she sat. A fat asthmatic poodle lay at her feet upon the hearth-rug. The other, a little lively grey-haired creature, who looked like a most ancient girl whom no power of gathering years would ever make old, was standing upon a high chair, making love to a demoniacal-looking cockatoo in a gilded cage. As I entered the room, the latter all but jumped from her perch with a merry though wavering laugh, and advanced to meet me.

"Jonathan, bring the cake and wine," she cried to the retreating servant.

The former rose with a solemn stiff-backedness, which was more amusing than dignified, and extended her hand as I approached her, without moving from her place.

"We were afraid, Mr. Walton," said the little lady, "that you had forgotten we were parishioners of yours."

"That I could hardly do," I answered, "seeing you are such regular attendants at church. But I confess I have given you ground for your rebuke, Miss Crowther. I bought a horse, however, the other day, and this is the first use I have put him to.

"We're charmed to see you. It is very good of you not to forget such uninteresting girls as we are."

"You forget, Jemima," interposed her sister, in a feminine bass, "that time is always on the wing. I should have thought we were both decidedly middle-aged, though you are the elder by I will not say how many years."

"All but ten years, Hester. I remember rocking you in your cradle scores of times. But somehow, Mr. Walton, I can't help feeling as if she was my elder sister. She is so learned, you see; and I don't read anything but the newspapers."

"And your Bible, Jemima. Do yourself justice."

"That's a matter of course, sister. But this is not the way to entertain Mr. Walton."

"The gentlemen used to entertain the ladies when *I* was young, Jemima. I do not know how it may have been when you were."

"Much the same, I believe, sister. But if you look at Mr. Walton, I think you will see that he is pretty much entertained as it is."

"I agree with Miss Hester," I said. "It is the duty of gentlemen to entertain ladies. But it is so much the kinder of ladies when they surpass their duty, and condescend to entertain gentlemen."

"What can surpass duty, Mr. Walton! I confess I do not agree with your doctrines upon that point."

"I do not quite understand you, Miss Hester," I returned.

"Why, Mr. Walton—I hope you will not think me rude, but it always seems to me—and it has given me much pain, when I consider that your congregation is chiefly composed of the lower classes, who may be greatly injured by such a style of preaching. I must say I think so, Mr. Walton. Only perhaps you are one of those who think a lady's opinion on such matters is worth nothing."

"On the contrary, I respect an opinion just as far as the lady or gentleman who holds it seems to me qualified to have formed it first. But you have not yet told me what you think so objectionable in my preaching."

"You always speak as if faith in Christ was something greater than duty. Now I think duty the first thing."

"I quite agree with you, Miss Crowther. For how can I, or any clergyman, urge a man to that which is not his duty? But tell me, is not faith in Christ a duty? Where you have mistaken me is, that you think I speak of faith as higher than duty, when indeed I speak of faith as higher than any *other* duty. It is the highest duty of man. I do not say the duty he always sees clearest, or even sees at all. But the fact is, that when that which is a duty becomes the highest delight of a man, the joy of his very being, he no more thinks or needs to think about it as a duty. What would you think of the love of a son who, when an appeal was made to his affections, should say, 'O yes, I love my mother dearly: it is my duty, of course'?"

"That sounds very plausible, Mr. Walton; but still I cannot help feeling that you preach faith and not works. I do not say that you are not to preach faith, of course; but you know faith without works is dead."

"Now, really, Hester," interposed Miss Jemima, "I cannot think how it is, but, for my part, I should have said that Mr. Walton was constantly preaching works. He's always telling you to do something or other. I know I always come out of the church with something on my mind; and I've got to work it off somehow before I'm comfortable."

And here Miss Jemima got up on the chair again,

and began to flirt with the cockatoo once more, but only in silent signs.

I cannot quite recall how this part of the conversation drew to a close. But I will tell a fact or two about the sisters which may possibly explain how it was that they took up such different notions of my preaching. The younger scarcely left the house, but spent almost the whole of her time in reading small dingy books of eighteenth-century literature. She believed in no other; thought Shakspere sentimental where he was not low, and Bacon pompous; Addison thoroughly respectable and gentlemanly. Pope was the great English poet, incomparably before Milton. The "Essay on Man" contained the deepest wisdom; the "Rape of the Lock" the most graceful imagination to be found in the language. The "Vicar of Wakefield" was pretty, but foolish; while in philosophy, Paley was perfect, especially in his notion of happiness, which she had heard objected to, and therefore warmly defended. Somehow or other, respectability—in position, in morals, in religion, in conduct—was everything. The consequence was that her very nature was old-fashioned, and had nothing in it of that lasting youth which is the birthright—so often despised—of every immortal being. But I have already said more about her than her place in my story justifies.

Miss Crowther, on the contrary, whose eccentricities did not lie on the side of respectability, had gone on shocking the stiff proprieties of her younger sister till she could be shocked no more, and gave in as to the hopelessness of fate. She had had a severe disappointment in youth, had not only survived it, but saved her heart alive out of it, losing only, as far as appeared to the eyes of her neighbours at least, any remnant of selfish care about herself; and she now spent the love which had before been concentrated upon one object, upon every living thing that came near her, even to her sister's sole favourite, the wheezing poodle. She was very odd, it must be confessed, with her gray hair, her clear gray eye with wrinkled eyelids, her light step, her laugh at once girlish and cracked; darting in and out of the cottages, scolding this matron with a lurking smile in every tone, hugging that baby, boxing the ears of the other little tyrant, passing this one's rent, and threatening that other with awful vengeances; but it was a very lovely oddity. Their property was not large, and she knew every living thing on the place down to the dogs and pigs. And Miss Jemima, as the people always called her, transferring the *Miss Crowther* of primogeniture to the younger, who kept, like King Henry IV.,—

> 'Her' presence, like a robe pontifical,
> Ne'er seen but wondered at,

was the actual queen of the neighbourhood; for, though she was the very soul of kindness, she was determined to have her own way, and had it.

Although I did not know all this at the time, such were the two ladies who held these different opinions about my preaching; the one who did nothing but read Messrs. Addison, Pope, Paley, and Co., considering that I neglected the doctrine of works as the seal of faith, and the one who was busy helping her neighbours from morning to night, finding little in my preaching, except incentive to benevolence.

The next point where my recollection can take up the conversation, is where Miss Hester made the following further criticism on my pulpit labours.

"You are too anxious to explain everything, Mr. Walton."

I pause in my recording, to do my critic the justice of remarking that what she said looks worse on paper than it sounded from her lips; for she was a gentlewoman, and the tone has much to do with the impression made by the intellectual contents of all speech.

"Where can be the use of trying to make uneducated people see the grounds of everything?" she said. "It is enough that this or that is in the Bible."

"Yes; but there is just the point. What is in the Bible? Is it this or that?"

"You are their spiritual instructor: tell them what is in the Bible."

"But you have just been objecting to my mode of representing what is in the Bible."

"It will be so much the worse, if you add argument to convince them of what is incorrect."

"I doubt that. Argument will expose itself the sooner that it is not on the side of the truth."

"You cannot expect them to judge of what you tell them."

"The Bible urges upon us to search and understand."

"I grant that for those whose business it is, like yourself."

"Do you think, then, that the Church consists of a few privileged to understand, and a great many who cannot understand, and therefore need not be taught?"

"I said you had to teach them."

"But to teach is to make people understand."

"I don't think so. If you come to that, how much can the wisest of us understand? You remember what Pope says,—

> Superior beings, when of late they saw
> A mortal man unfold all Nature's law,
> Admired such wisdom in an earthly shape,
> And showed a Newton as we show an ape."

"I do not know the passage. Pope is not my Bible. I should call such superior beings very inferior beings indeed."

"Do you call the angels inferior beings?"

"Such angels, certainly."

"He means the good angels, of course."

"And I say the good angels could never behave like that, for contempt is one of the lowest spiritual conditions in which any being can place himself. Our Lord says, 'Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for their angels do always behold the face of my Father, who is in Heaven.'"

"Now will you even say that you understand that passage?"

"Practically, well enough; just as the poorest man of my congregation may understand it. I am not to despise one of the little ones. Pope represents the angels as despising a Newton even."

"And you despise Pope."

"I hope not. I say he was full of despising, and therefore, if for no other reason, a small man."

"Surely you do not jest at his bodily infirmities."

"I had forgotten them quite."

"In every other sense he was a great man."

"I cannot allow it. He was intellectually a great man, but morally a small man."

"Such refinements are not easily followed."

"I will undertake to make the poorest woman in my congregation understand that."

"Why don't you try your friend Mrs. Oldcastle, then? It might do her a little good," said Miss Hester, now becoming, I thought, a little spiteful at hearing her favourite treated so unceremoniously. I found afterwards that there was some kindness in it, however.

"I should have very little influence with Mrs. Oldcastle if I were to make the attempt. But I am not called upon to address my flock individually upon every point of character."

"I thought she was an intimate friend of yours."

"Quite the contrary. We are scarcely friendly."

"I am very glad to hear it," said Miss Jemima, who had been silent during the little controversy that her sister and I had been carrying on. "We have been quite misinformed. The fact is, we thought we might have seen more of you if it had not been for her. And as very few people of her own position in society care to visit her, we thought it a pity she should be your principal friend in the parish."

"Why do they not visit her more?"

"There are strange stories about her, which it is as well to leave alone. They are getting out of date too. But she is not a fit woman to be regarded as the clergyman's friend. There!" said Miss Jemima, as if she had wanted to relieve her bosom of a burden, and had done it.

"I think, however, her religious opinions would correspond with your own, Mr. Walton," said Miss Hester.

"Possibly," I answered, with indifference; "I don't care much about opinion."

"Her daughter would be a nice girl, I fancy, if she weren't kept down by her mother. She looks scared, poor thing! And they say she's not quite—the thing, you know," said Miss Jemima.

"What *do* you mean, Miss Crowther?"

She gently tapped her forehead with a forefinger.

I laughed. I thought it was not worth my while to enter as the champion of Miss Oldcastle's sanity.

"They are, and have been, a strange family as far back as I can remember; and my mother used to say the same. I am glad she comes to our church now. You mustn't let her set her cap at you though, Mr. Walton. It wouldn't do at all. She's pretty enough, too!"

"Yes," I returned, "she is rather pretty. But I don't think she looks as if she had a cap to set at anybody."

I rose to go, for I did not relish any further pursuit of the conversation in the same direction.

I rode home slowly, brooding on the lovely marvel, that out of such a rough ungracious stem as the Oldcastle family, should have sprung such a delicate, pale, winter-braved flower, as Ethelwyn. And I prayed that I might be honoured to rescue her from the ungenial soil and atmosphere to which the machinations of her mother threatened to confine her for the rest of a suffering life.

MISERERE MEI, DEUS.

O, HEAR ME! Heavenly Father,
For I am sore distrest;
And clouds of darkness gather,
And troubles fill my breast.

My strength is fast declining,
And all my days are spent
In passionate repining
And bitter discontent.

I long for some sure basis
Whereon to rest my feet;
I sigh for some oasis,
For some secure retreat.

And must I sigh for ever,
And sorrow all in vain?
And wilt Thou never, never
Have pity on my pain?

I would not now dissemble;
But, striving to speak out,
E'en in my trust I tremble
Upon the brink of doubt—

Not doubting Thee, O Father!
I know how true Thou art;
But fearing, doubting rather
My own deceitful heart.

For idle thoughts come thronging,
And foolish thoughts arise;
And, while I plead my longing,
My longing faints and dies.

Look down in loving-kindness
Upon my mournful case,
And heal my inward blindness,
And all my guilt efface.

Look down on my dejection,
Have mercy on my moan,
And let my first affection
Be henceforth Thine alone!

I long to win Thy favour,
To walk the narrow way;
Against my will I waver,
And go so far astray.

Proud, when I would be humble—
Blind, when I strive to see;
At every step I stumble,
In coming unto Thee.

I do try hard to bridle
The sins that cause my pain;
But all my thoughts are idle,
And all my efforts vain.

I spend my days in grieving
Because of my sad state,
Yet still I go on cleaving
To that I loathe and hate.

My faith decays and dwindles,
My former hopes depart,
And Satan comes and kindles
His wildfires in my heart;

And lo! his fallen angels,
Hearing my fervent prayer,
Robed as Thine own evangels,
Swoop through the viewless air.

They come with passionate pleading;
They come with love-lit eyes;
And leave my bosom bleeding,
For all their words are lies.

I fly—they follow after;
They mock me for my fears;
E'en now their horrid laughter
Is ringing in my ears;

E'en now I quake and quiver,
And fear that I shall fall;
Deliver me! deliver
My faint heart from their thrall.

I am but poor and lowly,
And sunk in sin and guilt;
O, cleanse me, make me holy;
Thou canst, Lord, if Thou wilt.

I come to Thee in meekness,
Thy love alone I plead;
Thou knowest all my weakness,
Give me the strength I need.

Thy loving words thrill through me,
I lift my arms on high;
O, stretch down Thine unto me
And help me or I die.

WILLIAM HENRY HARWOOD.

THE RECHABITES.

BY THE EDITOR.

It is a safe rule to avoid illustrations drawn from ships when preaching at a seaport, or from battle-fields in a garrison, or from pastoral scenes to a congregation of shepherds. The reason of this is obvious. The preacher being much less perfectly acquainted with the subject that furnishes the illustration than his hearers, he is very likely to commit some blunder which the humblest of them can detect; and by this, expose himself and, what is a much more serious evil, his great theme to contempt. So it once fell out with a friend of mine when occupying a pulpit in the Highlands of Forfarshire. He, not unnaturally, thought that the twenty-third Psalm offered peculiarly suitable topics of discourse to the natives of a glen; and having a remarkably good opinion of himself, he never doubted, though a dweller in the plains, that with his knowledge of the habits both of shepherds and their sheep, his sermon would prove a success.

It fell out otherwise; and thus. Among these hills the temperature even in summer is cold rather than hot: full of springs and streams, their herbage is succulent; and it is rarely indeed that their pastures, like those of Italy or Palestine, are so burned by long droughts and scorching suns as to remind one of the Bible figure "withered like grass." This being the case, the sheep of the Grampians are independent of water; nor, though it is abundantly supplied by loch and dark tarn, dancing-streams and green mossy wells where the deer slakes his thirst, do they ever drink—unless, indeed, when they are ill. Ignorant of this, the preacher expatiated on "the still waters" of the Psalm—telling his amazed hearers that the Gospel was as much needed by them as water by their fleecy charges, and exhorting them to seek and enjoy its mercies as they knew their sheep did the river and the mountain streams. Now they knew the reverse of this to be true; and concluded that the preacher must be very ignorant since he did not know what even their children knew; and as they lingered to light their pipes by the church-door, he had the mortification, on retiring, to hear himself and his sermon treated with contempt; one saying to another, *Puir bodie, heard ye ever the like o' yon about a sheep drinking!*

The habits of the lower animals change to a certain extent with culture and climate. So, indeed, do those of man himself—the natives of hot countries, for example, living chiefly on vegetables, while the Esquimaux, to maintain their vital heat amid the rigours of Greenland, require, as well as use, the fattest animal food—seal, whale, and walrus. So, in consequence of the dry herbage and great heat, the sheep of those countries which supplied the sacred writers with illustrations, freely use water. There, it is indeed necessary to their health and life. Hence it was that a man one day saw a flock approaching the well where he sat way-worn and weary, in a dry parched land, beneath a burning sun. A common sight that; but not so the guardians of this flock—a sight as beautiful as infrequent, seven shepherdesses; sisters all; in the bloom of youth and womanhood. Hand in hand, with arms around each other's necks, these fair ones approach, perhaps unaware of a stranger's presence; and, drawing, fill the troughs that were there, to water their father's sheep. But ere

this was done, some men, for the wells of the East were often common property, arrived with their flocks at the same place for the same purpose; and with more of the selfishness of human nature than the courtesy we are accustomed to associate with Eastern manners, they took unmanly advantage of their superior strength to drive the maidens and their flock aside—an act of rudeness, and of plain injustice also, since not they but the shepherdesses had filled the troughs. A banished man, with a price set on his head, and his thoughts far away in the land where his friends and people wore the chains of a galling slavery, the stranger was probably too much occupied with his own sad reflections to take, in the first instance, much interest in the scene. But this rude injustice and oppression rouses a lion within him: and though it was against great odds—he a foreigner and the shepherds natives—he one and they many—Moses, for it is he, steps forward; and with that in his eye, his tones, and bearing that makes the cowards quail and retreat as he advances, he espouses the cause of the weaker party—and rights their wrongs. Fain, but perhaps too modest to ask him to their home, his fair clients content themselves with kind looks and grateful thanks. But full of admiration of his gallant bearing, they relate the whole affair to their father, who instantly sends them back, no unwilling messengers, to invite the stranger to the house—where, conducted by his future wife and her fair train of sisters, Moses found a home. It is to this same house, where he spent forty happy years, that I proceed, to trace the remarkable family whose name stands at the head of this article.

On seeing a girl tending a flock of sheep or herd of cattle, we might conclude that, though presenting with her golden locks, and rosy cheek, and naked feet, a beautiful picture, the nature of her occupation proved the humbleness of her rank. Such an inference would have been wrong in the old times of Scripture. People had more true taste and less false shame in these early days. Laban, for example, was a man of wealth, yet on our first introduction to his daughter, Jacob's future and favourite wife, we find her engaged in the care of her father's flock. "Behold," said the shepherds, speaking of Laban, and directing Jacob's attention to a beautiful maiden who approached them, "Behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep!" But the head of the house to which Moses was conducted, the father of these fair shepherdesses, held a position much superior to Laban's. Reuel, or Jethro, or Hobab, for he goes by all the three names, appears to have united in himself both the offices of a priest and of a prince in the land of Midian: and thereby affords us a curious and interesting glimpse into the arrangements of society in the patriarchal age. It is probable that at that early period, and among those who, preserving the primitive faith, worshipped one true God, there was no class specially set apart for religious offices—such as the Jews, under the Mosaic dispensation, had in their priests, and we, and all Christian sects, with a few exceptions, have in those called ministers, or clergy. Abraham, for instance, offered sacrifices simply as the head of a family; so did Jacob; and where there was a clan or tribe, the honour and responsibility of discharging such sacred functions belonged probably to its chief, who, after a fashion, united Church and State. Melchizedec did so. He was King of Salem, and also a priest of the Most High God; being honoured and recognised as such on account of his pre-eminent piety throughout the whole land, and by many besides his own subjects. Moses' father-in-law seems to have occupied a similar position. On visiting the Israelites in the wilderness, he offered sacrifice; and in taking part with him in that holy office, Aaron and the elders of Israel virtually acknowledged what might be called his "holy orders." Moses, his son-in-law, the renowned leader of the Hebrew host, himself inspired of God and endowed by nature with the highest qualities of a statesman, paid Jethro yet higher honours—taking counsel of him, and following his advice as how best to lighten the burdens of government, dispense justice to the people, and guide the helm of the Commonwealth.

This distinguished man was the ancestor of the Rechabites—a fact which can be plainly made out by bringing together some scattered parts of Scripture history. It is true that Jethro, though he visited Israel on their approaching his territories during their march through the wilderness, and on that occasion restored his wife and two sons to Moses, did not abide with them; but, taking his departure, bade them farewell, and "went his way into his own land." A branch of his family, however, who were called Kenites, afterwards joined themselves to the Hebrew nation, and being received into its bosom, became partakers of its privileges—an event which is thus recorded in the first chapter of the book of Joshua:—"And the children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up out of the city of palm-trees with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah, which lieth in the south of Arad: and they went and dwelt among the people." Now the Kenites, being the descendants of Jethro, all that is required to prove that he was the ancestor of the Rechabites is to show their identity with these Kenites, and this is done in the last verse of the second chapter of 1 Chronicles, where it is said, "These are the Kenites that came of Hemath, the father of the house of Rechab."

I have thus traced the stream to its fountain. Sprung from Jethro, the Rechabites had a noble origin; and since it is sometimes with men, as it always is with water, that they rise to the height of the fountain from which they spring, this tribe may have owed somewhat of their superior virtues to their honourable descent. That those who are born of families distinguished for talents and virtue often possess superior properties, is a well-known fact; one recorded in such proverbial expressions as these, "A hawk out of a good nest," "An ounce of blood is better than a pound of bone." If there is so much, as is known to shepherds and sportsmen, in the breed of dogs and horses, much more may we attach value to the breed of men, among whom we often see the qualities of the heart and head descending, by a law more sure than that of entail, from sire to son through succeeding generations. How much of their noble character the Rechabites owed to their noble descent,

it were not easy to tell. But they were under the favourable influences which the connection with old and honourable families naturally exerts on the minds of their representatives. Such families are more than merely ornamental to a country, like the old and picturesque castles they inhabit. The deeds which won fame and fortune for the founder of the house, the hoary traditions of its past history, the memory of a long line of distinguished ancestors—famous in public annals for their patriotism, and in the country around for their generous and noble charities, the feeling of having to maintain the high character of an ancient house, these things do, and cannot fail to exert influences for good which are not felt by families that, growing and perhaps destined to decay like mushrooms, sprung up but yesterday, without any ancestral traditions to cherish or ancestral honours to maintain.

THE PECULIAR CUSTOMS WHICH THE RECHABITES PRACTISED.

For a long period after being adopted into the family of Israel, those descendants of Jethro who bore the name of Kenites achieved no distinction: but passed through life like the great mass who eat and drink, marry and give in marriage, get quietly, and many of them usefully, through their duties, and then die off; and, with their memories consigned to the same tomb as their bodies, find no place in story. There was, indeed, one remarkable exception to this, Jael the wife of Heber—she who slew Sisera, the leader of the hosts of Canaan, having enticed him into her tent, and when he slept, with a nail driven through his temples, pinned him dead to the ground. Approve or condemn the part this heroine played in that bloody drama—and for myself I am not prepared either wholly to applaud or wholly to censure her—Heber's wife did a deed that earned for her the thanks of a grateful country, and a place in immortal song. Long years after, on festive and solemn occasions, in cottages where women plied the distaff, and in camps where soldiers met, of her, the pride of her own sex and the envy of the other, they sung, "Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent. He asked water, and she gave him milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish. She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen's hammer; and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples. At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: . . . . where he bowed, there he fell down dead."

Jael passes away; and long centuries thereafter another Kenite, equally distinguished for decision of character, steps on the stage. It is Jonadab the son of Rechab; and the star of the Kenite is once more in the ascendant. To such a height had his patriotism, and probably his piety, raised this man in public esteem, that Jehu, the executioner of God's wrath on the house of Ahab, courted his favour. Some men's favour is sunshine to a cause—their mere presence ensures success—and the highest testimony to Jonadab's influence is the anxiety Jehu shows to enlist him on his side, and to Jonadab's piety is the argument Jehu urges: "Come," he says, cloaking, as others have done, selfish ends under the appearance of religion, "Come, see my zeal for the Lord!"

There are some who, through the good influences they have exerted, live long after they are dead. It is said of those who die in the Lord that their works do follow them—but while their good works follow them to heaven, they also remain behind them on earth. Indeed, every one, though only within the walls of a humble cottage, or the narrow limits of a country village, has an influence for good or evil—pebbles as well as rocks, when they fall into a lake, raising circles on its glassy surface; and it is a solemn thing to think that no man lives, or can live to himself, without affecting some for weal or woe. But from time to time, once in a century or so—as might be expected in a world where Nature, though producing many mice, produces but one elephant, at a birth—great men arise to stamp their character on their age and nation,—by their thoughts, the principles they enunciate, the institutions they establish, forming the minds and ruling the destinies of generations that walk above their graves. Such men England had in Latimer and Ridley, in the Puritans of a succeeding age, and in those bold Barons of an earlier era who wrung her Magna Charta from tyrant hands. Such a man Scotland had in Knox, whose grave, like his who also led forth a nation from the House of Bondage, is known to none, but whose life is felt and whose memory is honoured by his countrymen—to whatever shores their energy and education have carried them. Among these moulders of men and makers of public opinion the son of Rechab holds no mean place. No man ever stamped his own features more deeply on the mind of others. With a more enduring impression than can be made on iron or on granite, his descendants took their cast and character from him; religiously observing for three hundred years at least, and for how many more I know not, the two customs he imposed on them—a nomade life and abstinence from all intoxicating drinks.

The instructions of Jonadab to his children, in conformity to which, since example is better than precept, he probably shaped his own practice, were these, as recorded in the thirty-fifth chapter of Jeremiah; "We will drink no wine," said his tribe, "for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons, for ever: neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents." Thus stedfastly adhering to a practice which the founder of their house had enjoined, and age had made venerable in their eyes, the Rechabites answered Jeremiah, pushing away the cup he offered. Though not without God's sanction, and indeed in obedience to his express directions, the prophet had put these stout men and their stern principles to no ordinary test. It was in the very temple and house of God the wine was offered. It was poured out by the hand of one of his most pious servants. He was a prophet of the Most High God who invited them to drink—what, apart from the prohibiton of Jonadab, they probably had no

objection to use. How natural in these circumstances for them to say—That cannot be forbidden which is offered in holy vessels, nor wrong to which a prophet invites! Yet they put aside the cup, saying, "We have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters." Happy family!—of how few, if any, of ours could it be said?—in which for three hundred years there had never been a drunkard to break a mother's heart, to bring shame on those who loved him, to fill a dishonoured grave? Such was Jonadab's—and such how many sad mourners wish that theirs had been! However people may, or may not, think it duty to set the example, and rear their children up in the customs of the Rechabites, they cannot but admit and admire the wisdom of this man. Holding prevention to be better than cure, and that, as all experience proves, it is much easier to keep people out of temptation than save them in it, Jonadab while enjoining his descendants to drink no wine, seeks to protect them from temptation; forbidding them, though they might have used the fruit of the vine in many other ways than drink, to plant a vineyard. Following his example, and for the same end, not a few parents educate their families in habits of the strictest temperance, in the use of no cup stronger than that

Which cheers, but not inebriates.

Christians may differ as to the path of duty in that matter. But the general lesson which Jonadab's injunction teaches is one, the truth and importance of which none will question. Peace of conscience and purity of life turn much more on our avoiding than resisting temptations. It is wiser, if it be possible, to flee than to fight them: a great truth taught us by a higher authority than Jonadab. It stands embodied in the Lord's Prayer, in that, not the least important of its petitions, Lead us not into temptation!

The second injunction of Jonadab was no less faithfully observed by his posterity. Types of man on this earth, and true representatives of Abraham—from whose loins they sprung, through Keturah, his second wife—they were strangers and sojourners in the land. Camping among the hills or grassy plains of Judah, they lived a wandering life: a shepherd race, who moved about from pasture to pasture with the flocks that formed their wealth; neither enervated by the luxuries, nor corrupted by the vices of cities. Virtuous in their habits, they were simple in their manners. Yet shrewd withal: quite able, which many are not, to hold fast their principles without riding them to the death. For example, notwithstanding their ancient customs, and the commandment of Jonadab, and their respect for his authority, they abandoned their tents; and fleeing the open country, took refuge within Jerusalem when the Chaldeans invaded the land. God's laws admit of no exceptions. But, neither bigots nor fanatics, the Rechabites rightly judged that man's do; and, as they were ready to dwell in houses when it would have been death to dwell in tents, they would have been equally ready, I have no doubt, to violate in the letter, though not in the spirit, the other law of Jonadab—to drink wine in a case of clear necessity, where its use was judged indispensable to the preservation of health or life.

As to the history of these two remarkable customs, it was probably the dissolute manners of his age which induced Jonadab to institute them. Considerations of expediency may make that a duty at one time which is not so at another. Medicine—to take an illustration from it—is not meat, yet the body is often in such an abnormal condition, so unhealthy, as to require its use; and, when the air is charged with the subtle poison of disease, precautions are necessary to fortify us against its attacks which were superfluous in happier times. Such were, perhaps, the grounds on which the son of Rechab acted. A sagacious and patriotic man, he probably instituted these customs to protect his family and their descendants from the general corruption of the age—the vices that reigned in cities, and the drunkenness that, prevailing everywhere, was undermining the prosperity and happiness, the health and lives of thousands. The principle on which he acted may be misapplied, yet the Bible sanctions and enforces it; saying, Go thou and do likewise. Looking to the good of others, the glory of God, and the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, Paul says—and the apostle's is a statement that admits of a wide application—All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient.

THE BLESSING ENJOYED BY THE RECHABITES.

There are few, if any, estates in our country now in possession of the direct, lineal male descendants of those who owned them three hundred years ago. Old families die out; their properties pass into the hands of aliens, or of collateral heirs; and whether it is a royal palace, or a noble's castle, or a simple mansion-house, the place that once knew them knows them no more. But for three whole centuries Jonadab the son of Rechab never wanted a man to stand up before the Lord. His descendants had seen successive dynasties on the throne; ancient houses, crushed by misfortune, crumble into ruins; honourable families sink into mean obscurity; and many perish altogether in the course of time, and under the ravages of disease and wars. However, the changes that swept away these had but swept over them, as the waves over a rock which, so soon as they have burst, emerges firm and fixed from the cloud of spray. A remarkable result, certainly, and one which becomes remarkably instructive when we look to its causes. These belong both to Heaven and earth; in other words, this result is due both to the Divine blessing and to the action of certain natural agents.

First, their wandering habits, their life passed in the open country and in tents, was calculated to preserve and prolong the existence of this family. No mode of life is perhaps so accordant with our natural instincts as was theirs. It offered, as they roamed from pasture to pasture, constant change of scenery, and in that the greatest pleasure of travelling—a balm to grief, a perpetual feast to man's love of novelty, and an innocent stimulant of equal advantage to mind and body. How strong the attractions of such a life are admits of many illustrations. Let me adduce two—the one a curse, the other a fact. The curse is

one employed by the Tartars, themselves nomades, a wandering shepherd race. The only one, indeed, they are accustomed to use, it proves how much people reared to a roaming life come to love it, and how miserable they think any other—the direst wish which a Tartar pronounces against his enemy being, *May you live in one place, and work like a Russian!* And the fact that proves the charms of such a life is the all but insuperable difficulty of weaning gipsies and other such wanderers from their old habits, notwithstanding the extreme hardships they entail in our uncertain climate. I knew a boy, for instance, belonging to this race, whom his parents had been induced to leave with a kind, Christian family, under whose roof he enjoyed many advantages—a comfortable home, good and regular meals, instruction in letters and in habits of honest industry. Yet, notwithstanding these, and after being to appearance tamed, so strong were the charms of his old life that he seized the first opportunity of returning to it, like the young chamois which a shepherd of the Alps caught, and, hanging a bell from its neck, reared with his goats. It seemed to be quite domesticated; going and returning with the herd, till a day when it happened to hear the cry of its own wild race amid the mountain rocks. The creature started, and listened. For some moments it stood in an attitude of eager attention, trembling with intense excitement; and then, all of a sudden bounding from the meadow, it sprung into the cliff, and leaping from crag to crag, vanished among the heights where it joined its kindred, and was never more seen; though for years thereafter its bell was often heard tinkling among the rocks, and the mists that shrouded them.

The most consonant, as it thus appears, a wandering life is to our natural instincts, it is on that and many other accounts the most conducive to good health, and long life, and the permanent existence of such families as practise it—at least in a climate so fine and under circumstances so favourable as those of the Rechabites were. Towns have many advantages; and who would find the highest types of man, intellectually, morally, or spiritually, must seek them among citizens. Yet through their luxurious and unnatural habits of life, the wear and tear and turmoil of business, their vitiated air, and especially their vices, towns are great devourers of human life. They waste it; nor, as statistics prove, could large cities increase, or even keep up their numbers, without a constant immigration from rural districts. Men get dwarfed, dwindle away, and die, more or less like many trees, amid the smoke of towns; and there can be no doubt that the tented life and roaming habits of the Rechabites under the genial skies and amid the pleasant scenes of Palestine materially contributed, under the blessing of God, to preserve their race.

But, secondly, there can be as little doubt that their habits of temperance, carried to the extent of what is called Total Abstinence, so far as natural causes were considered, contributed also, and still more, to the same result. It is certain that the strongest man the world has seen drank nothing stronger than water. His cup was filled at the crystal spring; and it was water, not wine, the bloody jaw-bone yielded to restore his strength. Though Samson's was undoubtedly a case out of the common course of nature, he may have owed his strength in some measure to his abstinence. It is a well-established fact, at any rate, that the ancient athletes, as do their modern successors who engage in pedestrian, wrestling, fighting feats, rigorously abstain from the use of stimulants; regarding them as not fitted to increase, but to impair their strength. And whatever reasons people may find for the use of these, there is no doubt that the simpler our fare, if nutritious, the better—those having most chance of enjoying robust health, long life, and a green old age who follow the habits of the Rechabites, and abjure all intoxicants. I could prove that; but that needs no proof which the highest medical authorities affirm, and no well-informed, impartial man attempts now-a-days to deny. Thus in those customs which distinguished the descendants of Rechab from others, we find two causes that help to account for the fact that while other families perished from the face of the earth, they endured—evergreen and immortal in their virtues; flourishing amid the nation's decay; defying alike all changes of fortune, the ravages of disease, and the arm of death to extirpate and extinguish them.

I see more, however, in the story of the Rechabites than a testimony to the advantages of simple manners and sober habits, in favour of what an eminent medical authority called the three great physicians, namely Air, Exercise, and Water. It was not the material or moral advantages which they found in these simple and temperate habits—though they might have urged these—which they gave to Jeremiah as their reasons for declining his invitation. "We will drink no wine," they said. And why? They did not say, Because we think it a sin; nor because we, who do not use it, enjoy robuster health, longer lives, clearer heads, lighter hearts, and heavier purses than those who do; nor because we stand in fear that our example might lead some to use wine who would not or could not do so without abusing it. The simple ground on which they placed their refusal was the respect they felt and the obedience they owed to parental authority. They say, "for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us;" and again, "Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab in all that he hath charged us." It was on this account that they, on the one hand, preserved the custom of their ancestors, and on this account also, on the other hand, that God preserved them—saying, by the mouth of Jeremiah, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you: therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever."

It is a dull ear which does not catch in these words an echo, as from the rocks of Sinai, of the commandment, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Eminent examples of filial piety, how might that law have been inscribed, as their appro-

priate motto, on the banners of the house of Rechab? Living in remarkable accordance with its precept, they were a remarkable monument to the truth of its promise. Distinguished from all around them by their superior respect for parental authority, they were equally distinguished by their happier fortune; while others perished, their days were long upon the land which the Lord their God had given them. That law is one of the Ten which, written by God's own finger, and spoken in thunder tones by his own awful voice, were separated and distinguished from those Mosaic ordinances, the shadows of good things to come, that were buried in the grave of Christ. Like the other nine it was fulfilled, not interred by the Redeemer. Like all other parts of the Decalogue, it is of permanent authority; and God is still making good its promise in the well-doing, the health and wealth, and prosperity of thousands who honoured their parents however humble they might be, cherished them, and yielded to father and mother the reverence that was their due.

"My son," says Solomon, "hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother, for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck." No man ever found himself the worse for taking that advice, nor is there a circle however limited but can show cases illustrative of the blessing that follows honour paid to father and mother. But, leaving these, let me adduce an example of this on a scale of no ordinary grandeur. There is a nation which numbers both more people and more years than any other on earth, ancient or modern, dead or living. The Chinese—for of them I speak—can trace their national existence to a period not far removed from the days of Noah. They appear in the dawn of history and earliest ages of antiquity; cultivating the arts when our forefathers, and those of all other existing nations, were barbarians. Unchanged amid perpetual and universal change, they saw the Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires rise and fall, flourish and decay; and now, a teeming population, they this day cultivate the very fields their ancestors ploughed when the story of the flood was fresh, and men, who heard it from the lips of Noah or his sons, told how the windows of heaven and the fountains of the great deep were opened. Now, though Pagans, two peculiarities have distinguished the Chinese from other pagan nations. Unlike the Greeks, the natives of Hindoostan, the Romans, and other heathens, they, though practising vice, have never deified it; and, secondly, they have placed reverence for parents, and obedience to their authority, at the head of all the virtues. When parents die their children even worship them; and while they live, yield such blind submission to their will that there is hardly a crime a child will not commit at their bidding. Filial reverence, in fact, is the redeeming and prominent feature of their character—one that has distinguished them as much from the nations which they have seen grow up and perish, as the oval contour of their heads and oblique position of their eyes. The connection between a national virtue and a national vitality so remarkable, I cannot regard as altogether accidental—one of the curious coincidences that occasionally occur. Illustrating in their lives the precept, they also illustrate in their fortunes the promise of the Fifth Commandment; so that, from this nation, numerous above all others for its population, and venerable above all others for its hoar antiquity, I seem to hear the words God sounded forth from Sinai, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

As unquestionably illustrating and enforcing this commandment, the history of the Rechabites at any rate is at all times instructive, and in these times peculiarly seasonable. Our age has its peculiar features; but reverence for authority is certainly not one of them. Indeed it bodes ill for our country, and for the future fortunes of America especially, not that kings are no longer "hedged round with divinity," but that a father's word does not carry the weight, nor his presence command the respect, which once belonged to them. The age is out of joint. Children are little men and little women. Whether it be due to a system of education that, like a hot-house, unduly forces the growth of youth, or to that early independence which children attain through the manufactures and machinery that yield them wages sufficient for their support, or to the operation of political and ecclesiastical causes; whether it be due to one, or to another, or to all these influences combined, the tendency of this age is to throw off authority, Divine as well as human. The daring manner in which many treat sacred things—boldly intruding within the veil of the temple, sitting in presumptuous judgment on God's character, questioning his providence, setting limits to his authority, handling his inspired Word as they would the pages of a common history, and by their own little line measuring Him who hath measured out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, these are the developments of a spirit which begins by disowning the authority of man, and ends by disowning that of God. When filial reverence is lost, and, despising the judgment of the wise and venerable, men say, "Let us break their bonds, and cast their cords from us," it looks like the beginning of the end. The rent that goes through the hearth-stone has a tendency to extend itself into the foundations of all social order and true piety. Who does not reverence a father on earth is not likely to reverence our Father in heaven. Who does not love a mother will not love Jesus Christ. Let the subject be looked into, and I dare to say it will be found that there is a far closer connection than what lies in their being printed on the same page and embraced in the same verse between the two great clauses of this beautiful commandment, *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of an old man, and fear thy God.* In the words of the hymn,

> A father's voice with reverence we
> On earth have often heard;
> The Father of our spirits now
> Demands the same regard.

BISHOP HALL AND HIS "CONTEMPLATIONS."

Cecil has mentioned somewhere, that he had a shelf in his library on which he placed books that were esteemed by him of highest merit, and which he had resolved to make his companions for life. He was very slow in elevating a book to this position, but when it had once obtained such select pre-eminence, he was still more slow in removing it. On this honourable elevation, we can scarcely doubt, he had placed the "Contemplations on Historical Passages of the Old and New Testament," by Bishop Hall. For we find him alluding to his writings with genial admiration; and this was emphatically a book not to be read once, and then handed over to cobwebs and dust, or turned by the help of the bookbinder into a mere library ornament, but to be chosen as a life associate, and to be laid open beside the sacred volume itself when its historical parts were studied, that it might help the reader, by its quaint originality and proverbial wisdom, in extracting the honey out of the inspired narrative. It was no rapid and unequal production, but the slow and careful growth of thirty years, the greater part of it having first been amplified into sermons; and then, as he informs the reader in one of his delightfully garrulous notices, he "gathered the quintessence of those larger discourses into these forms of meditation which he sees." It is gold not in the ore, but in the wedge.

But while his "Contemplations" are his *magnum opus*, and are as popular at this hour as they were two centuries ago, they are not the only writings of Bishop Hall which give him unquestioned right to take first rank among our English Christian classics. The latest edition of his collected works by Mr. Pratt, consists of ten goodly volumes in which there are many other compositions which neither the world nor the Church will soon willingly let die. In what circumstances, and under what influences, some of the chief of these were produced, will appear from a few short notices of his life.

Joseph Hall, the son of parents "honest and well-allowed," was born July 1, 1574, at Bristow Park, in the parish of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire. His father held such an office of trust and respectable emolument under the Earl of Huntingdon, as justified his honourable ambition to give to one of his children the advantage of a university education. His mother was one of those rare women who, by their wisdom and ungrudging assiduity in the training of their families, make the world their debtors. With a body that was always weak, and a mind inhabiting the frail tenement that was usually sorrowful, Winifred Bambridge, with her "looks serene and holy," produced lasting impressions on her son, that were prized more than all learning, and the boy did not shrink from the guidance of her gentle hand although, when he looked up, it was often into a pensive countenance. With the exception of Cowper's inimitable lines on receiving the portrait of his mother, there is nothing in our literature that contains a more beautiful testimony of filial admiration than that which was borne in after days by this grateful son to his sainted mother. "Were it not for my interest in nature, I durst say that neither Aleth, the mother of that just Honour of Clareval, nor Monica, nor any other of those pious matrons anciently famous for devotion, need to disdain her admittance to comparison. . . . So had she profited in the school of Christ, that it was hard for any friend to come from her discourse no whit holier. How often have I blessed the memory of those divine passages of experimental divinity which I have heard from her mouth. What day did she pass without a large task of private devotion, whence she would still come forth with a countenance of undissembled mortification. Never any lips have read to me such feeling lectures of piety; neither have I known any soul that more accurately practised them than her own. Shortly, for I can hardly take off my pen from so exemplary a subject, her life and death were saintlike."

He received his elementary education in the public school of his native town, where having spent some years "not altogether indiligently under the ferule of such masters as the place afforded," and having, by the age of fifteen, attained to some competent ripeness, it was not without much generous entreaty on the part of an elder brother, and considerable family pinchings, that he was entered as a student at Emanuel College, Cambridge. His mind was suited to the new atmosphere into which it was brought, so that it required no effort for him to appreciate the learned and tranquil leisure, the healthy discipline, the venerable structures, and the gathering renown of his university. But his first two years proving beyond the proportion of his father's means, "whose not very large cistern had to feed many pipes besides this," and this weariness of expense being acted on by the counsel of unwise friends, led to his withdrawal by his father from Cambridge, with a view to his becoming master in the school where he had formerly been a scholar. It was a heavy blow to the ardent student, like tearing him from the arms of a second mother. But his visible dejection and discovered gifts raised up for him in a distant relative an unhoped-for benefactor, who, accommodating his liberal help to his father's lessening means, soon reinstated him in that cherished seat of learning. These streams continued to flow steadily for four years to come; and by the time that they were exhausted, and he had begun to meditate a removal, another of those providences which his devout heart delighted to mark, unexpectedly opened his way to a fellowship, retained him within those walls on which his name was one day to shed an enduring lustre, and saved him from the great evil of a premature entrance on the Christian ministry. "Then was I with a cheerful unanimity chosen into that society, which, if it had any equals, I dare say had none beyond it for good order, studious carriage, strict government, austere piety,—in which I spent six or seven years more with such contentment as the rest of my life hath in vain striven to yield. Now was I called to public disputations often with no ill success; for never durst I

appear in any of those exercises of scholarship, till I had from my knees looked up to heaven for a blessing, and renewed my actual dependence upon that Divine hand. In this while, two years together was I chosen to the rhetoric lectures in the public schools, where I was encouraged with a sufficient frequence of auditors; but finding that well-applauded work somewhat out of my way, not without a secret blame of myself for so much excursion, I fairly gave up that task in the midst of those acclamations, to a worthy successor, Dr. Dod, and betook myself to those serious studies which might fit me for that high calling whereunto I was destined. Wherein, after I had carefully bestowed myself for a time, I took the boldness to enter into sacred orders, the honour whereof having once attained, I was no niggard of that talent which my God had entrusted to me; preaching often, as occasion was offered, both in country villages abroad, and at home in the most awful auditory of the university."

It was during the later years of his Cambridge life that he produced his Satires, which were afterwards republished under the title of "Virgedemiarum, or Six Bundles of Rods," and were sufficient of themselves to secure him an honourable place on the roll of English poets. Their popularity has been marred by his imitating the obscurity and abruptness of the Latin models, as well as by his needless adoption of many of the obsolete words of Chaucer, for wit and satire lose much of their effect when they require a commentary. They are then like some explosive substance which has been exposed to damp. But the keen penetration of character which his Satires manifest, the lively and vigorous colouring with which he holds up to the age its form and pressure, exposing the inane frivolities of contemporary literature, and punishing contemporary vices, together with the point of his style, and the musical cadence of his numbers, were such as to make Pope wish that he had known his writings earlier, and to remind another equally competent judge of some of the best passages in Dryden. His own lines have well described the legitimate province of Moral Satire; and he exemplified his own ideal; for unlike the satirists of a later age, he never sought to gratify private resentment by personalities, or by the excessive glow of his pictures excited the very passions which he condemned.

> "The satire should be like the porcupine
> That shoots sharp quills out in each angry line,
> And wounds the blushing cheek and fiery eye
> Of him that heares and readeth guiltily."

At a considerably later period of his life, Mr. Hall attempted a "Metaphrase of certain of the Psalms." But his success was indifferent, and the public reception of his attempt chilling. It may have afforded some solace to his mortification at this failure, to know that even his great contemporary, Milton, found himself unequal to the task of transfusing into fitting English numbers the inspired odes of David. But the man has probably yet to be born who shall express in suitable metrical language the lyric energy and living fire of those Hebrew bards. It would require as rare a combination of native genius, acquired learning, and emotional piety to translate the Psalms as to interpret the Apocalypse. "The harp of David," it has been happily said, "still hangs upon the willows, and disdains the touch of any hand less skilful than its own."

And now he "did but wait where and how it would please his God to employ him." And having the rectory of Halsted in the "sweet and civil country of Suffolk," earnestly tendered him by Lady Drury, he entered, about the age of twenty-eight, upon the regular duties of a ministry, after which his heart had long yearned. After having almost rebuilt his house, which he found in a ruinous condition, "the uncouth solitariness of his life," he tells us with a quaint felicity which any other words would alter for the worse, "drew his thoughts, after two years, to condescend to the necessities of a married state. And being commended to a Miss Winniff, of Bretenham, and convinced of the many virtues that lodged in that seemly presence, he offered her his hand, and at last, upon due prosecution, happily prevailed, enjoying the comfortable society of that meet help for the space of forty-nine years."

After some years, his quiet and congenial labours at Halsted were not unpleasantly interrupted for a time, by an invitation from Sir Edmund Bacon to accompany him in his travels on the Continent to the Spa of Ardennes. The fascination of such a request was irresistible to a mind like his so capable of shrewd observation, of storing itself with undying pictures, and of turning facts into thoughts. In a letter of advices to the young Earl of Essex at a later period, he showed how well he understood the uses of foreign travel. "Think it not enough that you see, or can say you have seen, strange things of nature or event: it is a vain and dead travel that rests in the eye or the tongue. All is but lost, unless your busy mind shall from the body that it sees, draw forth some quintessence of observation wherewith to inform and enrich itself. There is nothing can quit the cost and labour of travel but the gain of wisdom."

Besides, he desired to look upon Popery, not as he had seen it in England, but in its true spirit and fully developed proportions where it reigned. We wish we had space to quote in full the letter in which he describes his gay silken disguise assumed to escape the serious inconvenience and hazard of being known as a Protestant divine,—his keen disputes with the famous Jesuit Costerus and others at Brussels, in which his learning and dialectic skill as well as his suspiciously good Latin almost made his lay-disguise too thin for him, and more than once awakened the alarm of his patron for his safety,—and his eager witnessing of a Romish procession in honour of John the Baptist at Antwerp, when his curiosity would have drawn him into danger "through his willing unreverence, had not the hulk of a tall Brabanter, behind whom he stood in the corner of the street, shadowed him from notice."

It was while wandering among the solitary hills of Ardennes, where other men of genius have since received inspiration, that Mr. Hall finished his "Three Centuries of Meditations;" a work which, while indicating the growth of his devotional spirit,

revealed to the world his remarkable gifts of compact brevity and ethical eloquence. It was on account of this work that he began to be styled by his contemporaries the "English Seneca," a designation in which the compliment was fully as great to the Roman moralist as to the English divine. We are tempted to quote one of those golden sayings: "As there is a foolish wisdom so there is a wise ignorance, in not prying into God's ark, nor enquiring into things not revealed. I would fain know all that I need and all that I may: I leave God's secrets to himself. It is happy for me that God makes me of his Court, though not of his Council."

His labours at Halsted were soon found to be much more abundant than his remuneration, for he was "obliged to write books in order to buy books." His straitened circumstances, coupled with the knowledge that a portion of his rightful emoluments was annually appropriated by his patron, made him willing to accept the living of Waltham, which was pressed upon him by Lord Denny, and "whose conditions were, like the mover of them, free and bountiful." Upon this new sphere of his ministry, which he entered in 1612, and where he continued for two-and-twenty years, he concentrated all the strength of his now ripened powers and of his pastoral affection, so that even the repeated requests of the "sweet Prince Henry," then the pride and hope of the nation, to become his resident chaplain at Court, were not able to withdraw him from "his Waltham," —"where in a constant course I preached a long time, as I had done also at Halsted before, thrice in the week. Yet never durst I climb into the pulpit to preach any sermon, whereof I had not before, in my poor and plain fashion, penned every word in the same order wherein I hoped to deliver it, although in the expression I listed not to be a slave to syllables."

The picture which he has given in one of his letters, of his life of sacred study and quiet order in the arrangement and economy of his time, in which he could "all day make himself music (as ringers do), with the changes," has become one of the gems of epistolary literature, and presents a strange contrast to the life of many a minister in modern times, whose temper is so often fretted and his weeks consumed by the ceaseless worry of miscellaneous engagements and frivolous interruptions. It is curious to take a letter of Dr. Chalmers from Glasgow, in which he complains of a hundred calls in a week, and to mark what a difference there is between the pastoral experiences of the seventeenth century and ours. Can anything exceed in holy and tranquil beauty Mr. Hall's description of one of his Sundays at Waltham?

"Such are my common days; but God's day calls for another respect. The same sun arises on this day and enlightens it: yet because the Sun of righteousness arose upon it, and gave a new life to the world in it, and drew the strength of God's moral precept upon it, therefore justly do we sing with the Psalmist, 'This is the day which the Lord hath made.' Now I forget the world, and, in a sort, myself, and deal with my wonted thoughts as great men do who, at some times of their privacy, forbid the access of all suitors. Prayer, meditation, reading, hearing, preaching, singing, good conference, are the business of this day, which I dare not bestow on any work or pleasure but heavenly. I hate superstition on the one side, and looseness on the other; but I find it hard to offend in too much devotion, easy in profaneness. The whole week is sanctified by this day; and according to my care of this day, is my blessing on the rest."

It must have been during his long pastorate at Waltham that Mr. Hall prepared his "Explications of Hard Texts of the whole of Divine Scripture," a work which must have carried him over every sentence of the Bible. It gives results rather than the processes of learned and devout inquiry by which they have been reached; but there is always evidence of the previous mental toil, in the well-weighed words and the wonderful clearness and condensation of phrase in which the results are given. The book has the rare merit of offering help where it is really needed, unlike many commentaries which too often amplify what is plain, but desert you when their help would be most welcome, reminding us of a recent experience on a pass in the Alps, where the rope that had guided us when the path was easy, disappeared beneath the snow when we reached the most steep and slippery edge of the precipice.

On three occasions during his loved pastorate at Waltham, Mr. Hall was summoned to exchange his quiet labours for the discharge of high public duties. First, to accompany the Earl of Doncaster on an important embassy to France; next, to follow King James into Scotland, for the purpose of disposing her people to episcopacy—a reluctant service, in which, while winning the respect of her clergy for his moderation and wisdom, he did little to unsettle their Presbyterian preferences. And his third public commission was in 1618, to attend as a deputy from England, along with Davenant and others, at the famous Synod of Dort, in order to assist in adjusting the differences which had begun to rend the Church of the Netherlands on the "five busy Arminian points." His solid learning, Christian moderation, and perspicuous eloquence, drew around him the universal respect of that great ecclesiastical assembly, a respect which was formally and fitly conveyed to him by the scholarly Heinsius. But the humid atmosphere of Dort and the ceaseless noises of its garrison robbing him of his wonted sleep, drove him first to the Hague and then to England, where he soon found the controversy transferred to his own Church, and "scorched himself a little with the flame which he desired to quench." Next to the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, this Synod of Dort was perhaps the most important that had been held by Protestants since the age of the Reformation. Its history has never yet been written as it ought to be written. We have, indeed, respectable chronicles and dry narratives, but no such living picture as makes us see the men and watch their keen dialectics and clash of arms. Why should not some one yet do for this Synod what Bungêner has not unsuccessfully attempted for the Council of Trent?

Seven years after his return from the Netherlands, Dr. Hall was appointed Bishop of Exeter, and in 1641 he was translated to the See of Norwich. But the times

of the Parliament and the Commonwealth had now come, when the vessel of the Church was exposed to a lengthened storm, and those who stood in its high places were sure to be the greatest sufferers by the tempest. In the very thick of the commotion he might have been seen measuring arms not ingloriously with Milton. His sufferings increased with the throes and shakings of the ecclesiastical structure which he defended. Having joined with the prelates who protested against the validity of all laws made during their forced absence from Parliament, he was committed to the Tower, where he remained a prisoner for five months. Immediately after his liberation he returned to Norwich, where, with scarcely an interval of rest, he was driven from his palace, and both his episcopal revenues and his personal property sequestrated. Retiring to Higham, a little village in the neighbourhood of Norwich, he leased a small farm, and lived on a pittance that was allowed him from his formerly princely income. On occasion of the death of his wife, the meet help of nearly half a century, he wrote his "Songs in the Night," which is indeed music out of the depths, and has revived the fainting spirit of many a mourner from that hour to the present. Suffering and increasing infirmity never deprived him of his cheerfulness, or of his charity. When disabled from preaching by age, or hindered by legal prohibitions, he was content to sit at the feet of the youngest of his disciples, as diligent a hearer as he had been a preacher. At length, at the venerable age of 82, on September 8, 1656, he fell asleep.

During more than one half of what may be termed the intellectual and active portion of his life, he had been engaged in slowly preparing and piling up his "Contemplations," which were to be the crown of his literary and theological toils, and to make his name precious and fragrant to the universal Church. Those who are most familiar with these remarkable compositions, will wonder least at their undiminished popularity alike with the learned and the unlearned. It is not one but many great qualities that account for this. There are pithy apophthegm and sententious proverb, vivid pictures of scenes, life-like delineations of character, frequent flashes of original thought, unexpected lessons drawn from apparently barren incidents, so that the seeming desert blossoms as the rose, a kind of intuitive penetration into the meaning of texts, as if he often knew of some secret and shorter path to it, and seer-like bursts of devotion. These are the qualities that render the work, in some respects, unique in our religious literature; while the skill with which he handles the English tongue, not simply as a master, but as a magician, makes us feel at times as if a style like his had become one of the lost arts. And yet even the "Contemplations" may be said to be an unfinished work, for it stops at the end of the Gospel history. One is apt to wish that he had continued his meditations through the "Acts of the Apostles," and to imagine how he would have mused on the scenes of Pentecost, or reflected the grandeur and the pathos of Stephen's martyrdom, or presented the varied and glowing lessons from the conscience-terrors of Felix, or the hesitancy of King Agrippa, or the shipwreck of Paul, or the incident with the viper on the shore of Melita. As it is, how few authors have left behind them to the Church of all times so rich and rare a legacy.

ANDREW THOMSON.

THE DRAUGHT OF FISHES.

"O WOE is me that, face to face,
The Lord of Hosts have seen!
How shall I stand in holy place
With heart and lips unclean?"

So oft of old cried out, afraid,
The chosen of His Word,
When bright before them shone display'd
The angel of the Lord.

And such, upon Capernaum's lake,
The fisher's first dismay,
Ere Jesus call'd him thence to take
Henceforth a nobler prey.

Amazed, that Holy One he own'd,
At whose mysterious will
The obedient shoals came crowding round,
His empty nets to fill.

And, as in that broad flood of light
Which leaves no nook conceal'd,
He sees in all its doleful plight
His own dark heart reveal'd;

All-prostrate, "Leave, O Lord," he cries
"A sinful soul like mine!"

Too vivid gleam'd for mortal eyes
The rays of light divine.

Yet, fear not—conscious what thou art;
No Sinai's awful blaze
Strikes terror through a hopeless heart
Beneath the Saviour's gaze.

Now art thou fittest to forsake
Thy long-plied earthly toil,
And in the nets of Christ to take
The Heaven-directed spoil.

For who shall make to hearts that melt
Their balm of healing known,
Like them whose souls have deepest felt
The evil of their own?

Or who, while others deem it vain,
Shall, patient, labour on,
And, cheerful, fling the net again,
When every hope seems gone

Like him who firmest holds the thought
That not by human skill
Souls to his outspread net are brought,
But by his Master's will?

J. H. CLARK.

CHASTISEMENT.

If it is possible in the twenty-third Psalm to trace the outlines of David's history, it is equally possible in the third verse to guess the workings of his mind. He had been exulting in his assurance of the good Shepherd's love. His lips were yet trembling with that exquisite chant of praise for pastures green and waters still, when suddenly (it may be) the thought flashed across him—"Has it been always so?" and while memory recalled the interruption of mercy, conscience betrayed the cause. "Were the pastures green and the waters still when Bathsheba's child died; or when Absalom drove me from my home and my kingdom, and I went up Olivet barefoot, weeping as I went up? when confusion covered my face, and reproach broke my heart, and all God's waves and billows went over me? No: yet it was through my own sin, not through the unfaithfulness of God. I had gone astray like a lost sheep, to slake my thirst with draughts of guilty pleasure in the way of my own heart; and the rough road by which He brought me back was his way of bringing me out of my sin. It was to restore my soul, and to lead me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

Nothing so much tests our knowledge of God, or our actual standing-place in his kingdom, as the way in which we interpret chastisement. Those who are altogether without God in the world are disposed to look on it as an unkind and unaccountable interference with their happiness; an evidence, indeed, of Divine power, but not of Divine goodness. They do not hear in it a kind voice saying to them, "Turn ye unto me." They do not bow humbly to the rod, which deals its stripes in this life, only that thereby they may be spared in the next. There is suffering, but no healing process afterwards; a sense of uneasiness, but no real sorrow for sin. Who can wonder then that affliction hardens instead of softening them; that, instead of coming out into the light of the reconciled face of God, in the spirit of a penitent child, they go back, like Pharaoh, into their Egyptian darkness with hearts of stone!

David, however, in a very different spirit accepts that chastisement of which, with all his prosperity, he had as large a share as most men. He connects it with the Providence of God, he beholds in it the purpose of God, he accepts it as the mercy of God, he recognises in it the character of God. And this, his explanation of it, teaches us that for Christians there are two aspects in which it may be profitably considered: the one, what God means in it with respect to us; the other, what He means in it with respect to Himself. With respect to us He means restoration and holiness; restoration in the case of our having gone back: "He restoreth my soul." Holiness, as the unvarying and ultimate end of all his dealings with us, whom He has from the beginning chosen "to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth:" "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

The office of a shepherd is not only to guide and protect, and provide for the sheep, but also to go after them when they have strayed away. Our Lord, in the first of the three parables in the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke, appeals to this as to an universally recognised habit among men. "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?" But Ezekiel assigns this office to Messiah. "For thus saith the Lord God; Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day" (xxxiv. 11, 12).

Restoration implies wandering or backsliding, and is applicable either to a case of lapse, where there has been a real, though not necessarily a visible falling away from God; or to a besetting sin, which is seriously affecting the spiritual state, and, like a rank and noxious weed, must instantly and at any cost be cut down to the roots. Of actual falls from God, open or secret, David himself is a memorable instance. When the man after God's own heart went astray, God indeed restored him, but it was with pangs and convulsions, as when a man all but drowned struggles back from suspended animation into life. The greater the height he had reached, the deeper his fall from it; the more marked his holiness, the more scandalous his sin. If ever man suffered in this life the temporal consequences of guilt, it was David. Yet there are other kinds of falling away than his. Many, whose hearts are as much estranged from God as the Psalmist's, are never surprised into an outburst of crime, simply because they are too cold or too cautious to commit themselves publicly. Nay, their secret sins may be of quite another kind to his; sins, it may be, for which they may even gain credit; "men will praise thee, when thou doest well unto thyself:" yet sins far more abhorred by Him who can weigh motives and pity weakness; and known only to Him to whom all hearts are open, and from whom no secrets are hid.

We have an instance of this kind in the Church of Sardis. "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." Stronger language than this could hardly be used of any within the kingdom. Yet it describes the actual condition of thousands upon thousands, who have lost their first love, and are fallen back from their early aspirations; who pray, and yet restrain prayer; who open their Bible, and sit with it before them, but in no sense love it as their necessary food; who give away, but never really deny themselves of anything for Christ's sake, and in whom a steadily lessening zeal for God, and a wofully diminished anxiety for the welfare of

others, indicate but too surely the ebb of their inner life.

Human judgment, indeed, must not presume to penetrate either into the recesses of a fellow-sinner's conscience, or into the possible meaning of the righteous chastisements of God. Yet, perhaps, these are cases which more than any require the knife and the cautery of severe affliction; and when such a soul, writhing in its misery, bitterly complains that its punishment is more than it can bear, the not yet drugged conscience finds a ready answer. "Is there not a cause?" For when sin comes to a head, and discharges itself from the system in a complete though in a virulent outbreak, the scandal to the Church may be greater, but the peril to the sinner is less. Fever is often preferable to paralysis. The loss of a limb may be a less severe shock in the end than the gradual corruption of the blood or the steady enfeebling of the vital powers. When a soul is asleep, yet dreams that it is awake; when the discharge of religious duties, the use of religious privileges, the companionship of religious people, and the uttering of religious phrases condone to the self-complacent soul for chilled love to men and suspended intercourse with God, it is not a soft and gentle voice that will whisper it out of its death sleep: maybe only a life-long sorrow will bring it back to the Shepherd's arms.

But over and above the instances of a public fall or a secret decay, there is the yet more frequent instance of special acts of sin visited with special acts of punishment; the act indicating the habit; the punishment not only suited to the sin, but in proportion to it; the purpose of God being, not to cast off and destroy, but to admonish and restore. Rebekah, Jacob, Moses, Josiah, Elijah, are each of them instances of special sins and imperfections meeting with special chastisement; "and these are written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come."

Rebekah's sin was that of favouritism. Through her scheming partiality Jacob was successfully urged to supplant Esau; but her heart's desire, when it came, was as an apple of Sodom. Both mother and son were punished; but the mother's penalty is most significant. Thinking to send her son away for a few days till Esau's anger was abated, unwittingly she dismissed him for ever; and she herself found the worm that was to gnaw at the root of her gourd. Jacob's characteristic sin was deceit, the flaw that runs through his whole life, and robs his character of strength and dignity. But as he sinned in deceit, so was he punished by it; as he conspired to deceive his own parent, his sons conspired to deceive him. The heartless falsehood of Joseph's pretended death, which withered the patriarch's very soul, must also have smitten him with a bitter remorse for the fraud he had practised on his blind father. His sin found him out, and pursued him, and would not leave him, till he laid him down in his grave.

If we pass from sins to faults, from what is perverse and deliberate to what is simply infirm and imperfect (a subject for reflection, quite as useful and quite as necessary), we shall see how, in the case even of the most eminent of God's servants, impatience and self-will and unbelief cause us to wander from the path of duty, and compel for us the firm, though tender, admonition of God.

Moses thought to serve God when he went to visit his Hebrew kinsmen, and when he desired, though at his own risk, to assert their cause. But, so far as we can see, he was not justified in taking the law into his own hands, and slaying that Egyptian. It was not trusting God, who knew his people's sorrows as well as he did, nor was it really aiding his friends. The result of it was that, unable to vindicate himself, he had to flee; and though in the Epistle to the Hebrews we read God's own approval of his final choice between the reproach of Christ and the treasures in Egypt, there is not a word to defend that hasty homicide. For all that we know to the contrary he paid as his penalty an exile of forty years in the wilderness; and though we can well understand how that time was blessed to him and used by him, but for that characteristic impatience Israel might not have had to wait so long for their freedom; he, at least, might have passed more happily that third of his noble life.

Josiah is a signal instance of the fatal errors into which self-will may sometimes lead a good man, and of the severity with which God must visit it. The Chronicles, which give a fuller account than the Kings (2 Chron. xxxv. 20—24), make it sufficiently clear, not only that King Necho had no personal design against Judah at that time, but that he conceived himself to be actually carrying out the designs of Divine Providence, and did his utmost to dissuade Josiah from hindering them. Josiah, however, for reasons which it is unnecessary to examine, obstinately persisted in his purpose. Bent on his own way, he had it, but it cost him his life and his crown; and that disastrous end to such a promising beginning is both a terrible proof that we may and must go wrong, if we are resolved on it, in spite of all warning to the contrary; and that God will not interfere to preserve his own saints from the consequences of a headstrong folly.

Elijah, strange as it may sound, is an instance of despondency and unbelief, which God could not altogether pass over. After the slaughter of the priests on Carmel, we should have thought him capable of any daring; and had that great blow at idolatry been instantly followed up by decided action, the worship of Jehovah might have been restored in Samaria. But a message came from Jezebel, and a great panic smote the prophet with sudden helplessness, and he who had defied a whole priesthood, with a king at their head, fled away in fear at the threat of a vindictive woman, and going a day's journey into the wilderness, that no one might trace him in his flight, at length asked to die. Bent on even a longer flight, he was graciously strengthened by God for so great fatigue; yet we must not interpret that as a proof that God's Providence in the first instance pointed him to Horeb. It merely implies that, since he was resolved on going, God would enable him to reach his journey's end, that there He might meet him and ask him about his fear. But, surely, had he trusted in God that He would deliver him and yet further use him, he would never have fled there at all. In one point of view it was so much lost time,

and the throwing away of an opportunity, which was never repeated. The question asked of him is significant enough of God's interpretation of his conduct. Though his chastisement was confined to reproof, even to be reproved was a fall for a saint like him. "What doest thou here, Elijah?" this was his Lord's expostulation with him for his sudden giving way to that utter despondency. He was at once sent back across the whole extent of the land, and on an errand of as great peril as that from which he had so lately escaped.

Yes, let us remember, that even our faults grieve the good Spirit of God; and our infirmities and imperfections, if not watched against by us, must be chastened by Him. Though God is not extreme to mark what is done amiss, faults may grow into sins, sins may harden into habits. "Without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish"—this is the description of the glorious Church which, in the day of his return, shall be worthy to be the Lamb's wife; here, too, is the key to the discipline, the secret of the purpose, which is in Christ's heart about us now.

Possibly, indeed, if we had the same opportunity for analysis and induction in the moral government of God that we possess in his natural government, we might come to see that every moral act inevitably brings about sooner or later its own result, as any other effect follows any other cause in the other departments of his Providential kingdom; that, in this respect, we are still under a system of present rewards and punishments, the form somewhat changed, but not the essence; the principle being everlasting, though the manner of its manifestation transitory. Thus, in this court of law there is no appeal, and for these offences (in the sense of a present chastisement) no atonement. Christ died, not to save us from the inevitable consequences of our actions here (which would simply be impunity in sin), but from the deserved penalty of our actions hereafter. To spare us the needful pain of chastisement would be to deprive us of the only medicine which can remove the cause, as well as heal the sorrow. It would not only frustrate the purpose of Christ's death, "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works," it would also contradict the prophet's explanation of chastisement, given through the Spirit of God. "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens."

But chastisement is sent not only to recall the backslider, or to set the mark of God's displeasure on some act or habit of sin; it is to sanctify us, to add to our positive and personal holiness, to edify us higher into the image of Christ. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; *and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.*"

And here let it be observed what sanctification really means; what is possible and what impossible in the way of growth in grace, and in putting on the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not mending the old nature, which we inherit from Adam; it is cultivating and developing the new nature which we receive from Christ. The old nature cannot be improved; it is under a ban and a curse; it is to be crucified with its affections and lusts, and mortified in its members; we are to put it off, as we put off a worn-out and defiled garment; nay, we are to count ourselves dead to it, as if it had no more relation to us, since we are alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. The soul is like a house of which strangers have taken possession, and lord it cruelly over the owner. What shall you do for your liberty? Can you change their hearts and make them other men, so that you would be content or even glad they should remain? That is impossible. Pride will never be humble, lust will never be pure, selfishness will never think of a neighbour's interests, envy will never exult in a neighbour's joy. The only thing to be done is to turn them out by bringing in others stronger than they, who will, little by little, get the mastery over them. Thus the way to conquer pride is to cultivate humility; if we would be gentle, let us practise self-control; if we would think of others and help them, we must bear their burdens. The old affections must be expelled by new; the invading tyrants must be besieged and cast out by legitimate owners; and though we shall carry with us to our grave the roots of our old nature, though not till we have cast off the garment of our corruptible flesh shall we have our full liberty as sons of God, it is of infinite moment to us to ascertain that the only way of holiness is to overcome evil with good; and that there is no limit to the power of the grace of God save that which is imposed by ourselves.

In the light of these remarks the necessity and the purpose of chastisement will be seen more clearly. "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law." Chastisement *instructs* us, *softens* us, *educates* us, *elevates* us. There are many lessons it teaches us of God, and the world, and ourselves; but the one thing we have first to learn, and the lesson it imparts to us more distinctly, more continually than any other, is the nature, and the depth, and the complicatedness, and the deceitfulness of sin. Then we see how sin, like a foreign poison in the blood, affects and corrupts our entire nature, tainting innocent affections, perverting harmless dispositions, and, like the roots of a noxious weed, spreading itself secretly over the whole surface of our being. Affliction detects our secret, and perhaps unsuspected faults, much in the same way that acid acts on litmus paper. It also decomposes our complex character into all its multitudinous and varied elements, laying bare, to our surprise and sorrow, deformities of which we never dreamed. We discover (and any child of God can testify to the bitterness of such discovery) what unbelief lurks in us, what unthankfulness, what desperate selfishness, what numbness of heart both towards God and man, what petulance and waywardness, what obstinacy and self-will, what real shrinking from close intercourse with God. Then if we, tainted and cheated by sin as we all are, come in any degree to hate and fear it, it is only a step further to regard it as God regards it: and to see

how it is not his hatred of us, nor his desire to destroy us, but his hatred of sin and his purpose to save us from it, that brings down his rod. There are three distinct proofs of God's abhorrence of sin: Christ's cross, the whole creation groaning and travailing together in pain, and hell. Pain, whether of body or mind, is the visible mark of God's displeasure at sin; and, as conscience is the witness of God within us, sorrow is the witness of God without us, that He hates it with a perfect hatred, and would have us hate it too. The fifty-first Psalm brings this out in a remarkable light. If ever one man in this world was cruelly wronged by another, Uriah was wronged by David. Yet his sin against man, in that hour of his overwhelming remorse, seemed nothing when compared with his sin against God. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." O let us see that there can be no real beginning in holiness, much less no true growth in it, no adequate and absorbing appreciation of Christ's atoning sacrifice, no crying out for pardon through his precious blood, and no living gladness in it when it is found: no honest wrestling with wickedness in our own hearts, and no determined battling with it in the world around us, without deep and abiding convictions of its abominableness before God—in other words, without that chastisement through which those convictions come.

But there is another result purposed for us in chastisement, which affects not merely the apprehension of truth, but the moulding of character; which, besides enlarging our knowledge, fertilises our heart. Sorrow, as a discipline for the soul, subdues the will, softens the temper, curbs the passions, pulverises, so to speak, the rough excrescences of character, which, like lumps of hard clay on the surface of a tilled field, turn the edge of the plough and baulk the skill of the sower. It is not that we are to lose our will; that would be to lose our individuality; but that we are to retain it, that we may offer it up daily as a living sacrifice to God. "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus: Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh." (Jeremiah xxxi. 18, 19.) Oh! there are thousands upon thousands much chastened because much loved; because much loved, taken such pains with that they might grow like God. In a little while, instead of murmuring at it, we shall exult over it in a hymn of praise which angels might envy. Till then, let us glory in tribulation also, for "tribulation worketh patience."

Another end of chastisement is to educate and prepare us for life. He who knows what is coming on us would help us to meet it; not only does He offer us blessing, but (what is much more) He would make us capable of receiving it, and enjoying it, and retaining it, though by a process of trial which, at the moment of its coming, may make us stagger through unbelief. So, where life is to be busy, or prosperous, or brilliant, or much encumbered with temptation, affliction acts through the memory, like ballast on a vessel, to keep us steady, and sober, and humble. Joseph is an instance in point. For him the prison was the only safe approach to the throne. No one can govern who has not first learned to obey. He had to learn within the prison-walls lessons of human nature, his own as well as other men's, which he could not have learned before, which it would have been too late for him to have learned afterwards; he was also to be instructed how to suffer patiently, how to be silent under calumny, how to requite with justice, how to recompense with mercy. "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." If only we could believe this, how plain, how bright, how happy our life would be!

But there is one other result which chastisement aims at producing in us—greater nearness to God, and so greater meetness for heaven. As it is impossible to overstate the desire of God's heart, that we would receive his love, and walk in fellowship with Him, and consult Him in our difficulties, and worship Him with our entire souls, so is it needful to confess, humbling and saddening as the confession must be, that we do not do this willingly, nor heartily, nor entirely, though, so far as we go, it may be deliberately and sincerely; we give self and the world as much as we can, Him as little. For, though we can trust God for our salvation, we distrust Him for our happiness. We look to Him to bless us in the world to come, we look elsewhere to be blessed in the present world. Health, money, friends, advancement, society, knowledge, business—these are the gods that we worship, on these we rely; and we do not discover that they are but broken cisterns which hold no water, until God shatters them at a blow, and so we fall back on Him as our only abiding portion, in whom alone are the fresh springs of our life. Yes, let us confess that God desires us, and we do not desire Him; He is ever turning towards us to bless us, and we—we are ever turning away. His hands are filled with gifts for which we do not care. His heart is overflowing with love, which does not content or gladden us, unless it flows in the channels we ourselves choose for it. Idolatry is still the characteristic sin of men: love of this present evil world has far more power over the best of us than we think it has; and only when health is impaired, or money is lost, or friends die, or occupation is suspended, are our eyes fully opened to discern good from evil, and we made willing to say, "Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render the calves of our lips."

And thus,—for no one can be spiritually minded without being heavenly minded as well,—as earth attracts us less heaven attracts us more; we confess that we are strangers and pilgrims, we seek a city yet to come. For life with all its burdens and anxieties is yet such a blessed thing, this earth with its ties and pursuits and objects and possessions has so much in it to occupy and fascinate and gladden; friends are so kind, home is so happy, knowledge is so noble, nature is so fair, that, say as we will, think as we may that heaven is our home and this world a wilderness, were our health unbroken, and our tasks unfinished, and our energies fresh, and our homes full, we should

follow with somewhat reluctant steps and moistened eyes, and a heart looking behind us, the messenger that takes us away. We are meant to love life; nay, we are made to love it. Love of life is no sin, it is merely a lower kind of love than a desire for the fruition of life eternal in the presence of the Lamb; and the Divine way of lifting us up from the lower level to the higher, without contradicting on the one hand God's purposes for our earthly service, or, on the other hand, crushing the beautiful human affections, which are the features of God's own image in ruined yet not quite defaced souls, is by gradually weaning us from earthly things, rather than by violently alienating us from them, by correcting and elevating, rather than by destroying our natural instincts and capacities, through the blessed prospect of the inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. For what is true heavenly-mindedness? Surely not a cowardly, feeble, sickly craving to get rid of life because it is full of risks and toil and change. If we wish for heaven only because we are tired of earth, we shall soon want to leave it, and be back here. Heavenly-mindedness, such as God would work in us, is a weariness of sin, not of duty; a desire to see God, not to leave men. To be with Him for whom we have been waiting; to behold Him in whom we have been believing; and to adore Him whom we have tried and wished to love, yet never with the same kind of devoted love which we gave to husband or wife, or child, or friend; this is the desire for heaven which God would ripen in us by his dispensations of sorrow, a desire which is perfectly compatible with the manful and entire and cheerful and patient discharge of all our duties here.

Such, then, are at least some of the purposes which God would accomplish towards his people in chastening them. But the verse also teaches us that He has purposes with respect to Himself: "FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE." He is *holy*, and therefore He chastens us, that no one may accuse Him of countenancing sin. For his sake as well as ours, and for the world as well as for the Church, He must show Himself to be a holy God, loving righteousness, and hating iniquity. There have been three distinct periods in his providential government of the Church in its features of blessing and chastisement. The first was under the Theocracy, when the plagues on Egypt and the destruction of the wicked Canaanites marked the period when Jehovah himself was Lord and King of his people and made the rod of his power to be known. The second dates from the Kings to the Incarnation, when God was gradually withdrawing Himself from visible and supra-natural interference, and teaching his people to walk by faith and not by sight. And this being a time when men, whose forefathers had seen the very footsteps and hand-prints of God, began to doubt—since these had disappeared—if there was a God at all, the Psalms abound in petitions, not so much for a personal vengeance on personal enemies, as for a public and righteous retribution on the enemies of God. "Let God show Himself to be a living and holy God by punishing the wicked and rewarding the good," this is the one thought that runs through those Scriptures, the tone and spirit of which, when not precisely understood, shock and perplex us now. Such, for instance, is the meaning of the prayer, "Arise, thou Judge of the earth, and reward the proud after their deserving." Such the gist of the complaint, "Why do the ungodly triumph, and the wicked make such proud boasting?" Such the essence of the question, "Where is the God of judgment?" Such the substance of the exhortation, "Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity." Such the spirit of the thanksgiving, "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance; he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked, so that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily He is a God that judgeth the earth." The third period is the present, in which we look for a judgment to come, and are persuaded that whatever may seem to be imperfect or unjust now, will be explained and vindicated, and set right by the Son of Man on the throne of his glory. We do not therefore expect to see sin visibly punished, and we are expressly forbidden by our Lord himself to pass hasty or severe judgments on others. Yet this does not repeal God's law of personal chastisement, nor does it forbid our asking Him, when his rod visits us, "Lord, wherefore is it come?" A holy God hates sin, and must punish it wherever He finds it; He can have no truce with it, no forbearance towards it, no halting of purpose, no slackness of hand. If God did not visit sin at all, men would instantly say, He careth not for it. But when we see that He hates it all, hates it always, hates it everywhere, then his name is consistent with his government, and his character with his acts; and if we really desire for ourselves to be holy as He is holy, though we shall smart under his rod, we shall not wonder at it, nor resist it, for He will be seen to be doing the very thing for us that we have asked Him to do, and that we cannot do for ourselves.

But He is also *righteous*. This is their song who stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, and sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb:—"Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints." Sometimes, no doubt, we are tempted to think that this is not so. When the punishment seems out of proportion to the offence, or when it is "sorrow upon sorrow;" or when it goes on year by year; or when it is final, in the sense that there is no hope of ever escaping from it, we hardly know how to reconcile it with our ideas of God's justice, the punishment is greater than we can bear when it is heavier than we have deserved. How severe, for instance, was the doom on Moses that shut him out of the land of promise, and which included him in the same sentence with those whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, because they thought scorn of that pleasant land, and gave no credence to God's word! Is there a more touching prayer in all the Old Testament than that of the prophet's, "O Lord God, thou hast begun to show thy servant thy greatness and thy mighty hand. I pray thee let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain and Lebanon. But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear

me, and the Lord said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter." To glance at one more instance: the faithful but disobedient prophet paid a very terrible penalty for being the victim of a wicked fraud. The same kind of thing, though in a different form, continually happens now. Imprudence or impatience are sometimes as severely visited as perverseness or malice. A mistake in youth stalks after us through life with the gloomy shadow of a crime. Cæsar crossed but one Rubicon: but there are countless Rubicons in daily life of rash words, hasty impulses, unwise plans, which are but the work of a moment, yet cut our lives in two, and make a wide gulf between a happy past and a clouded future. The loss of a limb is irremediable. The death of a friend is irremediable. We cannot live our life over again: regret may prevent future mistakes; it cannot repair the past. Well, the one thing to do is to fall back on the righteousness of God, and to say to ourselves, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." We cannot be fair judges of the equity of punishment without knowing accurately the nature and extent of the sin. It was a severe punishment on Moses; but, be it said with all dutiful and loyal respect to that grandest of men, it was for a great offence; and had God passed it over, it never could have been said of Him, "He will by no means clear the guilty." As to the disobedient prophet, he was deceived, no doubt; but that was his fault, not his excuse. To be deceived by others may sometimes mean to deceive ourselves: and though the punishment was final in this world—though the true prophet suffered and the false prophet escaped,—in the next world we may believe they will change places; and the verdict pronounced by the instinct of human justice will be ratified by the sentence of God.

O, let us believe that God is never hard—never afflicts willingly or grieves the children of men, never deals with us *after* our sins, nor rewards us *according* to our iniquities. Does not our own experience tell us this? Heavy as may be our trials, do not we secretly feel to want them all, and that less would not do; our sorrow is not to atone for sin, but to help to deliver us from it: yet it must be sufficient to effect this; and therefore to touch the edge of the wound instead of probing it, would be but to trifle with our disease and prolong our pain?

For, once more, "God is *faithful*, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." When it is "sorrow upon sorrow," it is "strength upon strength;" and those who know most about affliction will be the readiest to confess what lessons it has taught them of the tenderness and faithfulness of God. He knows exactly how far it is safe to go with us: and He watches over us in the furnace, waiting for the moment when He may bring us out. Our powers are never really over-tasked, for they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength. Our patience need never be exhausted, if we remember in whose hand our times are. Our resources are never dried up, for the fulness of God is at our disposal. Our faith cannot fail while we look up at Christ. "My grace is sufficient for thee:" this is a promise for us, as well as for the apostle. And if we ask, as many ask with Job every day, "What is my strength that I should hope, and what is mine end that I should prolong my life?" let us lay hold of the blessed assurance, not only to Israel after the flesh, but to Israel after the spirit: "I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth, lest the spirit should fail before Me, and the souls which I have made."

In conclusion, to repeat a thought, which has already been dwelt upon in former expositions, the individuality of Divine chastisements, or the fitness of each man's sorrow for his own condition, is strikingly indicated in the words, "He restoreth *me*, He leadeth *me*." Life would be intolerable, could we not trace in it the plan of a Divine Providence watching over us and guiding us; sorrow would be overwhelming, had we to look on it as a chance arrow shot against us at a venture, and not aimed by the hand of one whom we can trust and love. When God sends chastisement, He knows to whom He sends it, and why He sends it, and what He sends. His treatment of us is infinitely wise in its precise adaptation to the circumstances under which it is applied, and to the result which it is intended to accomplish, and to the character which it is sent to sanctify. If anything, so to speak, is providential, affliction is. If in anything whatever we are bound to trust God with all the completeness of our judgment, with all the strength of our understanding, with all the adoration of our heart, it is when He is taking us apart to make us perfect through suffering. Thus it is that God sends sorrow to one man, and not to another; at one time in this way, at another time in that. The sorrow that might cure us to-day might not cure us to-morrow; the sorrow that might be good for me, might not be good for you. Each man has his own sorrows, different from any one else's in all the world, since he himself is different from any one else. Each individual believer is led his own way into the wilderness, each has Jesus with him there.

And having Jesus with us is the key to that secret, which we all find so hard, keeping the blessing of the sorrow, when the sorrow itself is passed. In one sense it is impossible that the freshness of our first impressions should never fade, or that in the heat and burden of the day the flower should be as bright and as fragrant as when it dropped with dew in the first blush of morning. But it is not the feeling of the blessing that is so important, as the blessing itself; not the echo of the Saviour's voice, but the Saviour himself that we should really desire to retain. And our Lord will not leave us, unless we bid Him. The believer's heart is far more precious to Him than the material glories of a visible Paradise with its walls of jasper and its gates of pearl. Yet we shall retain Him in proportion as we have clung to Him, and laid hold of the hem of his garment, and said, "Abide with us," "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me," when his hand was heavy on us, and the dews of suffering moistened our brow, and we had not strength for words; only the soul turned towards Him as flowers to the sun. Ours be the Psalmist's

prayer: "O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk in my house with a perfect heart." Ours be the prophet's complaint: "O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble, why shouldest thou be a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?" Then ours shall be the apostle's thanksgiving: "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

This once more leads on to another thought of great consolation, bearing on our supposed uselessness under certain visitations of God. For some are disposed to say that their time of affliction is all lost time, and it bitterly aggravates the chastisement, already severe enough, to feel that we are but cumberers of the ground. When we discover how lightly we valued our former opportunities, we wish for them back; yet wishing does not bring them back; we long, but long in vain, once more to be permitted to give a cup of cold water to one for whom Christ died. Well, it is something to be humbled for past remissness, and to discover mercy which we have not valued as it deserved. Yet inaction need not be uselessness. The land that lies fallow under the winter frost is mellowing for the spring sowing. It is very possible to be useless amid a great deal of fussy and showy activity, and to be seeking the praise of men, not of God. We cannot be useless while we are doing and suffering God's will, whatever it may be found to be. And we can always do that. If we are bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit, we are not useless. And we can always do that. If we are increasing in the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, we are not useless. And we can always do that. While we pray we cannot be useless. And we can always do that. God will always find us a work to do, a niche to fill, a place to serve, nay, even a soul to save, when it is his will, and not ours, that we desire to do; and if it should please Him that we should sit still for the rest of our lives, doing nothing else but waiting on Him, and waiting for Him, why should we complain? "Here is the faith and patience of the saints."

So, when sorrow comes to you, or to those you love, do not shrink away from it, as from some cruel torturer, but welcome in it an angel to bring you near to God. Do not fear, do not fear, do not fear. "This light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Our God is enough for every one of us, and when we pass behind the cloud, it is that we may see his face, and our joy be full. I would not indeed say, Envy those in sorrow. That would be aiming too high for human nature. But I may say, Bless God for his gracious purpose towards them, and let your prayer for them rather be, that they may be able to receive and retain all He offers them, than that they may be at once delivered from their pain. It is natural to pity them, yet if we could look into the invisible world we should see that they who are pitied by the angels, and whom, therefore, we ought to pity, are those who are left alone to be filled with their own devices, whom an unbroken prosperity is hardening against God.

Soon, very soon, the good Shepherd will no longer be restoring our souls, or leading us painfully in the paths of righteousness; for sin will be a thing of the past, and we shall be walking together on the everlasting hills. Yet, if our glory depends on our service, it also depends on our sanctity. In heaven we shall still serve Him; but only while on earth can we be purified with the baptism of pain.

A. W. Thorold.

A SUNDAY AFTERNOON IN A LONDON COURT.

We crossed a few streets and reached a narrow lane, that led into a close dirty court. Abel walked ahead, of course. He seemed quite proud of his leadership.

By *we*, I mean my friend Mr. Scott and myself. Mr. Scott is a clerk in a bank. He is a tall powerful-looking man of thirty, with a certain dignity in his appearance, which commands respect as much as his kind, benevolent countenance inspires confidence. Being possessed of a powerful voice, and having the knack of expressing himself in an easy popular way, he commenced open-air services in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell upwards of a year ago. His preaching has been attended with much success. On the Sunday of which I am now speaking, I found myself among his hearers. I went there, not only to witness the work he was carrying on, but also to hear him myself; for I knew that a half hour spent under his preaching was, to an attentive listener, a step onward in the way of salvation. Not that Mr. Scott told his hearers much that was new. I saw many passers-by stop a few minutes and then walk off again, with an expression that seemed to say, "Ah! the old story over again." But I also saw many who stood as though spell-bound by some mysterious power. They seemed riveted to the spot, and apparently forgot all about their business, so absorbed were they in the subject which the preacher, in his simple eloquence, put so forcibly before their minds. The fact is, "new" and "old" are words of very relative meaning. They denote attributes no object possesses by itself; they are rather imported into it by those who look at it. That which makes a thing new or old to you, is not in the thing, but in yourself. So that what was old to you yesterday may become quite new to-day. For instance, you have known for years that there is a certain remedy for a certain complaint, and whenever you see it advertised in the papers you at once dismiss it from your mind, because you know that you can obtain nothing from it in the way of information. But suppose that the symptoms of the disease

begin to manifest themselves in your system, the advertisement soon acquires freshness and interest to you. The old importunate beggar suddenly becomes a new friend, and you find yourself performing a deed which hitherto you deemed yourself incapable of: you attentively read that "hackneyed" advertisement, and even commit to memory the particulars which it gives. Now, in the very same way, many a one who for years and years had known the Saviour, but did not care about Him, upon falling in with Mr. Scott's preaching, listened with great attention to the proclamation of the old truth. And it was not because the preacher put something new into it, for no preacher, however learned or eloquent, can do that; but because the Holy Spirit put something new into the hearer's heart, something in the shape of an awakened conscience, of a feeling of uneasiness and anxiety concerning the state of his soul; in a word, a discovery of an inward malady, which no one can cure except that Physician whose medicine stands proof even against death.

The service over, a young man of about twenty-five advanced to Mr. Scott. He evidently belonged to the artisan class. His shabby dress seemed to indicate that he was connected with a family which had very little to do with the needle and the brush. His face, however, was pleasant to look at, and you could not help believing that its owner was a true and honest fellow.

"Would you like to go and visit a poor invalid with me?" said Mr. Scott.

"Oh, yes," I replied.

"Very well, Abel," he said, addressing the young man; "we'll go."

"Who is that young man?" I inquired, while Abel stepped on a few paces before us.

"He is one of my most regular hearers," said Mr. Scott. "He came to my preaching some six or eight weeks ago, and has attended steadily ever since. I was much pleased with the fellow's frank, good-looking face, which, like a mirror, gave back the expression my words must have called forth upon my own face. It greatly assisted me in my preaching, for nothing inspires a speaker more than the knowledge that his words are producing an impression on the hearts of his hearers. It may be a weakness in me, but I must confess that my liveliness greatly depends upon the effect which I witness upon the faces of the people. If neither smile nor frown, neither sign of consent nor of disapproval, be noticeable, and the people stare at me like so many wax figures, or look about them with an air of listless indifference, it is hard work for me to go on preaching, however precious the truth may be I am expounding. My spirit sinks with every sentence, as if from each of those inexpressive faces a cold chilly blast came upon my heart, blowing out the flame that warmed my soul when I began, and sometimes actually freezing me. But Abel's face has often made the light flare up again. From a short conversation I had with him one day I learnt that his parents are old and unable to support themselves, and are entirely dependent upon him and his sister. He has never learnt any trade, and earns a little money by carrying parcels and running errands. He is generally to be seen loitering about the railway stations, trying to pick up a job from the passengers. He said the things he heard me preach about were quite new to him; that he liked them very much, and wished they were also preached in the place where he lives, as he expected much that was bad might be done away with in consequence. This morning he requested me to visit a sick man, a neighbour of his, whom he had told about my preaching, and who had expressed a strong desire to see me. I felt that I must go with him at once, the more so as I was anxious to know a little more about his family and way of living."

Mr. Scott had just done saying this when we reached the court in which Abel lived. It was like most of its kind, dark, dirty, and almost suffocatingly close. It contained about ten or twelve four-storied dilapidated houses, and teemed with little children, who ran about at play. Men and women were standing in the doorways, the men smoking, and the women, some of whom were very gaudily dressed and others in rags, were picking fish or peeling oranges, and chatting with their neighbours. Some kept up conversations with others from the windows of the first and second stories. The whole made upon my tympanum the impression of an enormous beehive, the buzz of which was uninterrupted.

Abel proceeded to the doorway of one of the houses, where an elderly woman was standing with a fat healthy-looking baby in her arms. There was a sudden pause in the buzz, as the appearance of two gentlemen evidently attracted great notice.

"I say, Lizzy," cried a voice from a window, "it's for the Jew. He must die a Christian, and no help for him."

"Moses and Aaron!" was the answer.

A burst of uproarious laughter made the court resound. Abel pushed us rather hurriedly into the house.

"What is the meaning of all this?" asked Mr. Scott, who found himself in the dark passage sooner than its odour would have made him wish.

"Please step in, sir," answered Abel, opening the door of the front room. "I will tell you."

The room in which we found ourselves presented such a spectacle of confusion as I never saw before. Elegance and sordidness were here wrestling for the supremacy. There was a round walnut table and a stuffed easy chair, which might have figured in any gentleman's drawing-room. But the table was covered with a dirty rag, and in the easy chair sat a grey-headed man, of whose dress there was not one piece that was not torn. A fine bird's cage hung on the wall, and near to it a decayed Dutch clock, without hands, and completely covered with dust. A guitar of Italian make stood in a corner, surrounded with pots and pans, both dirty and broken. The elderly woman who followed us into the room had on an old torn cotton gown, but a splendid silk dress and a gorgeously coloured shawl were noticeable, suspended on a nail close by the fire-place. The old grey-headed man had something venerable in his appearance, in spite of his ragged coat. It was easy to see that the owner of that good-natured face was Abel's father.

"Please, sir," said Abel to Mr. Scott, "the sick man lives up-stairs on the second floor. I believe he is a Jew; at least, he is believed to be one by every body in the court. The people don't like him, but I think he is a good fellow."

"No, he is not," said the old woman; "he is a fool, sir, if not worse."

"Now, mother, be quiet," said Abel; "you cannot prove a single thing against Benjamins."

"Can't I?" answered the woman, contemptuously. "Does he not call the police into the court for every trifle? He is a low spy. He is paid for it, depend upon it."

"Ah well, Sarah, you had better not say that," said the old man. "You're wrong in this matter, I suspect. At any rate, allow the gentlemen to see poor Benjamins, as they want to speak a word to him."

"Well, that's all right," replied the woman, lowering her voice to a tone of compassion. "God forbid that I should prevent a man's good, especially when dying, as perhaps is the case with Benjamins. We are all of us poor sinners, and in need of God's mercy."

"Do you believe that?" asked Mr. Scott, agreeably surprised by this confession of the woman.

"Of course I do, sir," answered she. "I always say, that but for God's mercy I should be lying at the bottom of hell. Even the best of us deserve nothing less than that."

"Then have you a well-founded hope that you will not be found lying there one day?" asked Mr. Scott, in a grave tone.

"I hope I have, sir. I pray every day, 'Lord have mercy upon me.'"

"Of course you do," quoth the old man, with a sour smile.

His wife cast a grim look at him.

"I always say, sir," continued she, "a man who has no religion is worse than a brute."

She then told us that from her childhood she had been used to attend public worship regularly, but that of late she had been prevented by infirmity and by many engagements at home.

"I see you have a baby to care for," said Mr. Scott, taking the child's hand. "Is it your daughter's?"

"Yes, sir."

"Does she live with you?"

"She does, sir."

"So her husband is dead?"

"He is not, sir. He is a sailor, and is from home just now."

"Ah, Sarah, you know better," muttered the old man, sufficiently loud to be heard.

"I think we will just go and see the sick man," said Mr. Scott, who did not feel much pleasure in carrying on this conversation. "Abel, go ahead, if you please, and show us the room where the sick man is."

Some forty wooden steps, up which we had to grope our way in Egyptian darkness, took us to the back room of the second story. We found ourselves in a tolerably large apartment, indifferently furnished, but clean and tidy. There was a bed opposite the windows, upon which a sick man was lying, and another bed opposite the fire-place, which was unoccupied. An old woman who was sitting at the table near the window, dropped a lowly curtsey and left the place when we entered. Abel, after having introduced us to the sick man and given us seats, followed her example, and walked down-stairs. The invalid appeared to be about thirty. There could be no doubt that he was a Jew, or at any rate of Jewish extraction, for his black hair and beard, his aquiline nose, and his strongly-protruding jaw-bones stamped his face of that peculiar type which so certainly distinguishes the children of Abraham from all other nations. After a few words about his illness, which, though painful and chronic, yet proved not to be of a very serious nature, he expressed his gratitude for the visit with which we had favoured him.

"Abel told me of your preaching," he said to Mr. Scott, "and I often said I wish I could speak to that gentleman; but I never could expect, sir, that you would trouble yourself to come all the way to see me. It is too much, indeed."

"And what made you wish to speak to me?" asked Mr. Scott.

"Why, sir," answered he, with a smile, "there is a bit of a controversy between my friend Abel and myself about religion. I am an Israelite, as perhaps you may be aware. Now, I have been thinking much about religious matters of late, as I have been struck by the fact that Christians and Jews can never agree, though Christians believe and read our Bible."

"So you read your Bible?" asked Mr. Scott.

"Certainly I do," answered he, producing an Old Testament, with the Hebrew and English text in parallel columns, from underneath his pillow. "I am not a very great Hebrew scholar, but with the aid of the translation I can make it out pretty well. Now, I have read Moses and the Prophets over and over again, and I have found that it was wrong in our rabbis to impose upon us a great many things of which not a word is to be found in the law of God. I often quarrelled with them about this, which ended in my leaving the synagogue, lest I should be turned out. They follow absurd traditions for which there is no Divine authority whatever; and as I want to serve God, and not man, I threw all those human inventions overboard. But, on the other hand, I found that the Christian religion is not true either. I have often had conversations about it with Abel's mother, who would sometimes say to me that I would go to hell if I did not turn a Christian. But I found that her religion does away with the law of God altogether. For God in the law most decidedly declares that it is our duty to do his commandments, and that those who do them shall live, and have a great reward. But Mrs. Harris—that's the name of Abel's mother—always speaks of God's mercy, and that we are great sinners, and can only be saved by grace. But under the cover of these words she commits the greatest iniquities, and lives as if there were no God nor eternity at all. Her daughter leads a life of sin. She is out at present with the orange-basket, as usual, but I am certain she will come home to-night with some

sailor whom she has entrapped in her snares, and whom she will keep in her power till she has robbed him of everything. Her mother encourages her in her infamous way of living, and, in fact, the whole family live upon the earnings of that unhappy girl. If you saw into their back-parlour you would find it stuffed with articles which they have bought with the wages of iniquity, or have got as presents from their wretched victims. This state of things is a real eye-sore to the old man, who is good and honest; but he is weak, and must submit. As for Abel, he was always disgusted with it, and constantly quarrelled with his mother and sister. From the day he first heard you preach, however, he found he could not with a good conscience continue a member of a family which lived in such immorality, and, as we had often conversed about the matter, he resolved to take up his abode with me. That is his bed there. We live together like brothers, having everything in common, as we are both of us poor. I am in the service of Mr. Solomon Rahab, who deals in old clothes, and whatever I bring home in the way of wages I put into that box on the mantelpiece, and so does Abel, and we take from it what we are in need of. For Abel is an out-and-out honest fellow, and I could trust him with anything. Now, the fact that your preaching caused him to break with his mother's household, and, like Moses, to prefer the desert with a good conscience to his mother's Egyptian flesh-pots, made me think that your Christianity at any rate must be something better than Mrs. Harris's. Abel also told me that you always spoke highly of the commandments of God, and that you had said that Christ had not come to do away with the law, but to fulfil it. But how that could be he could not tell. Abel is a good fellow, but dreadfully ignorant. He can neither read nor write. I have just begun to teach him a little reading, but he is not a very quick scholar. His heart is better than his head. So, upon finding that he could not give me an explanation, I often expressed the wish that I could have a conversation with the preacher himself. I am very thankful, sir, for the kindness with which you have gratified my desire."

"I shall be very happy to answer any question you wish to put to me, as far as it is in my power," replied Mr. Scott. "If I am right, your chief difficulty is as to the relation in which God's law stands to his mercy. Now, as to God's commandments, we both agree that they are holy and good, and that it is our duty to keep them. But I hope you will also agree with me when I say that there is not one among the children of Adam who perfectly keeps God's commandments, and that we are all transgressors."

"I admit that," answered Benjamins; "but that's exactly what perplexes me. When Mrs. Harris said that we are all sinners, I could not help owning that she spoke the truth, neither could I help admitting her conclusion that we consequently can only live and be saved by the mercy of God. But then, I thought, if we are to live through grace, what is the use of the law?"

"Why, of course," said I, thinking that I saw clearly through the whole matter, "the law is necessary to regulate our life, and to keep us in the right way. But then, *if* we should unfortunately trespass against one of the commandments, grace steps in to make up for it. Else there would be no hope for us. Don't you see?"

"I beg your pardon," replied the Jew. "I cannot see how your theory solves my difficulty. Will grace make up for the transgression of only *one* commandment?"

"More, of course."

"Then of two?"

"Of more."

"Suppose there are one hundred commandments which it is our duty to obey, and suppose I can only obey a portion of them, can you tell me the minimum which I *must* perform, to have a claim upon grace? Where is the line at which grace begins? Suppose, after having done my utmost all my life long, I find at the end that my righteousness amounts only to thirty per cent., may I rest assured that grace will make up for the remaining seventy?"

"There is no such line drawn," said I, a little put out by this arithmetical way of treating morals.

"So it does not matter how much righteousness we bring in?" he asked, in a tone of disappointment. "We may have transgressed one commandment, or fifty, or ninety-nine, or even the whole of them: it is all the same? In the measure in which our righteousness shrinks back, grace steps forward. Is that the true religion? Then Mrs. Harris is right, and there is no harm in her immoral conduct. Mercy will be sure to put it all right for her. But then, permit me to ask again: what is the use of the Divine commandments, if *that* is God's way?"

I looked at Mr. Scott, who, with a smile on his face, listened to our discussion in silence.

"Now, Mr. Scott, what do *you* say?" I asked.

"Why, Mr. Benjamins," said Mr. Scott, "I want you to answer your questions yourself. You are putting a serious difficulty before our mind. On one side there is the law of God, holy and good. On the other side there is the fact that we all transgress that law, and consequently deserve punishment. The question here rises: how are we to escape that punishment? The theory of God's mercy stepping in to make up for the deficit was proposed. But you have rejected that theory, on the ground of its making the law useless. Now, do you know any other theory that will satisfy an alarmed conscience? As for *me*, if a man has violated a law, *I* cannot see how he can escape the penalty unless mercy interpose. But perhaps *you* know another way?"

"I will by no means deny that mercy is required," replied the invalid. "On the contrary, both the Law and the Prophets declare, 'If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared.' But what perplexes my mind is the impossibility of finding out the *condition* upon which only mercy can be granted."

"If we repent and confess our sins, the Lord will forgive us," observed I.

"Yes, so our Bible tells us. When David said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the Lord,' the prophet

answered immediately, 'The Lord also hath put away thy sin: thou shalt not die.' But I cannot see how repentance can be a solid ground for the granting of mercy, unless that repentance be perfect and complete in every respect. But here again the question arises: where is the man who always manifests a perfect repentance? David may have shown such complete repentance in the case which I have just referred to. But was he *always* such a perfect penitent? *If* he was, he must have been a man of a different stamp from myself. *I* feel that I cannot always show such repentance as I suppose a holy and perfect God must require. I can understand how through the mercy of God repentance may make up for the transgression of the law in one or two cases; but how it can be a permanent ground for acquittal, I cannot make out."

"You are quite right," said Mr. Scott. "Mercy can never be the rule; it can only be the exception. Any state, kingdom, or society would be sure to break down if mercy and not justice were the foundation of its organisation. A king who in all cases allowed repentance to make up for the transgression of his law, would soon lose all his authority, because he would reduce his law to a mere nonentity, and himself to an object of derision. But I cannot see how God could allow repentance to make up for transgression even in one single case. I can understand how an earthly king can allow such a thing, because every earthly king is a trespasser himself, and not only a trespasser against the law of God, but against his own law. But God is a perfectly just king, and perfect justice excludes every idea of connivance at the transgression of the law. If such a connivance is once allowed, justice is violated, and it would make no alteration in the case, whether that connivance were repented of or not."

"Just so," exclaimed the Jew. "That's exactly what I always perceived. Justice and mercy may go together in man, because in man both justice and mercy are imperfect. But how in God mercy can be compatible with justice is a mystery to me. The one requires punishment, and the other requires acquittal, and both being perfect, the one cannot allow itself to be made imperfect by giving up a part of its claim in favour of the other.

"Still, it appears to me," said Mr. Scott, "that there is a way in which both may obtain their respective claims, and yet remain perfectly free from violation. Suppose a man is by the law sentenced to imprisonment till his debt is paid, and suppose the king, desiring to deliver him from that sentence, pays his debt. Will not both justice and mercy be satisfied in that case? We call such a proceeding *substitution*. Have you ever thought of that?"

"I have," replied the Jew. "You know our law is full of it. The whole system of sacrifices is based upon that principle. But I never could see how it could solve the difficulty we are speaking of at present. Can perfect justice permit the transgression of God's holy law to be made up for by the killing of an innocent unconscious animal in place of the transgressor?"

"I think not," replied Mr. Scott; "but suppose God himself came down on earth to be put to death instead of the guilty creatures whom He desired to save. Could justice object to such a solution of the difficulty?"

"God be put to death!" exclaimed the Jew, with an expression of utter amazement. He cast a grave inquisitive look at Mr. Scott, as if to ascertain whether he was in earnest.

"Of course it could only be possible if God became man," continued Mr. Scott. "I dare say you have often noticed, when reading Moses and the Prophets, that they point at that great unfathomable mystery which was one day to be realised, *viz.*, the incarnation of God in the person of Israel's Messiah, David's great son."

The conversation now assumed the form of a sharp argument. The idea of such a thing as an incarnation of Jehovah appeared not only to be new to Benjamins' mind, but he even rejected it with signs of horror. He kept, however, within the boundaries of a regular and polite discussion, and allowed Mr. Scott full scope to state the doctrine of the Gospel on this fundamental point, and to show its congruity with the teaching of Moses and the Prophets. This was in so far blessed with success as it contributed much towards clearing away many erroneous opinions which Benjamins had picked up in his childhood about the "abominable idolatry of the Christians," and towards exciting his desire to become acquainted with the contents of the New Testament, of which I gave him a copy.

Before we left, Mr. Scott promised to repeat his visit, and Benjamins requested us, if possible, to do something for Abel.

"He is a good, honest, and diligent fellow," said he; "but the pity is, he has no regular employment, and this makes his mind unsettled. He wishes to marry a decent girl who lives here in the court, but I have hitherto been able to keep him from that, as I am sure it would only make another poor starving family. Besides, I wish he could return to his parents; but that cannot be, so long as his sister Dora is in the house. Dora is not what is called a 'bad woman.' She is young, and exceedingly light-minded; but if she were under good control, I believe she would not prove refractory. I have often spoken to her about her present conduct, and pointed her to the frightful consequences which must one day follow it in this life and in the life to come. Her eyes often fill with tears, and sometimes she sighs, 'I wish I were out of this house!' She fears, however, lest her parents should starve if she were to leave them. Besides, she does not know where to go, as she has learnt nothing except rambling about with the orange basket, and she has a baby to take care of, which she is much attached to. Her mother, too, lying, hypocritical, and flaunting as she is, has yet a few features in her character which give me ground to hope that she is not an irrecoverably wicked woman. I believe if Abel could be placed in such a position as to be able to support his parents, matters would greatly improve in that house, and I dare say in the whole of this court. For this family exercises a bad influence upon the inhabitants, owing to the sailors

and soldiers, and loose lads whom the girl brings into the court."

Having safely groped our way down again, we were met by Abel, who asked us if we would mind visiting another invalid in the court. As we had still some time to spare, we followed him to a house on the opposite side, the ground-floor of which appeared to be a rag-store. The door was strongly barred inside, for locks were turned and chains unfastened before we could enter. Abel did not go in with us, but a tall stout man, who opened the door, guided us to the place we sought. We had to wind our way through heaps of articles of every possible description lying scattered about in strange confusion. At one glance I noticed watches, and spoons, and musical instruments, sailors' clothes and military uniforms, swords and rifles, compasses and chronometers, and—Bibles. The odious smell which pervaded the place was almost insupportable. We were glad to reach the stairs, which led us up to the back room of the first floor.

"Get out of the way," snarled our guide to two little children who, in their innocent play, blocked up the landing-place. The poor things pressed themselves to the wall in a fright. Our guide then ushered us into the back room, while he himself turned into the front one. We afterwards learnt that he was the landlord of the house, and the owner of the rag-store. The family whom we were going to visit were his tenants.

The room in which we now found ourselves presented an aspect of poverty, combined, however, with cleanliness and order. It scarcely contained any furniture, save a little table, a couple of wooden chairs, and a wooden bench. At the window sat a good-looking girl, about twenty, engaged in sewing. Two little boys, apparently about five or six, were rolling a ball across the floor. In a bed lay a sick woman of between forty and fifty. Her flushed face indicated that she was in a fever. Her pillow and blanket seemed quite new, and contrasted strangely with the poor aspect of the room. On a little stool before her bed were a few oranges, a pot with jelly, a paper bag apparently containing sugar, and a small decanter filled with a yellowish liquor, which looked like sherry or brandy. Poor as the place was, it contained nothing indicative of neglect. The floor was clean, and so was the furniture, and the dresses of the girl and the boys, though showing the effects of frequent use and mending, were yet without rents and stains.

"Hush! be quiet now," said the girl to the boys when we entered. She dropped a curtsey, and placing two chairs near the bed, invited us to be seated.

We soon got into conversation with the invalid, who proved an intelligent woman. She was a widow, who had lost her husband four years ago. The family had lived in Cheltenham, where her husband had been employed at the baths, and had been able to maintain his wife and children in pretty comfortable circumstances. At his death, being deprived of every means of subsistence, she had removed to London by the advice of their present landlord, Mr. Groves, who was a cousin of her late husband's, and an old bachelor. He had given her ten shillings a-week and the use of the room, for which she had to clean his room and cook his meals. Mary, her eldest daughter, also received from him twelve shillings a week for assisting him in the rag store. She had thus been able to keep herself and her five children in comparative comfort. But soon some disagreement had arisen between Mr. Groves and herself, owing to which Mary had withdrawn from the store. She was consequently thrown wholly upon her own ten shillings for support, to which, however, Mary added a few shillings, which she earned by sewing for the people in the court.

While she was telling this story, the merry noise of the two little girls playing on the landing-place was heard now and again.

"Mary, go and tell the girls not to make such a noise," she said to her daughter; "give them this orange, and let the boys have the other one."

"No, no, that shan't be," said Mary, proceeding to the door; "Mrs. Harris would scold me if she heard of it. She said decidedly that the oranges were all for you; she left a bag with dates for the children."

"Does Mrs. Harris visit you occasionally?" asked I.

"Very often, sir, and she always brings something in the shape of refreshment. She is a very kind-hearted person. Whatever may be said of her, there can be no doubt that she is the most compassionate person in the court. She cannot bear to see people in distress. She would give her last penny to help them. The other day, when she noticed the condition of my bed, she sent me her own pillow and blanket."

"How very strange!" said I, casting a look at Mr. Scott.

"I am afraid," replied Mr. Scott, "the poor woman fearfully misinterprets the text that 'Charity shall cover a multitude of sins.'"

"Why, if that is a text of the Bible," said the woman; "she will have a large cover for her sins, indeed."

"I am afraid that cover will not avail her much in the great day," said Mr. Scott; "since, in my opinion, the text means nothing else than this, that a person who is animated by the spirit of love, will not bring his neighbour's sins to light, but cover them up with the cloak of charity. The gospel teaches me that, with reference to our *own* sins, there is but one covering given that will stand the eternal judgment, viz., the atoning blood of Christ. I hope, my good woman, you are not ignorant of that great truth."

From the conversation that now ensued it appeared that Mrs. Jeffreys—that was the woman's name——knew very little of the way of salvation. Though she was the daughter of respectable parents belonging to the trading class, her religious training had been very defective, and her family life, though a pattern of order and decency, had, at the same time, been a very ignorant one as to things spiritual. She appeared remarkably well educated for a woman in her position, in so far as regarded the forms and

Drawn by W. Small

Engraved by J. Swain.

A SUNDAY AFTERNOON IN A LONDON COURT.

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fashions of social life; she was not unskilled in female handiwork, and could read and write perfectly well, while the way in which she expressed herself showed that the immense quantity of novels she had devoured from her youth upwards, had at least had a purifying influence upon her language and style.

"I am ashamed to confess that I have hitherto cared very little about religion," she said; "and perhaps I should not care about it even now, had not Abel spoken to me of your preaching, and told us you had said that we were lost for ever if we did not repent and turn to God. Now I felt that this was a grave saying, which set me thinking seriously, especially as the Jew Benjamins at the same time put some questions and made some observations which caused me to think very anxiously. For he said that God was a just and holy God, who was one day to call us to account for all our words and deeds, and he showed that we were not living up to his commandments."

"Certainly you are not," I said; "I noticed it directly on entering your room, for I saw your daughter engaged in sewing on the Lord's Day."

"Why, that's exactly one of the things which the Jew also spoke about. 'Look here,' he said, 'you, as a Christian woman, believe that the first day of the week is the Sabbath instituted by God, and yet you allow yourself to desecrate it by working just the same as on any other day of the week. How will you answer to God for that?' he asked. Now I could not say much to that; but, on the other hand, I answered that I hoped our Father in heaven would show us mercy, taking into account our position, as we must mend our own clothes and those of the children on Sunday, since we must sew for other people during the week. But he shook his head, and said, 'Mercy, mercy! you are just talking like Mrs. Harris. You Christian people seem to think that our good Lord will allow you to come before Him with divers weights as you use them in your shops, and that if you make up for Him the full weight by your works, you may throw as much of mercy into the scale as will put the balance right.' But, sir, what are we to do? If the Lord has no mercy upon us, we are lost, all of us, ain't we?"

"Certainly," replied I; "every morsel of bread which we eat is a gift of God, which we have not deserved. But since God is so merciful towards us, we ought to serve Him all the more faithfully, and avoid everything that gives Him cause of discontent."

"Yes, so we should," answered Mrs. Jeffreys, "but circumstances are so trying in this world, sir, that we are often compelled to do what we feel we ought not."

"But if we do good only when it is easy, we are bad Christians," said I. "True religion consists in suffering and making sacrifices, rather than acting against our consciences."

"That's exactly like the Jew again, isn't it, Mary?" said the invalid, turning her head towards her daughter.

"Just like him," answered Mary; "I believe he is a better Christian than we are, though he is a Jew."

"Why, sir," continued the mother, "I will tell you what the matter is. Mary, as I told you, was engaged by my cousin, Mr. Groves, for the rag-store, but it was soon evident that he wanted her more especially to attract the sailors and soldiers to his shop. Her position became very dangerous, but I did not know what to do, as our livelihood depended chiefly upon her earnings, and Mrs. Harris said I should not be too particular about what young people were about, since we ourselves had once been young and merry. Still, Mary was quite wretched and miserable; but she submitted, poor thing, as she knew that there was no help for it. But one day Mr. Benjamins came up and spoke to me; nay, he remonstrated with me, and said that I *must* break it off at once, if I did not want to get God's wrath poured out upon my head, and that it was better even to starve with a good conscience, than to sin and to grow rich by it. And he came again and again, and left us no rest, till we yielded, and Mary gave up her situation, which she was but too happy to do. He also spoke to Mr. Groves, and showed him that the way in which he conducted his trade was unjust and ruinous to the young people, but Mr. Groves got angry and turned him out of the house, and from that time Benjamins has not been allowed to step over our threshold. Unfortunately, a few days after that occurrence the police came into the shop seeking after some stolen property which my cousin had bought,—not knowing, however, that it was stolen. The whole store was carefully searched in consequence, and my cousin has had many a visit of the police since. He believes that Benjamins played him that trick for vengeance, and so does the whole court. The people are exasperated against the Jew, though I am assured he is as innocent as a new-born baby."

"Your cousin seems to be a hard man," said Mr. Scott.

"Why, sir, he is not so bad as many take him for. His besetting sin is greed. He must be a wealthy man from all I can gather, but he lives like a poor beggar. On the other hand he is not altogether void of humanity, else he would have turned us out as well as Benjamins. He even said to me the other day, 'Why, Mrs. Jeffreys, I believe that after all you were right in taking Mary away from the store. She is better where she is now.' 'Thank you, Mr. Groves,' said I, 'but it is a hard thing for us to have lost her earnings, and I wish you would think of raising my allowance instead.' 'Oh, no,' said he, 'I cannot think of that, but I will remember Mary in my will.'"

"What is his age?" asked I.

"Between sixty and seventy, and he is not very strong. Still, he may live many a year yet; cracked china lasts longest, the proverb says."

"And who has taken Mary's place in the shop?"

"Nobody. He has an old servant, who lives in the room over this, a cripple, who lost his leg in India, and has a small pension. I am afraid, however, that the poor fellow has spent his last day in the shop, for he fell sick a week ago, and the doctor has given up all hope. This puts my cousin out very much, as he must now do all the work alone, and it will knock him up altogether, unless he engages an

assistant. But he will not easily come to do that, as he trusts nobody, and suspects every one who enters his shop."

"Ah, he couldn't do better than take Abel," quoth Mary; "but he is too stingy to be willing to pay his wages. He could not have a more honest servant than him."

"Of course not," said Mrs. Jeffreys.

"Did you ever suggest the thing to Mr. Groves?" asked Mr. Scott.

"I did, sir, but he would not listen to it. He thinks it is an invention of Mary's to get married to Abel."

"Oh, mother!" cried Mary; "you shouldn't tell such things. It's all nonsense."

"Why, child, nonsense or no, it is a fact that he thinks so; and perhaps he is not so far from the mark as you would make us believe he is."

Mary's face turned crimson all over. She left the room to look after the children on the landing.

"She *is* such a good girl," said Mrs. Jeffreys, while her eyes brightened up with enthusiasm. "But for her, sir, we should have been in the workhouse long since. She works day and night for us, and at the same time teaches the children. Will you believe, sir, that that little boy, the oldest of the two, who is only seven, can already read a page? Johnny, take your book, and read a few lines to the gentleman."

Johnny disappeared behind a curtain which concealed a corner of the room, where, as I understood, the children's beds were placed. He soon re-appeared with a New Testament, similar to those of which I had noticed a dozen on a shelf in the rag store.

"Come," said his mother, kindly beckoning to him. He overcame his bashfulness, and taking his stand by the bed, turned up a page, and read with considerable fluency a few verses of the Gospel of St. John.

"Ah, but you can read much better," said his mother proudly, stroking his hair; "only he is rather shy, sir. He never read anything to anybody else but ourselves. Now Johnny, take this orange, you have done very well, and give the half of it to your brother."

"No, I'd rather not," said Johnny, shaking his head in a determined way. "It isn't for us; we've got our dates."

"Ay, sir, they are just like their sister," said Mrs. Jeffreys. "It is wonderful how she manages to keep them in order. And they are so fond of her! You have no conception of it."

"There is a great power in love," said Mr. Scott, in a voice indicative of deep emotion. "You see, Mrs. Jeffreys, your children obey your daughter in everything because they love her. This is the key to the riddle which perplexes Mr. Benjamins and so many others. If we love God truly, we shall with pleasure keep His commandments. Love, Scripture says, is the fulfilling of the law. The great question only is: how to come to such a state of mind that we can love God with all our heart and with all our strength."

"It would be a grand thing," said Mary, who had re-entered the room; "wouldn't it, mother?"

"I think I could love God with all my heart, child," replied Mrs. Jeffreys; "but you know there are so many distractions and trials in this life."

"Please tell me *why* you think you could love God?" asked Mr. Scott.

"Why, sir, because He is our Creator and Benefactor. He sends us his blessings every day, doesn't He?"

"Yes; and so He has been doing all your life long, from the moment you were born up to the present day. And yet, as I may gather from what you told me about your own history, you have cared very little about Him, and lived as if He did not exist."

"True," said she, with a scarcely audible voice.

"I think something more than merely temporal blessings is required to make us truly love God," observed I. "It is a sad fact, but a fact it is, that the longer we enjoy God's perishable benefits, the more we get into the habit of forgetting our benefactor, unless a desire for better than earthly gifts drive us towards Him."

"We shall never come to love God with all our heart," said Mr. Scott, "until we come to look upon Him as our Saviour from everlasting perdition. I remember having once spent an evening with a friend of mine, a wealthy merchant, at his place in Herts. The subject of our conversation was what we are speaking about just now. 'Nothing is able to enkindle such cordial love as salvation,' said my friend. 'I saw that truth confirmed the other day in the conduct of my gardener. Though he earned high wages and I gave him many a present, yet he always continued a selfish, cold-hearted fellow. He did just his duty, but nothing more, and never showed me any sign of personal attachment. But one day I happened to be walking alongside the pond, when he had taken a boat to recover a ball which his little boy while playing had thrown into it. Unfortunately he overbalanced himself, and fell into the middle of the pond, where it is very deep. Of course, I flung off my coat, jumped in, and, though with considerable difficulty, succeeded in bringing him safe ashore. From that day he is quite a changed man to me. He is the best, the most willing and faithful, of all my servants. He does not know what to do to please me, and if he can only guess some desire which I cherish, he is sure to have it fulfilled long before I think of telling him of it. Formerly he often grumbled when I required him to do anything beyond the usual course of labour; but I do not believe that I could now bid him do anything, however out of the way, which it would not be a pleasure for him to do.' I have often since then thought of that story of my friend. It so clearly illustrates the effect of God's saving love in Christ upon our hearts. He sent his only begotten Son into the world to suffer and to die for us on the cross. He thus rescued us from the everlasting misery which we had brought upon ourselves through our sins. If we believe that with our heart, we cannot but love Him with all the affections of our soul. We become changed men. We begin to adore and to rejoice in Him, because we were lost and He saved us even at the cost of his blood."

"That's just what Abel said to us the other day,

do you remember, mother?" said Mary. "If Christ had not suffered and died on the cross," he said, "we should be hanging there now and for ever."

"Yes, he said so, child; but you recollect what Benjamins said. 'That could not be,' said he, 'for it would be a gross injustice to allow an innocent man to be hung instead of the guilty one.' And Abel could not answer him there. Oh, he is sharp, the Jew is."

"But I think I can solve that difficulty," said Mr. Scott. "If Jesus were only a common man like us, Mr. Benjamins would be right; but Jesus is God himself, the Creator of all of us, the eternal Lawgiver and Judge, and He became man for the express purpose of bearing the sentence of his own law in our stead. He did not lay that sentence upon another man, but He took it upon Himself. Now, had He not a right to do so? Was there any injustice in that? Was it not all boundless love and mercy?"

Mrs. Jeffreys appeared quite struck with that explanation. "Oh! I see, I see it now," she said, clasping her hands in wonder and delight. Mr. Scott then added a few observations, which he corroborated by reading a portion of the fifth chapter of the Romans.

"Sir," whispered Mary to Mr. Scott, as we went out, "I *am* so glad you spoke to my mother. I hope you will come back soon; we are so ignorant, you know."

* * * * *

About twelve months after my visit to the court I was sitting one day on the platform of the Crystal Palace line, and who should sit opposite to me but Mr. Benjamins. I scarcely recognised him, so different was he from the pale-faced invalid I had seen in the court. He looked quite a gentleman, and was buoyant with health.

"And how are matters going on in the court?" I inquired.

"Oh, we left it three months ago," he answered. "Didn't Mr. Scott tell you?"

"I haven't seen Mr. Scott since I was with him in the court that Sunday."

"Well, then, I must tell you what has happened. Great changes have taken place since you saw us. First, Mr. Groves died, and, picture to yourself the amazement of the court people when it was known that he had bequeathed all his property to Mary. She married Abel, and the rag-store was transplanted to Shoreditch. Abel insisted upon my becoming his partner, as I am well acquainted with the old clothes trade, and we there carry on a thriving business under the firm of Harris & Co. Of course, Mrs. Jeffreys and the children live with them."

"And Abel's parents, what has become of them?" asked I.

"They live in the country, where Abel supports them. His sister Dora married a sailor, and emigrated with him to Australia.

"And you yourself," asked I, "what are you—a Jew or a Christian?"

But here the train came up, and I had to get in. While I was standing ready to enter he whispered into my ear,—

"I hope to meet you when we see Him whom we have pierced."

A. W.

MARY OF MAGDALA.

It is by a singular fate that of the few women mentioned in the Gospels, two of the most famous should have become blended into one. The woman of artless purity has been merged in the fallen woman of shame; and the sinner at a passing feast has borrowed a history from the tried disciple of Jesus. She who first wept for the dead upon the Cross, has been held one with her whose tears were open penitence for public guilt; and she whose name was mercifully spared, has borrowed a name that is emblazoned in the saddest and noblest charities of Christendom. And yet, at first sight, nothing would seem easier than to separate them. The one is of no certain city, the other of Magdala: the one is a nameless and sudden apparition, "a moment seen, then gone for ever," the other is always mentioned by name, and becomes a constant follower of the Lord: the one is pure, the other impure: the one is healed of a mental disease, the other is cleansed from moral taint: the one is the companion of honourable and pious women, and assumes a public place beside the Saviour; the other shrinks into a privacy that shuns the public gaze. Not only are there these well-marked distinctions, but each has a sufficient history of her own. There was no need to find a preface for the Magdalen's, nor a close for the sinner's: each is rounded off and complete. For the poor woman that wept at Simon's, *that* story is all we care to know. She had sinned, and was forgiven. Let the happy life pass into friendly obscurity, let her *go in peace*, and let the music of that peaceful heart steal out, like the nightingale's song in the twilight and from the shade. And for the brave and tender woman that watched the sepulchre, her life does not commence for us till Christ has swept the chords of it with his wonderful words, and the devil has left her free to minister to Him who is the devil's Lord. But somehow the two have grown together into one, and art and legend have helped in the confusion, and century has passed down the tradition to century till it has entered into the very heart of the Church. It may have been from the feeling, true in the main, that where the devil holds the heart the life itself will be devilish—that she, from whom seven devils were cast out, must have been a greater sinner than others. It may have been that history must fain attach itself to a name; that the nameless ones die and make no sign; that as the story seized hold of men, the woman of the one chapter became the Mary of the other. It may have been from the deep, passionate love common

to them both. However it has happened, associations have gathered round the union too deep to be altogether displaced. Hospitals will still be raised for the worst of human maladies, and bear the Magdalen's name; Correggios and Titians of the future will paint the Magdalen's penitence; a Magdalen will still stand for the most pathetic type of a woman's travail and sorrow; and frailty and shame and dishonour will still fling their shadow on the Magdalen's life. If we are to conceive her as she appears in the Scriptures, we must release our minds from these powerful associations of centuries. We shall find that though the real features of her life are cast into shadow by the unreal, yet they are vividly and touchingly pourtrayed; that while history may break down a romance, or sweep away a legend, its office is to rescue character and restore it, to set it in its true and natural lights. The sinner that crept into the Pharisee's house loses nothing by being detached from the Magdalen, but rather gains; for there is a painful inconsistency—a want of feminine and delicate feeling—in setting one like her to the prominent part the other plays. And if the Magdalen loses the pathos and tragic interest of the prodigal's return, her life is beautiful and sufficient in itself. Her character is not painted with the tone and fidelity of a portrait. It is etched in a few clear and well-cut lines. It is with her as with many who were grouped about Christ. When the sunbeams march through a wood, a leaf here, and there a blade of grass, leap out and sparkle in the light; and, as Christ passed among men, the light from Him was ever bringing out some characters into a moment's clearness. We know nothing of them till at his passage they start upon our sight: when He has passed, they disappear. In such brief illumination Mary stood more than once.

I.

Of all the towns that lay thick about the Sea of Galilee, there is only one that presents any considerable remains. A ruined tower not far from the lake, a limestone cliff close by, a solitary thorn and beneath it a rush of limpid water—this is Magdala, the village of the tower, the Castletown as we would call it now. Jesus once disembarked near it on his way from Cesarea Philippi, and his foot may have often wandered through the quiet village street, for it lay close by his favourite shore and a few miles from his favourite city, and in a region of which we read more than once that Jesus went through it, teaching and healing. And here there lived a certain Mary, called in the Gospels Mary Magdalen, or Mary of Magdala, to distinguish her from other Marys there recorded—chief among them the Lord's mother, the mother of James, and the sister of Lazarus. We may conjecture that her social position was good. She is associated with a lady of the court, and her means enabled her to minister out of her substance to Jesus when living, and to purchase the costly spices for his embalming when dead. Her very freedom to follow Him implies a position of some independence. But the Scripture fixes our attention upon her unhappy sufferings. She was possessed with seven devils. We may but faintly picture the misery of this mysterious disease. Some of the possessed behaved like violent maniacs; some were seized at intervals with fits like epilepsy; moody silences alternated with loud menaces and blasphemy; sometimes mere boys were afflicted, sometimes delicate women. There was in all a mental confusion, a divided consciousness, a sense, possibly acute, of being in the thraldom of an evil spirit. Madness might produce the same mental wreck, epilepsy might be as painful to witness; but there was added here the horror of an actual Satanic agency. Nor was there any disease so inveterate, if not incurable. When the disciples returned from their mission, they singled out with wonder that even the devils were subject unto them. And Mary's case was aggravated: she was held, not by one devil but by many. It was so unusual that she became known as the woman out of whom the Lord had cast seven devils; for Jesus had healed her. Whether it was on some visit to Magdala, or at Capernaum, a few miles off, is but conjecture. Somewhere His eye had rested on her; in the skirt of a crowd, or in the sad home where she lived, or passing up the little village. Somewhere his word had reached her heart, and the devils had fled at his bidding, and the balance had returned to her mind, and the mad, unsteady fires were quenched in her eye, and the delicate womanly feeling had come back. It was a great epoch in her life, a recovery of herself beyond all hope.

Nor was it for herself alone. Distinct from all the cries of physical pain, there is a sad and bitter cry of mental anguish that rises over the restless tides of life. The strain of nerve and intellect demanded in these latter days is often greater than can be borne. There are minds overtaxed with thought, hearts overburthened with care, weary spirits crushed and wounded in the crowd. Before the silver cord is loosed, or the golden bowl is broken, the brain may have ceased to work, and the will may have lost its power. We carry on life at a pressure that is just a little on the side of safety, when a little extra speed will end in ruin. There are also temperaments that will be always exposed to more anxiety and haste than others, that exist in a world of care of their own creating, quick to catch the faintest alarm, pained, harassed, and wearing themselves swiftly out. And if bodily suffering, or over-effort, or the troubles of life, threaten, as we sometimes say, to drive men mad; there is a disease, only less awful than Mary's, that preys as hers did, not upon the strength, but the reason; there are those melancholy wrecks of souls, our idiots and our lunatics, whose affliction is so terrible that even if we could always discover, we scarce care to ask by what cause it came. It is for all these that Christ in this miracle vindicates his supremacy as the Healer, not of the body only, but of the mind and spirit. He, whose words had power over the Magdalene, lives still among men in the labours and triumphs of his people, in that kindlier and truer treatment of the insane, and those methods of skilful, patient, and unselfish Christian charity which draw their suggestion, impulse, and faith from Him, and by which these, apparently as good as dead, are often brought back to life. It is still his voice that will first call order out of their confusion; it is round his love that their first

clear thoughts will rally ;* it is by faithful bringing of them to Him that we may still hope for their healing ;

"Till by such chords as rule the choirs above,
Their lawless cries are tuned to hymns of perfect love."

It is He, too, who must cool the fever of the aching restless heart. He is ever passing through the surging crowd of men, to heal them of their smitten haggard life. Cumbered and oppressed with many things, their faculties and strength at the extremest tension, their brain vexed and unsettled by the never-ending whirl, a pressure put upon them that they were not meant to bear, in Him they may have rest, and at his word and fixed look some one is ever stepping out of the worry and fret of earthly things into the calm of heaven. Or when, under sudden and overwhelming calamity, or the utter blight of hope, the reason has been felt to totter, it is they that trust in the Lord that find in quietness and confidence their strength. He who owns the grace to help holds also the power. Mental maladies may be the more subtle, mental suffering more acute, and the mind that preys morbidly upon itself may despair of relief. Yet this whole inner kingdom of the man is as much under the control of Christ as the outer, either to deliver it from the grasp of Satan, or to build up in it peace, faith, and joy.

II.

When we next see Mary she is with Jesus. Joanna, the wife of one of Herod's officers, some unknown Susanna, and other women minister to Him ; and Mary of Magdala is among them, and occupies a prominent place. It was not a new thing when they followed Him, for Jewish women had already followed their favourite teachers. There was nothing unwomanly in it, no sin against the custom of society, no singularity. If ever there was a plea for singularity, it was the presence of Jesus. If He was teaching, what was to hinder any one from listening to his words? A passing show will draw the woman from her wheel, the workman from his bench, the housewife to her door ; and when this heavenly show appears, when Jesus, from the bosom of Infinite God speaks audibly upon the earth, for short space of three years, who would bar the hearing of Him by some conventionalism of society? Yet these women need no plea. Even when He was among men, it was true that

"The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask."

He could be served and followed without violating one social rule. Nor is it till we have exhausted every open and permitted service that we can plead entire excuse for disregarding current social restraints. The Christian life that shows eccentricity and defies public opinion, does not draw its inspiration so direct from Christ as that which hallows every simple duty and glows under every restriction. Jesus was not ambitious to be followed by a crowd. Those who claimed a place by his side He mostly sent back to the homelier work of their calling and neighbourhood. Mary of Bethany may well have loved as deep as Mary of Magdala, but she abode in her own house. There must have been a freedom from home ties that allowed the Magdalen to choose this blessed part. For it was not a mere following of Jesus, an overmastering curiosity, a restlessness for "fresh fields and pastures new," an eager hanging on his lips, but a quiet loving ministry ; not only to receive but to give. On no other condition does it seem that it would have been accepted. The follower of Jesus is always his minister.

Gratitude had bound this band of women together. They had been *healed of evil spirits and infirmities.* Jesus had ministered to them of that wealth of infinite love and power which no gold or silver could purchase, and they in turn ministered to Him of that substance which was necessary for his wants. It was with them that Mary fitly took her place. As the blessed company *went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God,* she was ever by his side. We cannot distinctly trace her steps ; but we are left to imagine her where the Scripture places her, watching and hearing whatever was done or said. And, no doubt it was thus out of personal intercourse that her love gained the strength that has made her eminent above all women but one.

This life, briefly passed over, is the first glimpse we have into the service of women in the Church. An apostle is sent to preach, a woman follows to minister. There must be many who, like the Magdalen, have no pressing duties at home, whose life is free, whose gratitude to their Saviour is deep, who, in this, may take her for their pattern. There is open to them a more direct service of Him, a following and ministry as peculiar and no less rich in blessing. His wants on earth were few, and it needed few to supply them ; nor could his higher wants be met by human service. For sympathy, strength, and consolation He fell back on One only, the Father. For there was a profound sense in which He above all came *not to be ministered unto but to minister.* It is otherwise with his brethren. They are dependent upon earthly help as well as heavenly, and for the very offices that could not be paid to Him. They can not only be clothed, fed, and visited, but comforted, cheered, and quickened, and with the same certainty that *inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.* While one or two sufficed for Him, they are so many that no one can stand idle. There is here a door flung open, a way of blessing cleft through toil and pain and sorrow, a path that Dorcas trod, and Phœbe, the servant of the Church at Cenchrea, and many a godly woman since. It is not for the few who have substance, but for the many who have only love. It is the woman's place and privilege, meet for her modesty and self-sacrifice, requiring her tenderness and delicate intuitive perception, service more of personal affection than of duty or abstract right, and in which, by a thousand nameless offices, she may show herself a follower of the Lord without violating one instinct of feminine reserve.

* "The same children who do not know whether a shoe ought to be on the foot or on the head, or who, if not prevented, would, like animals, walk on all fours and lick the dust, may yet sometimes be heard ejaculating, *Mon Dieu ! Prends pitié de moi ! J'en ai bien besoin.*" See Mr. de Liefde's Visit to Laforce in his "Charities of Europe," vol. ii., p. 451.

III.

From Galilee Jesus had gone up for the last time to Jerusalem. The events of the last days crowded rapidly one upon the other—addresses to the people, quiet evenings at Bethany, sad prophecy from the brow of Olivet, and farewell words of consolation to his disciples. There was the supper with its acts of solemn import; the night at Gethsemane, with the prayer, and the awful agony, and the drops of blood, and above, the silent watching stars; there was the hasty tramp of the mob over the grass, there were the lanterns flashing upon the traitor's ken, the wild scene of tumult at the judgment hall, and the meek and royal Saviour buffeted, scourged, mocked, the butt of rude soldiers' jests, crowned with thorns, sentenced amid thirsty cries for blood, and then toiling up his *Via dolorosa*, bent beneath the cross and faint and bleeding. And the crosses were raised upon the low hill, and Jesus and the thieves hung there all the long Friday—and the disciples had fled. No bands of children sung Hosannas; no multitude did Him reverence; apostles denied Him. But Mary of Magdala stood beside the cross. The woman's terror vanished before the woman's strength of love; the gibes of the rough men, the arms of the soldiers, the fury of the mob, were nothing to her then compared with Him. The three Marys clustered round the spot where He was dying. One of them was losing her mysterious Son, the others their Friend, Teacher, Saviour; their Hope and very Life was bleeding there to death on that accursed tree, and they could not stay his death by an hour. But they clung to Him in mute, affectionate defiance. The day darkens over with portentous eclipse; the very sun will not witness innocent blood like this; shadows and portents gather round the cross; the heat of a brooding earthquake fills the air. On the cross all is silent. Mary, the Virgin Mother, has been led away by the tender eagerness of John. The other women have moved off and form a group apart, of which Mary of Magdala is still the chief; and as the sun breaks out on the hushed crowd, and shoots his level rays through the red air, Jesus breaks the silence with his last psalm. Even He in dying will draw his words and consolation from the book where *it is written*. Emboldened by the light the mockers renew their torture, till a cry more terrible pierces the very heavens, and Jesus gave up the ghost. The earthquake heaves and rumbles, and rends the soil in chasms, and opens the yawning graves; the veil of the temple is rent from top to bottom; the pagan soldiers bow before these visible signs of awe and majesty. And Mary is still beholding, now afar off. Her figure is the last we see. Every incident of that terrible agony has been scarred upon her heart. Earthquake, and portent, and sultry ominous air are nothing to her who has lost her all in Him. She stands there against the sky, a weird and spectral figure, immobile as stone.

She had followed Jesus to the last. She cannot have been unfamiliar with the hopes of his disciples, the longings of his nation. She most probably had witnessed that triumphant progress by which He entered Jerusalem, like a king, although but a Nazarene and a carpenter's son. If the disciples already strove about their dignity in the new Messianic kingdom; if Salome, her companion, had made bold to ask high places for her sons, she, too, must have had brilliant dreams, in which the stately pictures of the prophets blended with the actual facts, and that impression that Jesus left on them that loved Him. She had seen these visions melt away: whatever hope had sustained her when she heard of the arrest, the trial, and the sentence, had ebbed as she watched the cross. It was now a double trial of faith and love. Her mind might well be bewildered, for He that should be the Messiah, the Prince, had succumbed to wicked men, and no miracle had been wrought for his deliverance; while her heart was wrung by witnessing his anguish, and then by knowing He was dead. She had nothing to rest on but her love. It was her great strength now. Her soul grew filled with the one image of Him. His death could make no difference in her affection, and if prophecies and hopes grew indistinct and confused, He was clear. She might say, like the blind man, *One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.* The kingdom, the future, the glory faded out as the sun went down; but nothing could rob her of her knowledge of Him whose words had brought her peace, whose steps she had watched, up to whom her love had daily passed, till now, in his death, it was the one precious treasure she had left.

What Mary learned at the cross, we may have to learn. Those who seek Christ, are sure to find also Calvary. Whether by his purity of character, graciousness of teaching, his self-sacrifice, or the just reverence of centuries men are drawn to Him, they cannot know Him till they see Him on the cross, *the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.* It is not to his life, but to his death, the thoughts of men must gravitate. He has said Himself, *I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me.* It does not lie in the power of his example to do that. The higher an example rises, it rises into solitude; and simply to follow Christ would reveal such incapacity of ours, such successive failure, increasing not diminishing in degree, such difficulty steadily augmenting in proportion as his character grew upon the soul in all its simple, faultless grandeur, that men would retire, awed, hopeless, and repelled. The very power to follow would be denied them, for that power lies in *being justified by faith, by his blood.* United to Him by faith, they are not copyists of outward acts that must always and infinitely transcend the best of theirs, but out of their living union a life is fashioned that, short as it falls of his in details, is like his in kind, in impulse and character and aim. And by that sacrificial death that secures their pardon and peace, and the washing away of their sins, the burden of their failures and shortcomings is removed before it crushes them into despair. It is thus at the cross and by faithful daily looking to Him who hung there, that we learn to say for ourselves, or can point others and say, *Ecce Homo.* Nor can Christ be followed without the cross at the end of it. At some point the way will lead us there; and we must then take up the cross and follow further. It may even

be that, like Mary, we fall into darkness, our hopes disappointed, our services unrewarded by the visions we expected, and we stand baffled, all that was so plain grown mysterious, the very doctrines we have built on looking uncertain and almost shadowy. Well for us, then, if, like Mary, we can claim at least our love of Him, and fall upon our personal knowledge, and go back tenderly, even with tears, over the way the Lord hath led us till He has altogether filled our heart with Himself.

IV.

We left Mary watching the cross—when we see her again she is watching the sepulchre. The body has been taken down and wrapped in linen. Joseph and Nicodemus, the two timid and secret disciples, have begged it of Pilate. John is tending the stricken mother, through whose soul the sword has pierced at last. Peter may be weeping in shame over his sins, and downcast, as is the case with impulsive men in moments of reaction. Judas has gone out in moody isolation, the prey of a remorse more bitter than Cain's. The rest are still scattered like sheep without a shepherd. But the women are true. Spices have been hurriedly bought and laid in the grave with the poor dead body. And when the men have done their best, and the hasty funeral is over, and the great stone is rolled to the door of the sepulchre, the two Marys sit over against it watching. A stone had been rolled against their hearts, heavy and immovable as the stone that sealed the grave. *He* lay buried there, *with the rich in his death.* The Magdalen would never hear his voice again. The echoes it had woke, the music it had stirred, were dumb. She had followed Him to the last: brave, true woman in her utter forgetfulness of self. But she would follow Him no longer. The hands that she had seen laid on the sick and lifted up in blessing, the feet that she had followed through many a thankless village and over many a weary road, the eyes that had searched into the hidden depth of her soul, the lips that had uttered such gracious and pitiful and blessed words, all, all were still! She sat and brooded, lost in thought,—lost to the setting sun and the coming Sabbath, to the loneliness of the garden, to all but the dead that lay behind the stone. Her hopes, her brightened life, her happiness, her spiritual sunshine were buried with Him there.

In all this we seem to understand Mary of ourselves. There are curious identities with these experiences of hers. There are days when Christ seems to have been buried out of sight. His power, that might have rescued us, seems asleep. His words, that might have comforted us, seem unspoken. The world seems to have lost his guiding, our life to have lost his presence. We see the point at which He left us; and we sit and watch there as by a sepulchre. There is nothing so natural. Yet even thus we may have that love, gained from knowledge, that prevents us losing hold of everything: that keeps us still attached to Him: that preserves us from that utter shipwreck when hope and faith and love are lost together. We, indeed, know what had not yet been revealed to Mary, that this disappearance of the Lord can be only for a season; that He is risen; that when the sun sets and disappears it is no more dead and vanished from the sky than Christ when He set in the darkness of the grave. She had but her love, and with that she strengthened her heart. Of itself, it is much. It takes us beyond the aspect of visible things, and out of the play of circumstance and the desolations of life; it makes us for the moment feel as if they were not. And, as we retrace each step and recal each word, the love that blessed us then blesses us still, deathless and ever-present. If He has been withdrawn or hidden, it may sometimes be wisest to let love lead us back, to remember what He has been, to let each incident burn slowly by this fire of sorrow into our soul. At least, we may gain strength for the time of darkness and a light to lighten it. We may gather up reverently the fragments of that great feast of love whereof we have already been partakers; or as gleaners search over the field to gather a single ear, where in reaping we had gathered sheaves. These solemn, brooding moments at the breaks of life are not profitless; it may be that sometimes a break is suffered to induce them; that we have been in danger of thinking, or loving, or depending too little; or that our love needs be tested and purged. The more Mary loved, though her love seemed so suddenly thrust into the past, her loss grew the less bitter, and she addressed herself to the duties of the present; nor will it be different with us. Yet we have other strength and consolation than she could claim. Whatever life may say, Christ is not dead out of it. We have but to wait for his reappearing. No helplessness of ours, no chain of sorrow narrowing in upon us like a fate, no unanswered prayers, no delays, no feeling of utter solitude can prove that He is not living, that He will not come. They may come to try, but not to destroy our faith. If we sometimes sit, gazing at the tomb, a brief night may alter all; and, be the night short or long, we know there is a morning.

V.

Mary sitting at the grave is the very type and embodiment of woe; the last time we meet her she is the very type and beauty of a holy joy.

There are duties that must needs be done in the very midst of sorrow, that, however we recoil from them at the time, are a merciful relief. Mere brooding grief is not healthy; it approaches too near self-indulgence. We would fain let sorrow crush us down, let the hand drop, and the heart pine undisturbed. And by the round of life God is calling us away, breaking the force of the blow, teaching us to remember that if we suffer, we must also live and do; that action—resolute, gentle, and composed, is the noblest attitude of grief. Mary might have sat far into the night but that the dead required other memory than tears and stillness and thought. Spices had still to be bought against the first day of the week, for those that had been used were only enough for the time, too hurriedly procured to be complete; they had to be bought before the sun set and the Sabbath commenced. The Sabbath followed; and the Pharisees went to the Temple; the soldiers lounged

about the streets; the mob that cried *Crucify Him* yesterday, sang the Psalms to-day; but up on Calvary, the grass was still soaking with the innocent blood.

In the early morning of the first day Mary was by the sepulchre again. The women were to meet and perform the last sacred offices; *to anoint Him with sweet spices before his burial.* As the sun rose an angel descended from Heaven, with a countenance like lightning, and raiment white as snow. He rolled away the stone from the empty tomb, and the guards became as dead men. Little wonder that when they recovered from their terror, they fled into the city from the awful place. But, as they rushed away in fear, the women were approaching by another path, terrified neither by the hour, nor by their errand, only sadly wondering, *Who will roll away the stone?* Mary, who was with them, seems to have reached the first; for no haste could keep pace with the eagerness of her love. The angel was by the grave, and splendours of Heaven were there about him; but the dead face hung before her mind; she had eyes for nothing else; she could only see that the body was not there. Coarse hands might have been laid upon Him: malice and persecution might have followed Him even to the tomb; He might have been conveyed to some public and dishonoured sepulture. Panic-stricken, she hurried back to seek help from Peter and John. Of the angel, of the stone rolled away, she could tell nothing. But her sharp, hasty cry was enough: *They have taken away the Lord.* The two fiery, impetuous apostles were the last men to loiter. A few minutes brought them to the spot, John's love outstripping Peter's ardour. A few glances satisfied them of the facts, Peter's ardour leading him to an inspection from which John's love shrunk. It was plain that something extraordinary had happened, that the worst was true, and the grave actually rifled; yet with circumstances puzzling and unaccountable. Like men, they went to seek help and counsel, to put their puzzled thoughts together. Like a woman, Mary, however, hovered round the spot. The profound, hungry love that drew her there *when it was yet dark*, kept her there now. The other women had gone, and the sun was up, and shining on Jerusalem. In the quiet garden nook the fresh, crisp morning air whispered through the olives, and the peace of the day-break was unbroken. In the grave itself there was no sign of haste or struggle, but order and repose, from the linen cloths and the napkins to the sitting angels. Nothing broke the calm but Mary's weeping. There was the very spot where she had sat and watched; there the head was laid, and there the feet. Could it be an illusion, a wild, feverish dream? And she stooped down and looked in; and it was all true. Though she saw the angels she expressed no surprise; when they spoke to her she replied with the transparent simplicity of a child. Love had lifted her above the sense of loneliness, the repulsion of the grave, and even the natural awe of the supernatural. The empty space, the vanished body, were uppermost in her thoughts. Jesus was her Lord still, and she could not rest till she found Him. In all the range of human love there is surely nothing more irresistibly pathetic than the wail of the sad woman for the dead body of her Saviour. It was at this moment that Jesus revealed Himself; and it is true to the absorbing power of her grief that, as with the angels, so in Him she saw only some possible clue to her loss. He might be the gardener; the very man by whose order the removal had been made. She could almost forgive him if he would tell her where the body was laid; she makes the passionate offer, far beyond a woman's strength, that if it was not worthy to rest there, she would bear it herself to some modest and undesecrated resting-place. And all the while her tears were falling like the rain, till through the wailing sobs she heard a sudden sound, a tone, a word, that brought up all the past; there was a flash of memory that revealed Magdala and the blue sea of Galilee, and the day when He passed by and healed with a word the poor demoniac; and, looking up, she saw Him in that one gentle word He spoke, that old familiar *Mary*, to which, in answer, sprang unbidden to her lips the quick *Rabboni.*

> "My Master!
> As ambergris leaves a rich scent unto the taster,
> So do these words a sweet content,
> An Oriental fragrancy."

The interview was brief. She would have detained and clung to Him, followed and clove to Him as before. Gently and with solemn loving words, He set before her that his stay on earth was short, that its conditions were changed, that He could no longer be ministered unto. Gently, with delicate compensation for her disappointment, He showed her that her ministry must be for Him to others. She was to be the first to carry tidings of his resurrection: *Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.* We dare not follow her as *she went and told them.* Her joy is too solemn for intrusion. Alone, with that blessed mystery of a living Jesus, she must have hasted on her errand scarce knowing herself for joy. Had she not been so eager, she might have grieved less, for the angel's words would have saved her the agony of suspense: had she not loved with that passionate strength she might have missed her reward. We can watch her to the upper room, we may fancy we see her radiant face, fancy we hear the words that pour through her trembling lips, the incredulity, the questioning of the rapid statement, the suspicion that it was a phantom of her own excited brain. We can go no further. The veil is never lifted off again. With this one unrivalled sermon she passed into the body of the disciples; and neither the Ascension nor the Pentecost threw her out into any relief. The light of the Person of Christ, in which alone she was visible, had been withdrawn into the kingdom of the Father, but not without revealing a character which could ill be spared among women, which carries to its highest pitch the singleness and sacrifice of a woman's love. No other can receive the singular honour with which the Lord in grace crowned her devotion; it could only fall to one to be the first to see the Lord after his resurrection, the first to say to the rest, *The Lord is risen indeed.* But others can follow her in silent, modest, gentle ministry, and can take courage as they read of her simple bravery and sublime faith.

W. F. Stevenson.

PREJUDICE; OR, THE BLACK POLYANTHUS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STUDIES FOR STORIES."

Part III.

Miss Palmer and I turned again and walked towards the entrance of the shrubbery, and it was not till she said, "You have never taken any part against me, Miss West; you have never looked unkindly at me," that I became aware how completely she had known the nature of our feelings towards her; it also flashed into my mind, what a strange thing it was that my own should so entirely have changed towards her without any particular cause, and I hung my head, and could not make any answer. I now thought her innocent; but I did not know how to tell her that hitherto I had thought as badly of her as any of my companions.

While I hesitated, the school-room maid came up, and told Miss Palmer that Madame would take her out for a drive. She had complained of headache; and Madame, always considerate, thought the air would relieve it.

Nannette had been unwell during the last two days, and had been excused from the school-room; as Miss Palmer and I hastened towards the house we saw Massey carrying her down-stairs well wrapped up, and I was surprised to see how ill she appeared.

"Poor lamb," said Massey when I spoke to my little schoolfellow, and she peevishly turned away her face; "don't take any notice of her, Miss West; it only teases her."

The little girl was carefully placed in the pony carriage, and Madame and Miss Palmer presently appeared. I thought Madame seemed depressed; and Massey, as she looked after them when they drove away observed, that she was sure her mistress thought the child very unwell, though she would not allow that there was much the matter.

"Why does she not send, then, for Dr. G——?" I inquired.

"He is sent for, Miss," said Massey, "but he cannot come till this evening."

The drive was not a long one; and when Nannette was lifted out of the carriage and carried up-stairs again, she was so much worse that Madame did not leave her all the evening, and after the physician's visit significant looks passed between the teachers which made us all feel extremely grave, for we perceived that the poor child was seriously unwell.

Madame did not come down the next morning, but sent a message to us, expressive of her hope that we would go on with our studies precisely as usual, and be very quiet in the house. We all tried to do our best, but not very successfully. Miss Palmer had a headache, and the teachers were scarcely equal to their duties, for both had been up nearly all night. Nannette had been attacked with croup, and for some hours had been in great danger.

After dinner it was a half holiday, and as it rained we were sitting drearily in the school-room, working and reading, when Miss Massey came in and said that a gentleman had called to see Miss Palmer.

Madame was in the drawing-room talking to Dr. G——, the two teachers were asleep on the dining-room sofas. "There is no place but the school-room for him to be shown into," said Miss L'Estrange; "we can go into our own rooms."

"No, ma'am," said Massey, addressing Miss L'Estrange as our head and leader, "the dear child has just dropped asleep, and Madame has given orders that no one is to come up-stairs."

"Then show the gentleman in," said Miss L'Estrange, "and we must stay."

Accordingly he was shown in, and we rose for the moment and then returned to our occupations, endeavouring to abstract our attention from him that Miss Palmer might talk to him more at her ease.

He was exactly what Massey had said—a roughish spoken gentleman in a light grey coat, stout, hearty, and farmer-like; he walked into the room, and after giving his niece two or three kisses which resounded through the room, he exclaimed, "Well, Hester, how are you, child? What! pale? I never saw you pale before."

"I've got a bad headache, uncle."

"Bad headache," he repeated as he walked up the room with her; "what business have girls like you with headaches? I say, young ladies, what business have girls like Hester with headaches?"

We looked up and smiled; some of us said we hoped it would shortly be better; and he walked up cheerfully to our table, laid his whip upon it, and sat down.

"Well, Hessie, I'm glad to see that you can hold yourself more upright now," he observed, and he looked at her with evident satisfaction, and then turned to us, and presently a broad smile came over his frank features, and rubbing his hands upon his knees he exclaimed, "Well, now, this is what I call a pretty sight; I'm glad my Hester's here; I knew she would be happy; such a number of young ladies, how pretty it is to see them! amusing themselves so sociably, and looking so good humoured."

He continued to look at us with that kind of admiring satisfaction which elderly people often feel for youth; his last words had called up a blush into the cheeks of several.

"Well, Hessie, child," he next said, still looking at us, "didn't I always say you would be happy here? Eh? Didn't I?"

"Yes, uncle," she replied.

On hearing the tone in which she said this, he glanced at us with surprise, as if inquiring what it might mean; then, perhaps, observing some confusion in our faces, a sudden thought seemed to strike him, and he turned sharply round to his niece, and perceived at once that something was wrong. She was

standing behind him, no longer pale, but agitated, and pressing her hands together as she often did when ill at ease.

"Where were you sitting, Hester," he said, "when I came in?"

"In a window-seat, uncle."

"Which?"

She indicated the one which was farthest from us, and again he looked round at us, but with a very different expression; he had turned upon his chair and was holding it by the back; she still stood, and looked as if she longed to speak but did not dare.

"Well, Hessie," he presently said, in a tone as anxious as his first had been cheerful, "Well, I hope you *are* happy."

She made no answer, and the gloom deepened on his brow; he repeated his question, but she held down her head and said nothing, till in the most compassionate manner he said, "I hope you have considered, my dear child, what a chance this is for you?" Then she murmured, "Yes, uncle." The uncle heaved a deep irrepressible sigh, his bitter disappointment was most evident, but he said firmly. "I say, child, look up, look at me." Miss Palmer obeyed him, and he again repeated, "Are you happy here?"

Most of us I believe would have given anything to have left the room then, but we could not do it; we were compelled to hear her answer, given in a gentle voice, but as firmly as the question had been asked her, "No." It would have been utterly impossible to mistake the meaning of her face, even if she had not answered at all.

"My dear child," he presently said very kindly, "if you cannot stay here, what can I do with you but send you out to your grandmother; and what do you expect to be then better than a servant, and a very hard-worked servant, too? There will be few comforts, no books—think of that."

"I do think," answered Miss Palmer.

"And," he continued, "I could not have afforded, my dear, as you know, to place you here but for the kindness of Madame, who receives you much under her usual charge for old acquaintance' sake."

She interrupted him hastily—"But I was promised——"

"Yes, you were promised; but, my dear, I thought, so kind as it was of Madame, that if I could get a good education for you——"

"Oh! but I was promised——"

"Yes, your grandmother promised that you should have your choice, and I never doubted that you would stay; what can I do better for you, my dear, always travelling about as I am? If you go to your grandmother you need not expect that it will be like living at a farmhouse here; it would be rough work and rough fare; and your grandmother told me herself that she could not afford to keep a servant, and thought it hard that I should wish to keep and educate you when she might have the benefit of your work." He said this with great earnestness, and as if he had entirely forgotten our presence. I cannot describe the pain it gave us to hear it, and to feel that her extreme desire to leave the school was in consequence of our unfriendly behaviour. I call it simply unfriendly, because at that time we were far from feeling it to be unjust.

"I was to stay here till you came back," said Miss Palmer, in a faint voice; "and I have kept hoping and hoping that you would soon come, uncle. Madame is very kind, but I am miserable. How can I stay here four years longer? Oh! pray take me away with you, as you promised."

"What! and send you to your grandmother Wilson?"

"Send me anywhere," she replied with a sigh.

We were all distressed and surprised at the hopeless tone in which she spoke, still more at the energy with which her uncle instantly replied, "I'll take you back with me this very day, Hester, if you can give me a good reason for your being miserable."

"Now, uncle!" she exclaimed, as if aghast.

"Come," cried Miss L'Estrange, starting up with glowing cheeks, "suppose we all go and stand in the hall for a few minutes."

We were all eager to follow her lead, but before we could move a step from our places, the rough-spoken gentleman exclaimed in such very resolute manner that he could not possibly think of our turning out of our room on his account, that after a little faint resistance we were reluctantly compelled to remain and listen with shame and contrition to what followed.

"Come with me, Hester," said her uncle, "to your own place where you were sitting before I came in."

She followed him to the remote window-seat, and they talked in lower tones than before; but, excited as our nerves were, it was impossible not to hear every word, and we were far too ill at ease to be able to keep up any conversation among ourselves.

First came various questions about Madame, and to these she answered that Madame was always kind.

He next inquired about her lessons, and she admitted that they were neither too long nor too difficult; that she liked the teachers, and she thought they liked her.

Her uncle appeared to be in such a restless state that he could not remain still for an instant. He pulled the working materials out of Hester's little basket, which stood on the table beside him. He changed his attitude. He got up and sat down again, scarcely taking his anxious eye off his niece, while all the time she stood before him, her head drooping, her eyes fixed on the ground, quite patient and quiet.

"All hitherto sounds as if you should be happy," said her uncle in a lower tone, though one which was still audible to us; "but if it is not so, Hester, tell me the reason."

She still said nothing. "Unless I have the reason, and the true one," he repeated firmly, "you must stay. Give it me at once. Have you felt ill since you have been here?"

"No, uncle; only the last two days."

"Then, once for all," and then he paused, and again lowered his voice, yet it reached our silent party, and we all heard—"tell me, are the young ladies kind to you?"

He paused for an answer, and no one breathed till it came. It was given as if reluctantly, and in a very low and gentle tone, scarcely above a whisper, and we all felt rather than heard that it was "No."

Our suspense was breathless. As for me, confusion took away my powers of observation. What, I thought, should we do? Should we call Madame;—should we promise to be more kind in future;—and what would this uncle do? Would he take her away directly, or accuse us to Madame? I was one of the little girls; it did not devolve on me to act, but I wished some one would do or say something. I wished, however, in vain, for before any of the elder girls could recover from their consternation to speak or stir, the door was opened by Massey, who said to Miss Palmer's uncle, that Madame was now disengaged, and wished to see him; and he got up instantly and followed her, leading his niece by the hand.

Then followed a scene that I shall not easily forget. The dignified Miss Ward shed tears; Miss L'Estrange and Belle cried and sobbed with that heartiness which characterised all their actions; Miss Ashley blamed herself; Miss Morton blamed Madame for not having told us these circumstances beforehand; Juliet declared she had always expected some unpleasant end to Miss Palmer's affair; and Miss L'Estrange sobbed out that she would rather have borne twice as much that was disagreeable than have said a word, if she had known how much depended on Miss Palmer's staying; "and now," she continued, "to think of our knowing that *we* are making her be a *servant*."

As for me, I had felt since the morning a curious sensation which, I believe, is sometimes the precursor of illness. I was very cold, and kept from time to time entertaining doubts as to the reality of what was going on around me. Every fresh thing that happened, I said to myself,—"I wonder whether this is real; and if it is, I wonder why I care so little about it. I wonder whether I should care if a very long lesson was set me, or be very much pleased even if I saw mamma walking in at the door. I don't think I care about anything."

Miss Morton was the first to recall the girls to themselves by reminding them that it was most absurd to be so sorry at Miss Palmer's departure, when we had found her presence so unwelcome, and when she had done so much to make herself disagreeable; besides, she said, "You know we did not adopt that cold manner which she had called unkind, till we felt quite sure that she more than deserved it."

"That does not signify at all," said Miss L'Estrange, sobbing; "it has ruined her prospects for life. Oh, I am so sorry! Oh, poor thing—poor thing!"

"Mary," said Miss Morton, giving her a slight push, "how can you give way so before these children! Pray be reasonable."

"And all about my *rubbishing* polyanthus," sobbed Belle, half resentfully; "I'll never be unkind to any one again, however much she deserves it!"

"I am sure she deserves it, and a great deal more," said Miss Morton, quite calmly, "her suffering for this fault does not make her innocent of it."

I believe this kind of conversation went on for more than an hour, and we had begun to wonder whether Miss Palmer's uncle might not be relating what had passed to Madame, and considering what we should say in our own defence, when Massey came in again, and said to me, "Miss West, you are wanted, if you please."

I went into the hall with the same dreary sense of unreality upon me, and there I saw Miss Palmer, her boxes, her music-books, her parrot in his cage, and all her possessions, standing at the street door. There was a chaise outside, and her uncle stood by it, giving some directions.

"Going! Miss Palmer?" I exclaimed, in consternation.

"I have taken leave of Madame," she answered; and pale as she still was, there was a peaceful kind of happiness in her face which went to my heart, for I felt how more than glad, how thankful she was, to be away from us. The parrot, as usual, was making a great noise—screaming, fluttering, and climbing about with his beak and claws—"Here's a state of things," he screamed out, as I went up to its mistress, "ha! ha! ha!" It was astonishing how often this sentence of his seemed appropriate to the matter in hand.

"Dear," said Miss Palmer, "I thought I should like to kiss you and wish you good-bye."

"Are you really going then?" I inquired. "Oh then, let me tell the girls, they are some of them very sorry, particularly Miss L'Estrange."

She hesitated, and then answered with that same look of serenity, "I could not expect that they should like to see me after I have said that about them to my uncle; but I will send a message. I am going with my dear uncle, and I believe I shall be very happy. I shall never think that they meant me to *know* that they disliked me. They were not aware, I believe, how much they showed it. I was not brought up to be such a lady as they are, and they must see the difference, I know. I am so grieved that I spoke unkindly of them, now that I am going such a long, long journey. It seems as if what I said could not be true. When they know that I am never coming back any more, I am sure they will excuse whatever it was that they disliked."

She paused so long, that I said to her, "Is that the message, Miss Palmer."

"O, no," she replied, "I wish I could make a good message."

"It would be much better just to come and take leave of them," I pleaded; "and I will tell them about the message too."

She still hesitated; but as I took her hand, and drew her towards the school-room door, she gave way, and suffered me to usher her in and explain her errand.

As she advanced into the room all her composure left her, and she burst into tears; the girls crowded about her, and all kissed her—some, perhaps, because they felt compunction, some because they wished to be magnanimous at the last, and some because the others did.

She seemed struggling to speak, and said in

broken sentences that she should always think affectionately of them, and that she hoped they would forgive her for going in this way; but the old shyness so much overcame her that she could scarcely make herself intelligible, and her uncle calling her from without, she drew down her veil, and after kissing me, hastily withdrew.

We followed her into the hall; her baggage was put into the chaise; and Madame took leave of her; Miss Palmer was lifted in, and the little chaise drove off.

Madame seemed depressed, and remarked that Miss Palmer's uncle had appeared rather in a hurry to take his niece away, and had said that as he should not be passing that way again for a long time, he hoped she would excuse it.

It was evident from her manner to us, which was not at all different from usual, that no other reason had been given.

The rain was over, and the wet flowers were bright in the sunshine; it was very warm, and I remember that there was so little wind that the fallen petals of the peonies lay in heaps under them, and were not blown away, and on the grass beneath the two hawthorn trees there were patches as white as snow.

Madame soon withdrew to her sick child, who was now awake; therefore, we four of the second class went up to our own room.

I remember seeing Massey there, already beginning to take down the little blue bed that had been Miss Palmer's; my schoolfellows began to question her, but the curious sensation had so much increased in my head that I only wished she would make haste and finish her operations, that I might lie down on my own bed and rest.

I was soon able to do this, and Massey, looking very much surprised, inquired if I felt unwell.

"Oh no," I replied, but I was very tired, and I had a curious feeling in my head. Massey observed that it was a strange thing, and she thought we were all going to be ill together, for when Miss Palmer came up-stairs she was so giddy that she was obliged to take sal volatile, and thought she should have fainted.

Never had a bed been such a luxury before. I drew the quilt over my shoulders and lay quietly listening to the conversation going on around me, till Massey recurred to the subject of Miss Palmer's departure. "She seemed very much pleased to be going away, poor dear," said Massey, sagely shaking her head, "not that she said a word to me like that, but I know, I know."

"What do you know, Massey?" asked Belle.

Massey was counting the curtain rings, and did not answer till she had run them all on to a tape, and tied them up; then, with that unexcited quietude of manner which sometimes gained unusual attention for what she said, she observed—

"If anybody had told me beforehand that you young ladies were so proud I wouldn't have believed it."

"Proud!" repeated Belle, with genuine surprise.

"I am sure I've been very sorry ever since," continued Massey, "that I told you about her uncle not being such a gentleman as your papas. That was just what Madame wished you not to know."

"What has that to do with our being proud?" asked Juliet.

"Well, miss," replied Massey, "if you are not proud, why did you always make Miss Palmer keep her distance, and always speak so coldly to her?"

"Massey, you are quite wrong—quite mistaken," cried Belle, whose blood boiled at the hint that we had ill-used Miss Palmer because she was in an inferior position.

Massey smiled with a tranquillity much more aggravating than direct denial would have been, and continued, "But I will say for Miss Palmer, that never was a young lady that gave me so little trouble, and always kept her drawers so neat."

"I say you are quite mistaken," repeated Belle.

"In thinking you and Miss Palmer were not comfortable together, did you mean, miss?" asked Massey, as quietly as before, and without looking off her work.

"Massey, you don't understand," said Juliet; "it was not because we are proud that we were unfriendly with Miss Palmer."

"Miss Palmer was never obliging to us," added Margaret.

"We were always uncomfortable from the very day she came," continued Belle.

"Indeed, miss," replied Massey, with respectful attention, but not as if she took any particular interest in the matter; "well, it's no business of mine, but I thought she seemed very obliging at first, young ladies."

"She never was," said Juliet, "never."

"Well, miss," said Massey, "excuse me, but I think you forget about those flowers that she bought for you; that was obliging, I think, for you never could have had them if it hadn't been for her."

"Bought them for us," cried Margaret, laughing scornfully, "for us, indeed! Why, Massey, she bought them for herself, and planted them in her own garden."

"I mean," said Massey, "those flowers that she bought of that man—you know, young ladies, the man that was going away before you came in from your walk."

"Well," said Belle, "so do we mean those flowers."

"But she didn't buy those for herself," said Massey, "because I helped her to choose them, and she asked me how much I thought you would like to give for them." Then looking up and observing our breathless attention, she continued, "Miss Palmer came to me as I was ironing in the laundry, and told me that the man she had heard talked of was come, and that you would be so disappointed, and hadn't she better venture to choose out the best for you. So I said, 'Yes, to be sure, miss;' and she asked me to come and help her to make a bargain, and she gave four shillings and sixpence for them, and after that I helped her to carry them to the gravel walk against you came home."

Belle drew a long breath, and stood gazing at

Massey mute and motionless, while Juliet and Margaret began to cross-question Massey, which only made her more positive in her narrative. Miss Palmer had never hinted at meaning to keep the flowers herself, she said; and if she had not given them to us, it must have been because she was too shy.

Thus the ground on which we had founded all our prejudice against Miss Palmer was pushed from under our feet, and all her subsequent conduct seemed to change. We acknowledged that it was kind in her to have purchased the plants for us; but when Massey remarked that she wondered why she had not given them to us, we could not reply, for we felt that our behaviour and our offended pride had so checked and embarrassed her, that she could not do it at the time; and, afterwards, they were so much broken and spoilt, that they were not worth giving.

My school-fellows sat a while deep in thought; then they said they should go and tell all this to Miss L'Estrange, and I was left on my bed, where I presently fell into a sound sleep, and did not awake till the tea-bell rang.

That evening we were not left without the presence of the teachers; little, therefore, could be said about Miss Palmer, but it was evident that Massey's story had made a deep impression in the school, and Miss L'Estrange particularly declared that she would never rest till she had made some reparation.

The next morning Nannette was extremely ill, and Madame sent down to request that the lessons might go on as usual; but I felt scarcely able to do mine, and longed to lie down on my bed and rest.

I did not know that I was ill, but thought it strange that I should shiver when the sun was shining so brightly; afterwards I thought it equally strange that I should be so hot, and feel so cross and irritable with everything and everybody.

The lessons appeared to go on in a dream that had many changes, and yet, when at length Dr. G—— came in, and after speaking to the teachers, said cheerfully, "Are there any young ladies here that have never had the measles?" and I answered, "Yes, I have not," I had no intention of deceiving him when I replied to his further questions that I felt quite well.

He informed us that Nannette had got the measles. Juliet and I were the only pupils that had not had this complaint. Juliet's parents were in India, but Miss Quain said she supposed that I should immediately be sent home.

"I must not have her sent home," said Dr. G——. "She is not in a fit state for it. Would you like to go and lie on the drawing-room sofa, my dear?"

"Oh yes, very much," I replied, and Miss Quain made no objection; so he led me to the sofa in the drawing-room, where there was a delightful scent of geraniums, and where, the green blinds being let down, there was a soft, cool shade.

I laid my head on the pillow; all those miserable feelings vanished, and I fell fast asleep.

When at length I awoke, Miss L'Estrange was standing by me, and I saw Massey coming into the room with a tray and some plates upon it.

"How are you now, my pet?" said Miss L'Estrange, kneeling down by me, and kissing me.

I answered as before that I was very well, and was very glad to find that now I was neither hot nor cross.

"Dr. G—— says you may have your dinner if you like," she then said; "and after that you may go for half an hour into the sunshine."

I opened my eyes and repeated, "If I like I may have my dinner?—oh yes, I like, of course."

Massey accordingly put the tray before me, and I sat up and enjoyed my dinner; but after this I was by no means able to go out, and was very glad to let Massey carry me upstairs and put me to bed.

There I lay very quietly watching Miss L'Estrange, whom Madame, at her own request, had constituted my nurse. She sat at work, and now and then spoke to me very affectionately and properly, telling me that I was going to be ill; that I must try to be patient, and pray that if it was the will of God I might shortly get well again.

I assented, and liked to hear her talk; but, in my childish heart, I felt all the importance of being ill, and having other people anxious about me, especially when the girls came in one by one on tiptoe to ask how I was, and to condole with me. At five o'clock the second class came upstairs, and having dressed themselves, very quietly went into the garden. Between sleeping, and talking, and watching my kind nurse, a long time seemed to pass, till suddenly some very quick, and not at all cautious, footsteps came rushing up the stairs, and, to my very great terror, Belle darted into the room, crying and sobbing as if her heart would break.

It was in vain that her sister alternately questioned and soothed her; she could neither speak nor control herself, and the room was half full of girls, some amazed, some crying, some arguing, before a single coherent sentence was uttered that could throw any light on this strange proceeding.

Miss L'Estrange looked from one to the other, quite bewildered. At length I distinguished Margaret's voice—"It was the rabbit," she exclaimed; "it was Speck."

"Well, what of the rabbit?"

Several voices answered, some lamenting, some contradicting; till suddenly remembering me, and that she should have kept me quiet, Miss L'Estrange sent them all away excepting Belle, and used what means she could to calm and pacify her. Belle, however, could not attend to her entreaties; but throwing herself on her knees before her sister, she hid her face in her lap, and declared that she should never be happy again, and that the rabbit had done it all.

"What can this mean?" said Miss L'Estrange.

"Prosper," sobbed Belle, "Prosper said last night that he'd seen him."

"Well, my dear," asked her sister, "what then?"

"We went—we went between the rows of hops to look for him."

"And you found him, I suppose," suggested her sister, looking more and more surprised.

"And we peeped between," proceeded Belle, "and he was sitting—sitting up and eating; and Prosper

said"—here a fresh burst of tears, and it was some moments before she went on. "But we startled him away, and he left his leaves and things lying on the ground; and Prosper said——"

"Well, what did Prosper say?" exclaimed her sister, getting out of patience.

There were more sobs, then Belle went on—"And Prosper said he had cut off the parsley stalks as clean as if he had done it with a knife; and so—and so he had."

I shall never forget the sudden change of countenance with which Miss L'Estrange heard these words. "As clean as a knife," she murmured to herself, with a sort of consternation; and then I remembered when and where I had heard this said before.

"Could a rabbit have done that?" said Miss L'Estrange, apparently quite shocked.

"He did those in the hop ground," said Belle, crying piteously; "and when he saw us, he left them lying round just like the leaves of my black polyanthus. Oh, Mary, what are we to do to make amends to Miss Palmer?"

Before her sister could answer, Miss Ashley came in, and quietly shutting the door, sat down on my bed and said, "Is not this a terrible business, Mary?—what is to be done?"

"I suppose there can be no mistake?" said her friend.

"Impossible," was the reply. "If you had seen the leaves and stalks, you would have known at once that that was how the polyanthus was cut; and here have we absolutely hunted an innocent girl out of the school for want of knowing this before. Mary, why don't you speak?—what shall we do?"

"I'm sure I don't know," said Miss L'Estrange, in a desponding tone of voice.

"It was a most cruel, unwarrantable prejudice from beginning to end; and oh, how I wish she was in the house to hear me say so! Oh, Mary, how could we give into it?"

"I'm sure I don't know," repeated Miss L'Estrange, more sadly still.

I listened with great interest; but the feeling of unreality was stronger than ever, and as my head ached, I was not very sorry when Madame, reappearing with Dr. G——, sent them all out of the room, and set Massey in their place; and now followed such confusion, as I remember to this day. There was nothing but seemed to change as I looked at it: white rabbits were running over the coverlet, but I could not reach to stroke them; amber necklaces were under the pillows, but I vainly tried to find them; curious plants were growing all over the floor, and curious birds were walking about among them; papa and mamma were looking at me through the window, but they never came in, nor spoke to me; and I was always doing multiplication sums, that got longer and longer, and never came right.

The time did not appear to be long. Sometimes I saw a lamp in the room; then again the sun would be shining in; after that I saw three stars glittering in the cool summer sky, and watched them as they seemed to get entangled among the walnut boughs before they set.

At last I woke, and found that I could not lift up my head. It was morning; I thought what a long dream I had had, and felt very weak; but Massey was sitting by me, so I asked her why she had not put out my clean frock, as it was Wednesday.

"Wednesday," said Massey, very gently; "no Miss, this is Thursday."

I was very much surprised, but thought I knew better than she did; and when I had drank some tea, I remarked, that if this was next Thursday, I wondered where Wednesday was gone to.

"This is not next Thursday," said Massey; "this is the Thursday after." So I thought it was of no use arguing with such a person, and asked her how far Miss Palmer had got by this time.

"What made you think of her, Miss?" said Massey. "Well, be she far, or be she near, I'll answer for it she has had the measles, for she was taken before she left just as you were."

Just then I heard footsteps in the passage, for my door was ajar; I thought to myself, "That is exactly how papa walks." The footsteps came on nearer, some one entered, I opened my eyes and saw that it was my papa, and that he was standing looking at me; I could not speak for joy, but Massey said, "Miss West is wonderfully better this morning, sir."

Presently, the rustle of a silk dress swept softly across the floor, and my contentment was complete. I was sure it was my mother's dress, and so it proved to be.

In the afternoon of that quiet day, I was so much better that I could talk to my parents; I asked after Nannette, and was told that she had been very dangerously ill, and was recovering, but slowly; I then inquired about Miss Palmer, but my mother had never heard her name, so I was obliged to be contented for the present with my ignorance.

Very quietly, and as it seemed, quickly, the time passed; and sometime during the afternoon of the next day I awoke, and found Miss L'Estrange sitting by me; I heard mamma tell her that I was not to be fatigued, but that if she could say what she wished me to hear in few words, I might listen to it.

Almost as shortly, therefore, as I now relate the circumstance, Miss L'Estrange told me how anxious they had all been to write to Miss Palmer, and acknowledge their error; to tell her what they had discovered about the black polyanthus, and what Massey had told us of her buying the flowers for us. "But we did not know her uncle's address," she continued; "and it was only two days ago that we happened to hear it, through a farmer, who knows him. So we have written a long letter to her;" she said, "asking her forgiveness, and begging her to persuade her uncle, that we shall be extremely friendly and affectionate to her if she may come back again; and that we shall try to make up to her for our past unkindness; we have made up a little parcel, in which we have each sent her something to keep for our sakes, and we thought you would like also to send her something."

I said I should, and chose a little locket out of my stores to be sent. The letter was then read, and all the pretty little presents were shown to me.

The parcel, she told me, was to go by railway; and then she left me to enjoy all the peace and rest of convalescence, doubly pleasant to me, because my parents were so constantly with me.

The next day I was so much better that I was allowed to enjoy the little consequence of seeing all the girls, as they came in with my mother's consent to speak to me.

I shall not soon forget that morning; I was beginning to understand that I had been extremely ill, and I saw in the faces of my father and mother something of that rest and peace seldom felt but after anxiety. My mother was reclining on a couch where I could see her, my father sitting by me; he had been reading, and an open Bible was still in his hand. I reflected on what he had said, and was grateful for them, that God had spared their only child; and for myself that I might yet live to be useful and thankful.

Miss L'Estrange was sitting at the foot of my little bed. I had nothing to do but to lie still and rest; the flies were humming in the sunny windows, the birds were singing outside, the shadows of the trees were rocking across the white blinds; everything about me was orderly, cheerful and quiet.

My thoughts naturally recurred to Miss Palmer; I wondered whether she would return to school, and began to consider what I could do to show my sorrow for the past.

Just then, Massey came in, and said to Miss L'Estrange, "There is a parcel for you, Miss, from the railway."

My father, thinking perhaps that she would like to open it in my room, left us to ourselves and went out.

I could not help noticing that this was precisely like what we had sent to Miss Palmer. Miss L'Estrange hastily untied the string, and out came our own packet, precisely as we had sent it, excepting that the seals were broken.

She looked at first astonished, and then inexpressibly hurt. "Is it possible," she said, quite pale with the pain this prompt return of her own presents had given her—"Is it possible that she refuses to be reconciled, and declines to accept our keepsakes, or even to read our letter?"

My story is nearly concluded; I will not detail how we turned over the contents of the parcel, how we examined the seals of our letter, and saw that she had opened them, how we questioned with one another as to why she had returned them so quickly.

We were not to be allowed to make any reparation. I looked up during the examination, and saw my mother's eyes fixed on a little note which had dropped from the parcel upon the bed.

At the same instant, Miss L'Estrange snatched it up, shivered as she opened it, and closed her eyes as if she did not dare to read it. I took it from her, for a terrible dread of what might be its contents struck through my heart. Our apologies and reparation had come too late. The writer said, she had been requested to return this parcel and its contents to the young ladies, for that Miss Palmer had died that morning at seven o'clock.

PATIENCE.

When my heart is sore within,
Through a hope of joy deferred;
When I cannot conquer sin,
Or my heart with pride is stirred;
Mix for me the needful cup,
Watch me till I drink it up.

If this stubborn will of mine
Will not bow itself to Thee;
And I struggle and repine
At the yoke imposed on me;
Do not let me have my way,
Kindly, firmly, say me nay.

And if patience may not come,
But through pain, and toil, and strife;
If it be denied to some
Till the evening of their life,
Let me suffer what I may,
Still for patience will I pray.

Patience, Lord, is all I ask,
Only give me rest in Thee!
Here is strength for every task,
This the life of liberty!
As we trust Thee here below,
Will our weight of glory grow.

A. W. T.

OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS; OR, METHODS TO DO GOOD.

BY THE EDITOR.

VIII.—MAN'S INABILITY.

ARISTOTLE—says South in one of his brilliant sermons—Aristotle is but the ruins of an Adam. This being the view of man which the Bible presents, and the Fall accounts for, those who receive it in its integrity have been charged with holding low, mean, degrading views of the nature and of the dignity of man. In one sense this is true; in another nothing is more false. It is true in so far as the Bible teaches us to believe that all men, in consequence of sin, are criminals in the sight of God and lie under sentence of death; that all are dead in trespasses and sins; that there is none that doeth good, no, not one; and that, presenting sin in a totally different aspect from that in which it is regarded by many as a light and little thing, sin is exceeding sinful. Hence, brought by grace to see its vileness, and to feel its exceeding evil, the holiest men have always been the humblest, the strongest have felt the weakest, the best have thought the worst of themselves—David, the man after God's own heart, saying, I was as a beast before thee; Job, the most remarkable character of his own or any age for piety and uprightness, saying, as he shrank from his own image, I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes; and Paul, though the greatest of all the apostles, much too great as well as honest to fish for compliments and depreciate himself that others might praise him, speaking of himself not as the least, but as less than the least, of all saints. If these are the terms in which men of the purest minds and holiest characters have felt constrained to speak of themselves, how is it possible to entertain too low views of human nature? What terms can express its degradation other than those of Scripture—our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; or, in figures borrowed from the loathsome leprosy, the whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint, and there is no soundness in us, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores. We do entertain low views of human nature; and so, however loudly they assert its dignity, do others—all who put locks on their doors and a witness on his oath, build prisons and support police.

Yet to allege that those who believe in the fall and corruption of human nature, cherish only low, mean, degrading views of man, is in another sense, quite wide of the truth. If the value of anything is to be estimated by its price, to what an immeasurable height of worth does it exalt man that God gave his Son to redeem him?—redeeming him not with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without spot or blemish. So far from cherishing low views of man, I believe that a gem of inestimable value lies concealed beneath the beggar's rags. A soul is there of divine-like faculties and of priceless worth: and a body also, which, though the seat of appetites that man shares with brutes, and of passions, perhaps, such as burn in the breasts of fiends, may become more sacred than any fane built by human hands—a temple of the Holy Ghost. There is a worth in man no meanness of circumstances, no degradation of character can altogether conceal. He is a jewel though buried in a heap of corruption; the vilest outcast, possessing powers and affections that need only to be sanctified to ally him with angels, and make publicans and harlots fit for heaven. Fallen though he be, man is capable of undergoing, and, created anew in Jesus Christ, born of the Spirit, brought from nature into grace, undergoes a more wondrous change than the insect when, no longer a worm, no longer crawling on the ground, no longer feeding on garbage, it leaves its shell to spend its happy days in sport, flitting from flower to flower; its food their juices and its bed their leaves. We thus assert the dignity of man. Only that his greatest, purest dignity is seen, not in what he does, but in what has been done for him; not in what poets or philosophers have written, but the Bible has revealed of him as redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, as a living temple of the Holy Spirit, a son of God, and an heir of glory. Yet I remark, notwithstanding—

Man can neither convert nor sanctify himself. Endowed with an intellect which, though defaced, has survived the Fall, his capacities and capabilities are great. As if he were a God, he measures the heavens, weighs the hills in scales, and the mountains in a balance. He subdues the elements, rides on the wind, rides on the waves; makes the lightning his swift messenger; and yoking fire and water to his chariot wheels, compels them to serve him. Prolific in invention and skilful in arts, as if he were a creator, he can make the elements he subdues. Image of him who giveth rain, whose voice is heard thundering in many waters, who casteth out his ice in morsels, and scattereth his hoar frost like ashes—man makes snow, and ice, and rain, and dew, and lightning; and, falling on the strange discovery that the brilliant diamond is formed of the very same matter as coal, he has boldly pressed on his Maker's steps, and all but succeeded in rivalling nature's gems. But though it were hard to say—such is the progress of arts and science—what human skill may not accomplish, it has its bounds. There is a line across which it has never passed, and cannot pass; where a voice is heard, saying to the boldest adventurer, Hither shalt thou come, but no further. By no skill or combinations of matter can man give being to the lowest living thing. Master of the elements, by their help he travels the earth with an eagle's speed; wingless, he ascends into the air and traverses its pathless fields; he makes the sea his high road—skims along its surface or descends to bring up the treasures that with the skeletons of men and wrecks of navies lie on its oozy bed. Yet there is not a living thing, the meanest that lives in

earth, or air, or ocean, but it baffles his power to make. It were easier for him to make a planet than a plant. It were at least as easy to kindle a sun, or send a world spinning through the realms of space, as to make the lowest living thing—a worm; the green mould of decay; the humblest moss that clothes or lichen that colours a stone; one of those creatures, thousands of which find a sea to swim in in a drop of water. However the vivifying elements, as they are called, of light, and air, and heat, and moisture, may act as auxiliaries to the development of life, all that lives both in the vegetable and animal kingdoms had a parent like itself—from which it sprung by seed, or egg, or germ, or spore; and every attempt which science has made to produce a living creature through the action of dead elements and the combinations of dead matter, has produced nothing but a failure—every such failure proving that the stream of natural life has its spring in the Creator, its fount nowhere but in God.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord! is the testimony borne to the divine unity by all the kingdoms over which he sways his sceptre.—There are innumerable analogies between nature and grace; and the correspondence between God's works in both kingdoms only grows more manifest the more carefully they are studied. The discoveries of science are shedding a clearer and clearer light on the Word of God: and in the matter of spiritual life the study of nature prepares us to receive the revelations of the Bible. It is with the one as with the other life. As unable to awake the sinner as to awake the dead, man cannot give it. Our life is hid with Christ in God. Nor will any who sees how no combination of means and circumstances, though important as auxiliaries to its development, can create life, changing dead into living matter, be astonished that Jesus, turning all eyes and hopes on himself, said, "I am the way, the truth, the life." Therefore, he says, because I live, ye shall live also; and thus it is true both of conversion and sanctification, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh in vain."

It follows, from the foregoing, that we owe our success in spiritual matters not to ourselves, but to God. In temporal things, his hand is always as present, and sometimes almost as visible, as when it appeared to Belshazzar's eyes writing his doom on the plaster of his palace wall. It may be said, indeed, that manifest interpositions of Providence are rare; and that for every ten persons in whose fortunes they appear in the shape of remarkable prosperity, relief from troubles, escape from danger or from imminent death, there are ten thousand who earn their bread, and bring up their families, and win their way in life entirely, so far as appearances go, by their own exertions. Another King of Babylon—uncrowned, dethroned, bereft of reason, driven out to herd with cattle, the greatest, saddest spectacle of earthly vanity the world has seen—presents a monument of the unsoundness and danger of such views. He was taught to feel in his fall the hand he denied in his elevation. And since the heart may swell as proudly under frieze as imperial purple, and God be as little recognised amid the few comforts of a cottage as amid the luxuries of a palace, let us beware. Many have been guilty of Nebuchadnezzar's crime, who neither wore his crown nor bore his punishment.

What though our lives have been distinguished by no remarkable providences—does that prove that their success and our thanks are not due to God? Tell me not that the hand of the diligent maketh rich. Will it do so unless He pleases? If he sees meet that men shall be poor, in vain they rise up early and lie down late, and eat the bread of sorrow. If he sends rain to drown our fields, can we shut up the windows of heaven? If he raises a storm to sink our merchantmen, can we walk the sea with the foot of Jesus, or rise with him to bid the waves be still? If he roll a tide of bankruptcy over the affrighted land, can we arrest its progress, and say, ere it break on our house and beat it down, Hither shalt thou come, but no further? In other words, hast thou an arm like God, or canst thou thunder with a voice like him? The means we use to preserve life and health, acquire wealth, honour, or any other earthly blessings, are nothing more than the levers, cranks, shafts, and rolling wheels, of a machine, of which God is the moving power. It is his will, not ours, that makes our hearts to beat and the blood in our veins to circulate; that makes food nourish and sweet sleep refresh us; that makes our business yield its profits and our fields their harvests; that sustains our efforts and crowns them with success. When our mountain standeth strong, let him hide his face, and we are troubled. "Therefore," says the psalmist, in a burst of adoration, "thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and the earth is thine: thine is the kingdom; and both riches and honour come from thee; and thou reignest over all."

For all spiritual blessings we equally depend on God. How does the state of heathen countries prove that except he build the house, they labour in vain that build it? In their case the experiment has been tried: and the result, to keep up the figure, is a house indeed, but one based on sand; daubed with untempered mortar; and ready, so soon as the floods rise, and the winds blow, and the rains descend, to bury its miserable owner in its ruins. What man, independently of his word, can know of God, and do for himself, is not proved, as some allege, by the correct principles of morality and conceptions of the Divine Being to be found in the writings of infidels. They parade the world in borrowed feathers, and shine in stolen gems. Whatever is high in their morality, or correct in their notions of God, I trace to the very book they profess to despise and reject. Would we see what man can know of God, or be without him and his word, turn to those lands where no ray of gospel truth has ever shone; and where, by the lurid light of altars red with blood, we see man kneeling to a beast, to a stock, to a stone; practising cruelties and crimes he vainly seeks to expiate by offering the fruit of his body for the sins of his soul. Darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the people.

And when we open the Bible it is to see, in whatever aspect our salvation is regarded, that the pivot

on which it turns is not the power or will of man, but the mercy and the might of God. Whose was the love salvation sprang from? whose the Eden promise that begat hope in the bosom of despair? whose the finger that wrote the holy law? whose the prophets that heralded the Saviour? whose the Son that was cradled in Bethlehem and crucified on Calvary? whose the Spirit that, taking of the things of Christ, applies them—turning the sinner into a saint, a child of the devil into a son of God and an heir of glory? These questions admit of but one answer. That love, that promise, that finger, that Son, that Spirit is God's. In him all our well springs are; nor by any hand but his was forged one single link of the golden chain that binds believers to the skies: "Whom he did foreknow them he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; and whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

What the Bible in these words, elsewhere, and everywhere indeed, teaches, daily experience proves. Thousands possess the means of salvation, and might be saved, who are not. They starve by a table loaded with bread; die beside a fountain into which they have only to descend to be healed: with Christ within their sight, within their cry, opening heaven to others, they perish with the thief who perished at his bleeding side. Two men are in one bed, one is taken, and the other left: two women are grinding at the mill, one is taken, and the other left—a circumstance painfully illustrated in the spiritual history of many a family and many a church. Of two children reared under the same roof, taught the same truths, guarded with the same holy care, one is taken, and the other left—of two members of the same church, sitting in the same pew, hearing the same sermons, baptised in the same font, and drinking of the same cup, how dissimilar their fates!—one is taken, and the other left. Mysteries these that nothing can unlock but this, that salvation is not of flesh or blood, or of the will of man, but of God—that it is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.

For the purpose of teaching a truth that should inspire and animate our prayers, God has often wrought out his ends by the most unlikely means. There are objects in nature not less astonishing for the smallness of the worker than the greatness of the work. Such are the coral walls around those lovely isles that, carpeted with flowers, clothed with palms, and enjoying an everlasting summer, lie scattered like gems on the bosom of the Pacific. These, with the ocean roaring in its fury before them, and behind them the lagoon lying like a molten mirror broken only by the dash of a sea bird or the dip of passing oar, are stupendous ramparts. Compared to them our greatest breakwaters dwindle into insignificance. One of these reefs off the coast of New Holland is a thousand miles in length, and how many hundred feet in depth, I know not. Yet the masons that build these are creatures so small as to be almost invisible. Such mighty works does God accomplish by instruments so mean! a sight that helps a believer—though he has to say with Nehemiah, I have a great work to do—to take heart and hope, and say with Paul, I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

But we have not to go to nature to see God accomplishing great purposes by unlikely means. The Bible is full of such examples. We should have committed the treasures of divine truth to the charge of some mighty monarch, and called the Saviour of the world from the loins of a Cyrus or a Cæsar—of one whose weakness should not tempt him to seek safety in a lie, and whose family should have been in no danger of dying through famine. My ways are not as your ways, says God, neither are my thoughts as your thoughts. In Abraham, an obscure Chaldean, an exile, a wanderer without any home but a tent or property in the soil but a grave, God puts the dearest interests of mankind into the weakest hands. In that patriarch the hopes of the world hang on a man around whose head swords are flashing, and into whose breast—but that his steward perhaps in the battle he fought to rescue Lot thrusts it aside—the robber buries his spear. In him and Sarah the hopes of the world are hung on a pair whose bed is childless, and on whose heads time has shed its snows. And again, when a child is born to them in Isaac, the salvation of a lost world hangs by a single strand: and again in Jacob's family, it turns on a dream and fortunes as unlikely as any that fill the pages of a romance. With Abraham in the battle; with Isaac on the altar; with Joseph in the dungeon; with Moses cast on the water; with Rahab in the beleagured city; on yon field, where, with two armies looking on, a stripling goes out to meet the giant; on yon plain, where, through the midnight gloom, we see a mother hurrying with her babe from the swords of Herod and the massacre of Bethlehem, how often was the light of truth nearly extinguished, the ark that carried the hopes of the world all but wrecked? Never to human sight was good ship more nearly wrecked!

Nothing is more remarkable in the Bible than to see how God, as if to teach us to trust in nothing and in none but Himself, selects means that seem the worst fitted to accomplish his end. Does he choose an ambassador to Pharaoh?—it is a man of stammering tongue. Are the streams of Jericho to be sweetened?—salt is cast into the spring. Are the eyes of the blind to be opened?—they are rubbed with clay. Are the battlements of a city to be thrown down?—the means employed is, not the blast of a mine, but the breath of an empty trumpet. Is a rock to be riven?—the lightning is left to sleep above and the earthquake with its throes to sleep below, and the instrument is one, a rod, much more likely to be shivered on the rock than to shiver it. Is the world to be converted by preaching, and won from sensual delights to a faith whose symbol is a cross and whose crown is to be won among the fires of martyrdom?—leaving schools, and halls, and colleges, God summons his preachers from the shores of Galilee. The helm of the church is entrusted to hands that had never steered aught but a fishing-boat; and by the mouth of one who had been its bloodiest persecutor, Christ pleads his cause before the philosophers of Athens and in the palaces of Rome. And when he chose the weak things of the world to

confound the strong, and the foolish to confound the wise, what did God mean to teach us but that we are to look above the instruments to the great hand that moves them; and that, whether it was a giant or a devil that was to be conquered, the eyes of the body or of the soul that were to be opened, walls of stone, or, what are stronger, walls of ignorance and sin that were to be overthrown, men are but instruments in his hand,—the meanest mighty with Him, the mightiest mean without him.

This inability forms no reason why a sinner seeking to be saved, or a saint to be sanctified, should not use means—giving all diligence, indeed, to lay hold on eternal life, to grow in grace, to make their calling and election sure. Well and justly is God's service called *reasonable*. All that it requires is that men bring the same good common sense to their spiritual interests which they employ in conducting their ordinary affairs. Give us day by day our daily bread does not imply that we expect to be fed like Israel with manna, or like Elijah by ravens. While by such a prayer acknowledging himself a pensioner on God's bounty, man sows his fields; waits on his business and on his God; prays and ploughs together. Even so in all, likewise, that concerns our highest interests, we are, to use the words of Scripture, to be "fellow-labourers," co-operating, working together with God; doing on our part what we can do, and God on his part doing what, though indispensable, we cannot do. These two cases, taken from Christ's history, happily illustrate this.

It is a Sabbath morning; and its doors thrown open as the hour of worship approaches, the synagogue begins to fill. Among those who enter is a man with a withered hand; and however others come, there is haste in his step and high expectation seated on his brow. Blessed day, now is his chance to be healed. Jesus is in the neighbourhood, and is sure to be at worship. Early there, likely the first, this crippled man, heeding nothing else, looking at none, talking with none, keeps his eye on the door—keenly observing all who enter, and often, as it opens and Christ appears not, disappointed. At length the feet of a group are heard; again the door opens; and the colour that flushes his face tells that the person has now come whom he has come to meet. Nor is this all he can do, and does. Observing where Jesus, attended by his disciples, sits, he rises, and, elbowing the crowd aside without regard to their challenge or murmurs, pushes on to place himself before the Saviour,—right in his eye. All this he can do, and does, and more. Ordinarily concealing a deformity he was ashamed of, he now drops his robe, and, exposing the poor unsightly hand in the hope that it may catch Christ's eye and move his pity, sits with looks fixed imploringly on our Lord. There was no need for him to speak. His eager looks and the poor, bared, withered hand were touching prayers. Nor did these prayers wait long for an answer. The eye that never saw misery but to pity it is at length turned on him; and Jesus says, Stretch out thine hand! Strange command to others, perhaps also to himself—as bidding him do the very thing he had no power to do. Still he tries it. Again doing what he can, he makes an effort—and, Glory to God! bursting from his lips, succeeds. Virtue goes out of Christ. The shrunken hand instantly acquires a healthful colour, and swells into its right proportions. In his joy the man shuts and opens it; moves the pliant fingers; and holds the miracle aloft to the gaze of a crowd, dumb with astonishment. Give him a harp, and with that hand he would sweep its sounding strings to the praise of Jesus. Pattern to men who have souls to be saved, and hearts to cure, he did what he could—using all means within his power to obtain the blessing. And, did people, with equal eagerness, repair to the church on Sabbath, as he to the synagogue, to meet Jesus Christ, and with the same earnestness and the same faith, lay out their sins and soul's sorrows before him, our Sabbaths would witness greater works than this—He who healed that withered hand healing withered hearts, and, whether they required to be saved or sanctified, giving power to them that have no might.

Take another case. Covered with dust, footsore and weary, a messenger presents himself to our Lord, and speaking in Mary and Martha's name, says, Behold he whom thou lovest is sick! Tell a mother that her child is fallen into the river. It is enough. She stays to ask no questions, to hear no more. She is off on flying feet; and, descrying its sinking head, with one wild scream she leaps like a flash into the roaring flood. With no such haste, much as he loved Lazarus, did Jesus turn his steps to Bethany; but abiding where he was for two days, left his friend to die; even as, with a still grander purpose in view, on seeing the serpent creep into Eden he made no haste from heaven, but left our first parents to fall. He whom he loved has died, is buried; and four days thereafter the news that "the Master is come" brings the sisters this consolation, that, though they have lost a brother in Lazarus, they have still a friend in Christ—one who sticketh closer than any brother, and who, as the event proved, can restore a brother. They go to the grave to weep, but He to wrench its bars asunder, and stand there more conspicuously than in almost any other scene both God and man; in his works a God and in his tears a man. He is to raise the dead. Yet though the chief, he is not the only actor on a stage where it might be fancied man had no part to play. By that tomb men do not sit mere spectators of the might and majesty of Godhead, Jesus addressing them to say, Stand back, stand still and see the salvation of God! A great stone closes the mouth of the sepulchre; standing, with the Saviour in front and the corpse behind it, between the living and the dead. It must be removed: and Christ has only to say the word, and, moved by hands invisible, it rolls away to disclose the secrets of the tomb. But He who takes away stony hearts, because none other can, does not take away this stone; nor address it, but those who have put it there, and can take it thence. He requires them to do what they can—each doing their part; theirs to roll away the stone and his to raise the dead. Now, though we can neither convert nor sanctify ourselves or others, yet man has something, and much to do, as is plain from such words as these, "Cast away from you all your trangressions, whereby

ye have transgressed ; and make you a new heart and a new spirit : for why will ye die ?" Strictly speaking, we cannot make us a new heart, but we can place ourselves or others in a position for God to make it. We can remove obstructions to that gracious and holy change —we can dispel ignorance, put away temptation, abandon bad habits—the drunkard's cup, for instance, renounce pleasures that occupy our hearts. Thus removing what obstructs the flow of life and grace from Christ, we can "take away the stone ;" and, co-operating with God in the use of these and all divinely appointed means, we can, and, as we can, we ought to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, God working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

It is with man and God in the production of spiritual, as with the skies and the soil in the production of material, fruit. Gathering harvests each successive year from fields whose wealth of fruitfulness seems exhaustless, we say, How bountiful is the earth? —the world's, like the widow's, meal-barrel, is never empty. We speak of the fruits of earth, and the flowers of earth, and the harvests of earth ; but these, her offspring, have another parent. Heaven claims their sweet juices, and fragrant odours, and glorious colours, as hers, and most her own. To the treasures of light, heat, rain, and dews, poured from exhaustless skies on the dull cold soil, earth's flowers owe their beauty, her gardens their fruits, her fields their golden harvests. Each, at any rate, has its own part to do ; nor would a husbandman labour to less purpose under a sunless sky on fields bound hard with frost and buried in perpetual snow, than preachers without the cheering, warming, enlivening influences of the Sun of Righteousness, the dews of grace, and the blessing of the Spirit. Man's is but a husbandman's office—to plant ; to water ; nothing more. "Paul," as the apostle himself says, "planteth, Apollos watereth, but God giveth the increase ; so, then, neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." And thus, whether we preach, or are preached to, when most diligent in the use of means, let a sense of our inability turn our eyes and all our hopes on God. With him is the blessing and the residue of the Spirit. Nothing, indeed, so much hinders the cure of a soul as what helps the cure of a body. Many as the analogies between the processes of grace and nature are, here there is none—but a total dissimilarity. In that anxious sick room, where life and death struggle for the mastery, it is all-important to sustain the patient's strength. This offers, so to speak, his only chance ; and for that end there is no charm in drug or stimulant more potent than boundless confidence in the skill of the physician. Such confidence in man lies at the foundation of the physician's success ; such confidence in man is fatal to a minister's. This may be one reason why, with so many sermons, there are so few conversions ; why, among the crowds that throng God's house, so many depart unblessed, unsaved, unsanctified—no better, but rather worse. God will not give his blessing to such as, shutting him out, put their confidence in the use of means—in the virtue of sacraments or the power of sermons, in dead books or living preachers. He is a jealous God, and will not give his glory to another.

COTTAGE POEMS.

BY A CURATE.

IV.—AMONG THE FLOWERS.

We took them to the woods one day,
When the summer woods were gay,
At the flowery close of May,
Saying, "Children, run and play!"

And they hardly understood
They might wander where they would ;
And it seemed a doubtful good
That on very flowers they stood—

Flowers too precious in the sight
Of these children—priceless quite !
One a king-cup, shining bright,
Held as if she held a light !

Every bank with treasure teemed,
Daisies silver coinage seemed,
Dandelions, starry-beamed,
Like to bright gold pieces gleamed.

Of primroses, ling'ring there,
One would weave a garland fair ;
One would fill her lap with care
And a miser's anxious air.

From the city's slums they came,
Flowerless, dark, and full of shame,
Full of foulness without name—
Homes, alas ! and hearts the same.

"Feed my lambs," said Christ one day ;
So we took them out to play ;
For the young lambs God doth lay
Down among the flowers of May.

Drawn by Paul Gray. Engraved by J. Swain

AMONG THE FLOWERS.

See page 624.

HEROES AND MARTYRS OF THE REFORMATION IN ITALY.

III.—THE LADY GIULIA DA GONZAGA.

WHEREVER the Reformation spread it found zealous adherents among the female sex, who in many instances greatly promoted its interests by their devoted activity, and everywhere adorned the cause by their graces and virtues. In Italy this was remarkably the case. At the close of the preceding article the names of three distinguished ladies were mentioned as among the disciples of Juan Valdez; and to these other names have to be added, of females in different grades of society and in other parts of the peninsula, who connected themselves with the Reformation movement there. It may not be possible very clearly to trace their influence, or even to indicate their course of action. Still it cannot be doubted that their influence was very considerable, and on this account as well as on account of their personal worth, they are entitled to a place in this series of sketches.

The first place in the series is undoubtedly due to the Duchess da Gonzaga-Colonna, one of the earliest adherents of Valdez, one of the most intimate of his associates, and the steadfast friend of evangelical truth to the last.

GIULIA DA GONZAGA was the eldest daughter of Luigi da Gonzaga, Duke of Sabbionetta, and his wife Francesca di Gianluigi Fieschi, of Genoa. The family to which she belonged was a branch of the great ducal house of Mantua, a house from which many names illustrious in European history have proceeded. The name of Gonzaga stands associated with illustrious achievements in the field, and with the early pursuit and generous patronage of literature. Of those members of the family whose names have become famous, five were ladies.*

Giulia was born at Gazzuolo, in the last year of the fifteenth century. Endowed with mental qualities and personal charms of the highest order, and uniting to these great sweetness of temper and an open, candid, and generous bearing, she at an early age commanded the esteem no less than the admiration of all with whom she came into intercourse. Whilst youthful knights of the highest rank were ready to break spears in her honour, poets caught the inspiration of her charms, and even grave historians thought it not unworthy of them to celebrate her praises in their pages. De Thou ranks her among the "lectissimæ fœminæ" of Italy, who were suspected of heretical pravity,† and Hilarion da Coste says that "De Thou, François Billon, and other authors, praise her for her attainments (*son savoir*) which made her be held in estimation by the ablest men in Italy."‡ Brantome, an authority in such matters, says that she was esteemed the most beautiful woman of the time in all Italy, and that he had seen her portrait, taken after she had been several years a widow, and that it fully confirmed the reputation she enjoyed.*

At the early age of thirteen she was married to Vespasiano Colonna, Duke of Traietto and Count of Fondi. The disparity of their ages was great, he being past forty; he was, besides, a widower, with a daughter, named Isabella; but, notwithstanding this, he succeeded in inspiring his young wife with an affection which survived his death, and never decayed in her bosom as long as she lived. Infirmities, brought on by severe military service, had impaired his constitution, so that their happy union lasted only a few years. At his death he testified the confidence he had in her character and abilities by intrusting to her the management of his estates and the sole guardianship of his daughter Isabella. On her part profound regard for his memory and the deathless love with which he had inspired her, led her to reject the many and urgent offers of marriage which her beauty, her endowments, and her wealth caused to be made to her from some of the noblest houses in Italy. According to a fashion, common at that time, she chose for her device an *amaranth*, a flower of which the poets have feigned that it never fades,† and a species of which, remarkable for the protracted duration of its efflorescence, is known in our gardens under the name of *Love-lies-bleeding;* and for her motto, *Non moritura*, "undying"—a motto borrowed from Virgil, to express that her love for her husband could neither perish nor change. Among those who were suitors for her hand was Ippolito de' Medici, the grandson of the illustrious Lorenzo de' Medici, and the *protégé* of Leo X., a man of splendid abilities, a lover of literature and himself a proficient in classical learning, but restless, vain, prodigal, and ambitious, and who, though he ultimately became a churchman and reached the dignity of cardinal and archbishop, showed always more of the knight and the warrior than of the ecclesiastic. Having translated the second book of the Æneid into Italian, he dedicated it to the Signora Giulia in terms expressive of the warmest affection towards her. Though she rejected his suit, he seems to have continued towards her his knightly fealty, and some years after met his death whilst on a visit to her after a warlike expedition on her behalf. In devoting himself to the Lady Giulia, Ippolito traversed the design of his patron the Pope, who was desirous of marrying him to Isabella, the daughter of that lady's deceased husband. Isabella became the wife of Luigi da Gonzaga, of Gazzuolo, the brother of her stepmother, a young noble of great personal attractions, and who had received the name Rodomonte for his

* See Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," passim; Bayle, "Dictionnaire," s. v. Gonzague.
† "Hist. sui Temporis," bk. 39. 2.
‡ "Eloges des Dames illustr.," 2. 97.

* "Vies des Dames illustr.," p. 282.
† Immortal amaranth! a flower which once
In Paradise fast by the tree of life
Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence
To heaven removed, where first it grew, there grows,
And flowers aloft shading the fount of life.
Milton, "Paradise Lost," iii. 353—7.

romantic bravery and great strength. Their union was not of long duration. Having been commissioned by the Emperor to recover for his sister certain possessions which had been claimed and taken from her by Ascanio Colonna, but which the Pope, Clement VII., had adjudged to belong to her in terms of her husband's will, he was wounded in the shoulder by a shot from an arquebus whilst engaged in besieging the Castle of Nicovara, and died shortly afterwards, leaving his widow to the guardian care of Giulia. A son, named Vespasiano, was the fruit of this marriage; by his father's will he was placed, first under the guardianship of his paternal grandfather, and on his decease, in 1540, came under that of his aunt Giulia da Gonzaga.

The disputes and troubles which arose from rival claimants to her husband's estates having been settled or quashed, Giulia retired to her castle at Fondi, situated on the southern shore of the Bay of Naples. Here she spent her time in the pursuit of literature, in the society of men of culture and refinement, in the management of the estates which had been intrusted to her care by her husband's will, and in deeds of beneficence. Her name occurs in many of the letters of the literary men of the time, and her praises were sung by the poets in varied verse. Ariosto,* Molza, and Perrino, have celebrated her fame, and Bernardo, the father of the illustrious Torquato Tasso, has dedicated to her two sonnets, of which we will attempt a translation.

I.

O regal dame, whose beauty infinite,
A boon by the Creator's own hand given
That thereby to the path that leads to heaven
Many thou shouldst attract with gentle might.

With grace divine each soul thou dost invite
To worthy deeds that bring enduring fame;
And in thine eyes serene the sacred flame
Of purest love sheds forth its wondrous light.

Sense, virtue, worth, and winning gentleness
Attend thee as the sun attends the day,
Or as the lustrous stars attend the night;
Thy heavenly gait, thy smile, what thou dost say,
The thought and sweetness that thy words express,
Are of thy beauty the adornments bright.

In the other sonnet he goes even beyond this in his eulogy.

O gentle Pilgrim, who on either side
Hast search'd heaven through to find the true and good,
These in thy breast with loving willinghood
Have made their home, and with thee aye abide.

Propitious Star that dost the traveller guide,
Drawing by gracious and resplendent ray
Each thoughtful soul into the happy way
That leads to where earth's storms may be defied.

Signet on which, imprest in living lines,
Is seen the image of the Deity;
And every form of grace and price is there,
Of goodness and true honour Mirror fair,
Divine idea where all beauty shines—
Thrice happy is the man that sighs for thee.†

* "Orlando Furioso," cant. 46.

† "Rime di Bernardo Tasso," Bergamo, 1749, son. 188 and son. 155, quoted by Mr. Wiffen, "Life and Writings of Juan de Valdez," p. 110

This is in that style of extravagant eulogy which was characteristic of the age, and in which Bernardo Tasso was especially given to indulge. There can be no doubt, however, that the lady who is the subject of it possessed that rare combination of personal attractions, with high mental powers and serene moral dignity, which constitutes as near an approach to ideal perfection as it is given to our fallen nature to reach.

Giulia, breathing an atmosphere of literary enthusiasm and poetic fervour, was herself inspired to utter her soul in song. Her sonnets, which even in that age were esteemed excellent, were collected from various early collections, and published separately at Bergamo in 1750.

Her repose at Fondi was on one occasion rudely interrupted by an event which strikingly illustrates the unsettled state of society at the time, and the perils to which a lady of her condition might be exposed. The fame of her transcendent beauty had travelled as far as Constantinople, and had reached the ears of the Sultan Suleyman, who, with true Oriental unscrupulousness, determined that such a gem must, at all hazards, be appropriated to himself. In obedience, accordingly, to his instructions, the famous corsair, Barbarossa, steered his galleys into the Bay of Naples, and in the month of September, 1534, in the dead of night, made an attack on the town and castle of Fondi. No resistance could be offered by the affrighted townspeople; but the noise which the assault and their terror produced aroused the inmates of the castle. They had only time to awaken their mistress, and hurry her by a secret passage out of the castle, when the invaders were at the gate. Giulia, having procured a fleet horse, fled to Vallacorsa, where she was in safety. Barbarossa, baulked of the valuable prey he had hoped to seize, and finding that, the alarm having been given, forces were assembling to oppose him, ruthlessly plundered the town, and then hastened to re-embark. Among the nobility whom the danger of the Duchess summoned to her defence was her former admirer, Ippolito de' Medici. Resuming for the nonce the warlike accoutrements which he had laid aside for the priestly vestments, he gathered a body of his dependants and hastened to her defence. Before his arrival the danger had passed, and Giulia had returned to her castle. Here, whilst enjoying for a few days the hospitality which gratitude prompted her richly to offer, he begged her to allow him to send a painter, by whom a portrait of her worthy of the subject might be taken. The result was that Sebastiano del Piombo, the most famous portrait painter of his day, visited her at Fondi, and there executed a portrait which Vasari pronounces "divine," which was doubtless that seen by Brantome, and which, after passing through various fortunes, is probably now in the National Gallery in London.* On a subsequent occasion, about a year after, Ippolito paid another

* "The portrait of Giulia Gonzaga, painted by Sebastiano, went into the collection of Francis I. of France, at Fontainebleau. A portrait, said to be the same, having the attributes of a saint, S. Agatha or S. Apollonia, the nimbus and pincers, afterwards adorned the Borghese palace at Rome. It was purchased by the Rev. W. Holwell Carr, and bequeathed by him to the National Gallery, London."—Wiffen, p. 14, note.

visit to Fondi. The Duchess was from home, and Ippolito, finding this, retired to Itri. Here he was seized with sudden and violent illness, the symptoms of which were not unlike those of Asiatic cholera. After thirteen hours of intense suffering he expired. Suspicions that he had been poisoned fastened upon his groom, who was supposed to have been bribed to the infamous deed by Duke Alessandro, of Florence, his master's cousin. Whether the man was guilty or not was never ascertained; for though Ippolito believed he had been poisoned, and suspected his groom, he gave orders that no attempt was to be made to discover the evil-doer. The belief, however, had taken hold of the minds of the people, and when the groom returned to his native town the inhabitants rose up against him, and stoned him to death for his ingratitude to so kind and indulgent a master.

The disputes and troubles in which the Lady Giulia was involved after her husband's death were not the only nor the most vexatious annoyances which she had to endure in connection with her temporal affairs. Her step-daughter Isabella, having married as her second husband Carlo de Lanoja, Prince of Sulmona, commenced a process of litigation with the view of depriving her of that management of her husband's estates which she claimed in terms of his will, and securing to herself the possession of certain jewels which it was alleged on the other side had been only lent to her. The Lady Giulia declared herself willing to agree to a fair compromise, but to this the other party would not accede. A long and harassing series of processes and negotiations ensued, which was at length terminated by the judges deciding that the Signora Isabella should pay to the Signora Giulia 2500 ducats annually in quarterly payments, and 1000 ducats down for lapsed time. Giulia, however, retained the guardianship of her nephew Vespasiano, Isabella's son, on the demise of his paternal grandfather. Over his education and training she watched with the most assiduous and enlightened care, causing him to be instructed by the best masters in Tuscan, Latin, and Greek, and instilling into his mind the principles of piety and virtue. The fruits of her judicious culture were seen in his after-life. He grew up adorned by many excellences, and became one of the most zealous patrons of learning, both secular and sacred. He granted to the Jews a license to establish a Hebrew press at Sabbionetta, from which issued several editions of the Pentateuch, Psalter, and Rabbinical commentaries. He died in 1591, and with him the dukedom of Sabbionetta became extinct.

It was whilst her mind was disquieted by the litigations provoked by her step-daughter that the Lady Giulia came under the influence of Juan Valdez. By this time she had left Fondi, and taken up her residence in Naples, where she had a house and establishment in the Borgo delle Vergine; though, to avoid scandal, she herself lived as a secular person at the Franciscan convent of Santa Chiara. In what way she was led to attend the meetings of the Reformers we are not told. We meet with her in the society of Valdez for the first time on the occasion of her walk home with him from the preaching of Ochino; but that this was not the commencement of their intercourse is evident from the tenor of the conversation which he reports as having taken place on that occasion, and especially from the fact that she there speaks of his having known her for a long time, and refers to previous conversations. Already it is clear that, in whatever way originated, their intercourse was of the most friendly character. The Duchess freely opens to him her mind, and asks his counsel in that state of disquiet and contrariety in which she felt herself, and he replies to her with the freedom and point which well-established friendship could alone have permitted. Their intercourse continued till his death; and there can be no doubt that his influence over her was great in the way of moulding her religious convictions, and helping forward the development of her spiritual life. She survived him for twenty-six years, during which she carefully sought to follow out the principles which he had commended to her. Her time was spent in the study of the Scriptures, "which," says a writer of the time, "she perused with pure and sincere heart;" in the visitation of the sick and the destitute; and in the society of persons like-minded with herself. After the death of Valdez, Carnesecchi became her confidential adviser. When he was put on trial for his relations with the Reformers, her name appeared in his correspondence; and this caused her to be brought under the inquisition of the Holy Office. The vexations to which she was thus exposed are said to have shortened her life. She died on the 19th of April, 1566, and was interred in the church of Santa Chiara; having in her last will virtually proclaimed herself of the Reformed party by commending herself, not, as a Romanist would have done, to the Virgin and the Saints, but to "the Lord God Almighty, her long-suffering Father, and to Jesus Christ his Son, her Redeemer;" to whom she committed her soul, "if it be worthy to be received into eternal life."* She left behind her a rich and fragrant memory, treasured in the inmost souls of those who best knew her worth. To after-generations her name has come down as that of one in whom the rarest gifts of mind and person were transcended only by the moral and spiritual excellences with which they were associated.

W. L. Alexander.

* Wiffen, p. 117.

ON PRIVATE PRAYER.

TO THE YOUNG.

Prayer is the soul's incense—the rising of the spirit-nature to God. Prayer in its highest form is not a petition, but a communion with God. God is always near us, but we do not always realise his presence. In prayer He is not only near us,—we "draw nigh unto Him." Seasons of peace and places of retirement are especially suited to prayer.

Isaac went out into the fields to meditate or "pray."

It was outside the great city, on the banks of the Euphrates, that the pious Jews met together in exile, and poured out their grief to God, when "by the waters of Babylon they sat down and wept."

With the blue peaks around him, on the top of Mount Carmel, from whence he could descry afar the shining levels of the Mediterranean sea, Elijah bowed his head between his knees in the frequent attitude of prayer.

Without the town, by the river side, the converts at Philippi met together to pray with Paul.

And our Lord himself often sought the hilly solitudes of Judea and Galilee, and continued all night in prayer.

When you are alone with God and nature, do not forget to raise your heart in swelling thankfulness to Him. See Him everywhere—in the waving of the golden corn-fields and in the light of setting suns. Sanctify all outward things with his presence, and learn to associate all that is fair and lovely in his creatures with the Divine beauty and the Divine love.

It seems to me at this season of the year—in the Spring-time, when we go out into the fields and see the first flowers budding, and nature re-clothing herself with a bright robe of living green—the heart cannot resist joining its own cry of joy to the voices of the world, re-orient out of dust, and the hymn of praise rises with the songs of wild birds and the breath of flowers!

David mentions three special seasons of prayer—"In the *evening*, *morning*, and at *noon* will I pray and cry aloud."

Morning Prayer.—One of the most natural seasons for prayer is certainly the morning. In the morning the mind is clearer, all the faculties are renovated by God's blessed mission of sleep. The night's rest has prepared our eyes for the glorious sunlight, and nerved us for the trials and the business of the day. When we awake in the morning, let our first thoughts be of God—the first moments of the day should be moments of solemn self-dedication. I think it will be either so, or just the reverse—your thoughts are either of God or they are devoted to the world; and, remember, the thoughts and resolutions of the early morning will influence you all day. Neglect not to invigorate your soul with prayer before you set out on your day's journey—neglect not to commit your way unto the Lord, that He may guide your feet into the way of peace. His Holy Spirit, with the overflowing waters of grace, waits to flow through your soul, and make you pure. For you his baptismal streams, like his mercies, are "new every morning."

But there is another morning: it is the morning of life; it is your youth. This is a season of precious opportunity. The sands which are running through your hour-glass are indeed golden sands, and they can never be recalled. Let the morning of your life be also a season of solemn self-dedication to God. Do not let it find you and leave you careless. Be not like the disciples in the garden of Gethsemane: waste not in sleep the precious hours given you to prepare for the coming struggle. You may go to sleep just as they did—sleep whilst your Master is praying and suffering; and when the struggle comes you will be unprepared, just as the disciples were: suddenly waked from slumber, "scarcely able to stand, unable to see right from wrong, and hurried headlong into evil. You are young, perhaps, and surrounded with kind friends and guardians; you have not yet come into rude contact with the outer world. Now is your quiet Gethsemane,—Gethsemane's struggles you cannot yet know,—See that you learn not too well Gethsemane's sleep."*

After prayers of thankfulness and praise, the most appropriate morning prayers are prayers against temptation, and these will be both prayers for yourself and prayers for others; pray thus: "Lord keep me this day from temptations to selfishness, impurity, unkindness, and from all dangers which may assault and hurt the body and the soul; watch over me, and all those who are dear to me;" for, learn it well, you cannot separate yourself from those with whom you live. They are almost always the instruments of your blessing and your trial; through them daily temptations meet you; bear them all in your prayer to God: it is best, it is safest; for them, too, there is a blessing, nor can you be blest apart from them.

Noonday Prayer.—Our first idea of "noon" is that of the sun beating down fiercely upon an arid plain, and in the bright sultry noon you will often long for some shady retreat, some green oasis, where you may find rest and communion with God. "At noonday," says the Psalmist, "I will pray and cry aloud."

Some persons make a practice of retiring in the middle of the day, if it be only for five or ten minutes, for noonday prayer. Some good men have even urged that it was not possible to lead a godly life without such prayer. We can hardly admit this; our souls are so differently constituted. To some it may prove salutary, but to others even the reverse. Some are able, from the nature of their occupations or characters, to withdraw themselves and fix their thoughts upon God in the middle of the day's work, but others, much occupied in business or of a more excitable temperament, although working "ever as in their

* F. W. Robertson.

great Taskmaster's eye," might not be able so far to banish intrusive thought as to make such special retirement useful. There are no stiff rules to be laid down; there are vital principles connected with prayer —principles, not rules. The principle is "Pray always, lifting up holy hands;" "Pray without ceasing;" but, remember, when or where or how long you pray is of little importance compared with the spirit of your prayer. There is no magic about prayer. It is an instinct as natural as any other human instinct. Prayer is the soul's desire for God; if it is not that, it is nothing. If you can say, on rising from your knees, "O God! for a few moments I have been one with Thee; I have received grace and strength in time of need. Thou hast inclined Thine ear unto me and heard me, and for that purpose came I hither"—then you have prayed. But for those who do not affect a definite time for noonday prayer, occasional short prayers at any time may be substituted. I allude to "ejaculatory prayers." Such was the Publican's prayer, "Lord be merciful unto me a sinner!" It was not remarkable for originality or length, but it reached Heaven; it was a reiterated utterance caused by the pressure of the same thought over and over again upon the soul. That is ejaculatory prayer. When you walk abroad you may say, "Turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity;" or, at other times, "Help, Lord," "Save me, O God, for the waters are come in even unto my soul." The Psalms are full, quite full, of sentences which will help you. Although the times, and the seasons, and the manner and substance of prayer must vary, yet of prayer, which is so vital a part of our spirit-life—prayer, which is the dream-ladder of the soul—the very channel of communication between God and man—prayer of any kind, at any time, so only it be real, we can never have too much.

There are some temptations which are continually meeting us; scarcely a day passes without our being beset by them—trials which spring, it may be, from our family and social relations. Let us pray that our very blessings may not lead as astray. We have so much to be thankful for—enjoyments, friends, families, brothers and sisters—let us beware how we use them. It is God's law that the very things which should be our blessings may become our curses—what may guide us to Heaven may thrust us down to hell. Every day then we are tempted in our souls and in our members—suddenly, at all sorts of times, in all sorts of ways, and to such temptations we must oppose the suitable weapons of short and earnest prayers. To do this is a severe test of character, for when we most need prayer we are often least able to pray. Pray, then, that you may be able to pray *when* you are tempted.

One last word on *Evening Prayer*. When the shadows are closing around us, and another day in the rent-roll of our life begins to look black as we try to see it in the light of heaven, surely then, above all, it is a fitting time for solemn prayer.

Ere we lay our heads to rest upon our pillows, we ponder, "Another day of weakness and sin and failure is past—is lost! I have not been 'about my Father's business.'" We do not say there may not be other thoughts, for perhaps it is with a feeling of deep thankfulness that you lie down to sleep. You may be grateful for strength during the day; you may have received great blessings, great mercies, great marks of Christ's love. Many peaceful thoughts may mingle with your evening praper; but the first must be, "I have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," and this because confession is what puts us in our right position with God; it is the first step in our restoration, "I confessed my sin, and so thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin." In the *morning*, then, let us pray *against temptation*; at *noonday*, *under temptation*; in the *evening*, *after temptation*—that so we may learn daily more and more of His tender mercy "who tempteth no man," nor suffers any "to be tempted above what they are able to bear," but "who with the temptation makes a way of escape" for all, that they may "return unto the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls." H. R. Haweis.

THE SHULAMITE AT THE LORD'S FEET.

"My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies."—Canticles, ii. 16.

Poor heart! why throb thus wildly in my breast?
The more I ponder on my Master's word,
The more are doubts and fears within me stirr'd,
Long as my eyes on my own weakness rest.

I to come forth? What, I? 'Twas so He said—
My wav'ring steps to others must be guide,
My feeble arm must 'gainst the foe be tried:
There a whole world—and here a lowly maid!

Ah no, my Lord!—and yet the call is Thine!
I spoke unwisely, keeping self in sight;
I'll only look on Thy all-saving might—
Be calm, my heart! for my Beloved is mine!

Yes, my Beloved is mine—what wouldst thou more?
The cause is His! It is His work I do!
He is my rock, my shield and buckler too,
Of strength and wisdom my unfailing store.

And I am His. Oh heart, be faithful still!
Still let Him lead me as it seems Him best!
With Him to combat, or with Him to rest,
March, or encamp, according to His will.

My friend is mine, and I for ever His:
Himself he gave—myself to Him I give;
In me He dwells; in Him alone I live:
Was ever union half so blest as this? L. C. C.

WHAT MISSIONS ARE DOING IN WESTERN INDIA.

Some remarks of Dr. Livingstone's on the religious condition of Western India have lately attracted notice, and were referred to in a late number of this Magazine.* The subject is one of great interest; and Dr. Livingstone is a very candid, careful, and intelligent observer. His letter, as given in a recent number of "Evangelical Christendom," is now before us; and so pregnant a text might well warrant a pretty ample commentary. We hasten to say that our object is not criticism or correction, but enlargement and explanation. Those who have been interested by Livingstone's remarks will probably be glad to hear something more on the same subject.

We mean to speak of Western India in particular. To talk in fluent terms of India generally is somewhat hazardous. For India is a vast continent, the so-called provinces of which are nations; and every nation has its peculiarities in India, as elsewhere. Be it remembered that we reckon up at least twelve cultivated languages in India—each having its distinct and characteristic literature. In many points, Bengal is different from Bombay, and Madras often differs from both. Certainly Calcutta is not India, nor is it even Bengal, in the sense in which Paris is said to be France.

Nor is it enough to give the correct geography of the place to which our remarks are meant specially to apply. For society in India is not like society in Europe. Society in Europe consists of one great mass, divisible indeed into upper, middle, and lower portions, but yet, to a considerable extent, homogeneous. But in consequence of the universal prevalence of caste, Hindu society consists rather of a series of *strata;* and one stratum may have amazingly little in common with the stratum next it. And hence reforms in India—and, indeed, all influences, whether reforming or deforming—proceed laterally rather than vertically; they run along the stratum in which they take their rise more easily than they ascend or descend. Christianity may be rapidly extending in one caste, while it makes little or no progress in others inhabiting the very same district.

I wish, from the bottom of my heart, that the men who still tell us that the Gospel is making very little progress in India would keep in mind the very simple principle now mentioned. *Dolus latet in generalibus:* please to come to particulars. Tell us the exact place—tell us the class of people—regarding which your assertion is made. Dr. Livingstone supplies us with a case in point. He mentions that, before going to India, he "understood that the profession of Christianity by a native was generally evidence of bad character." Such was the information he had received. To what extent is this assertion true, or rather, how could such an extraordinary statement be made? Partly, it is a tradition of former days; a specimen, unfortunately not yet locked up in a museum, of the false and bitter things which used to be said in opposition to Missions when the battle for the opening of India to the Gospel had to be fought and won against the old East India Company. But partly, also, it is an instance of the sweeping, erroneous generalisations of which we have spoken. For there is to be found in connection with most military stations in India a mixed multitude of people of whom a great many are ready enough, if they can make anything by it, to call themselves Christians. In Western India few of these camp-followers are natives of the soil. The indigenous Christians are not fond of their society; they call them, slightingly, "people from Madras,"—as it happens that the far greater part of this mixed and often vagrant class comes from Southern India. Farther, the great majority of these so-called Christians are Roman Catholics, when they have any religion at all; of those we have seen fully five-sixths were Romanists. And, therefore, be their character what it may, our Protestant missions are in no way responsible for it. Livingstone's very true remark, after he had seen with his own eyes the missions of Western India, is that the people who gave him such information could have come in contact only with "the scum of camps and cities." Of camps, above all, we say; and the melancholy thing is that many of our countrymen—military men especially—unless they are heartily interested in the spread of the Gospel, may see native Christianity only as exhibited in this very "scum." The opinion of native Christianity held by such men, although just to a certain extent, regarding a certain class, yet, in the form in which it is commonly thrust forward, is deplorably and flagrantly wrong.

In speaking of missionary work in Western India, it is with some difficulty that I refrain from prefacing my remarks with an explanation of the chief characteristics of the native races. Perhaps in no part of the world is there a more remarkable confluence of races than in Bombay and its neighbourhood. Marvellous are the contrasts of costume and countenance—marvellous the Babel-like variety of dialects in the crowded, sweltering bazaars of that great commercial city, which is still rising in population with a rapidity almost beyond example. But, lest we lose ourselves in the rush and whirl, let us commence with what is easier of comprehension. Let us go first to the quiet country districts, and ask what is doing there.

We shall be compelled to confine our attention at present to the two great provinces of Maharashtra and Gujarat.

Maharashtra is the country of the Marathas, a people possessing a marked character and a marked history. They first came prominently forward about two centuries ago, when they rose in revolt against the Mohammadan Emperor of Delhi (the Great Mogul). The Maratha chiefs soon claimed to be lords paramount of India; and their plundering horse swept resistlessly over the continent from the Himalayas to Tanjore. They were finally overthrown by the Bri-

* In "Notes for Readers out of the Way," page 422.

tish in 1818 ; but the wild spirit of the race was only curbed, not broken. The Marathas had waged war for religion as much as for empire—for plunder, indeed, more than either ; and the Brahmans, who had been all-powerful under the native rulers, hated the presence of the *Mlencha*—the unclean foreigner—with a perfect hatred. If we are to look at natural causes as predisposing men to the reception or rejection of the Gospel, assuredly, at the time when missionaries came to labour among them, the Maratha people were one of the least likely of Indian races to welcome their message. For the foreigner from the far West still grasped with the one hand the reeking sword which had cloven down their dominion, while with the other he presented to them the new Shastra.

Another point is of importance. Missions to Western India are comparatively of recent origin. One of the first Scottish missionaries to Bombay has fallen at his post, only a few weeks ago. The earliest mission to the Maratha people goes only a little farther back than the Scottish. After many harassing impediments thrown in its way by the British Government, it may be said to have commenced its labours about the beginning of 1815.

This first mission to the Marathas was American. The next was English. The next was Scotch. On the southern boundaries of the Maratha country there next came a German mission, connected with the Basle Society ; but of this we shall hardly speak, as comparatively little of its extensive work is done among the Marathas. The same remark applies to a station of the London Missionary Society at Belgaum, at which two faithful men long laboured, and not in vain.

But avoiding over-minuteness, and not cumbering our page with lengthy statistics, we proceed to speak of Native Christianity. The largest number of adherents belong to the oldest, the Mission of the American Board, which has its chief seat in and around Ahmednuggur, a town about 70 miles N.E. of Poona. Connected with this Mission there are 23 churches, containing 640 communicants, and 500 baptized children ; in all 1140 persons.

This is not a large number of professing Christians. And yet it is not small, when various considerations are carefully weighed. In addition to what has been already mentioned regarding the prejudices of the Maratha nation (which influence powerfully all but the lowest castes) and also the shortness of the time the Missions have been at work, it is important to note that the rate of increase in the Missions of Western India is high. Thus, the members of the American Mission eight years ago were under 200. Or look at the rate in another place. About three years ago, two people were baptized as the first fruits of the Free Church Mission at Jaulna. In little more than two years the number baptized at and around that station had risen to sixty-two. I recollect that on going through the figures with some care about three years ago, it came out clearly that the ratio of increase of Native Christianity in Western India had been nearly 300 per cent. in ten years. And it is certainly higher now.

But enough of mere statistics. Who are the people among whom the increase mostly takes place ? As might have been expected, not mostly the higher castes. There are, in all the Missions, men of the very highest caste ; and not a few of the "twice-born" Brahmans have really been born of water and of the Spirit, and are now energetic preachers of the once-hated faith. But still the majority, ay, the great majority, of those who are now rapidly coming over to Christ are the lower classes. Among the caste of the Mahars, who, though despised now by the upper classes, possibly were the original occupiers of the soil and gave name to the country,* the American Mission labours, with cheering tokens of Divine favour and ever-growing success. The English and Scottish Missions have drawn many of their recent converts from a yet lower class—the Mangs.

Some of the Missions are preparing to commence operations among the wild aboriginal races living among the mountains and the forests ; and when they shall do so, all the experience of the past encourages the pleasing expectation that the progress of the truth among these will be still more rapid than among the castes that have been yet referred to. The Brahmans and the Parbhus come over by units, the Mahars and Mangs by tens, or rather hundreds ; and we may hope that the Waralis and Bheels, and Gonds, will come ere long by thousands. The explanation of the difference is not far to seek. The higher classes are held in the iron grasp of an ancient, fully developed, and elaborately constructed system, with complex rites to fatigue the conscience, and a most fantastic mythology to regale the fancy ;—above all, with a watchful priesthood ready to explain it, and to enforce it by penalties more tremendous to the Hindu than death itself. The religion of the lowest castes, on the contrary, although wild and gloomy enough, is yet comparatively vague and shapeless ; and it more easily gives way before a definite and loving faith. This is still more true of the half-savage jungle tribes. Be it remembered also that the lower classes have always been despised and trampled on by the higher. On the whole, then, if the result ere long shall be that men of low castes and outcasts shall be found pressing into the kingdom, while the haughty Brahman, and even the middle-class man, remain self-excluded, it need not greatly surprise us. And while we must ever feel that in the Divine election of particular communities to receive before others the blessings of Divine grace, there is much which it baffles human wisdom to explain, yet surely we may without presumption say that we recognise a beauty in the way in which the light of life now dawns by degrees on India. It is redemption to all, yet it comes in a certain order ; it is redemption *first* to the oppressed —and *next*, to the oppressor.

So far have we spoken of rural Missions in Maharashtra. Let us turn now to Gujarat. In this rich and important province, with six or seven millions of inhabitants, there was one Mission that laboured since the year 1815—that of the London Missionary Society. Its head-quarters were at Surat, which was formerly a great commercial city, though it has been

* The Brahmans say the name is Maha-rashtra, *i.e.*, *the great country*. Quite as probably the original name was Mahar-rashtra, *i.e.*, *the country of the Mahars*.

steadily declining as Bombay has been rising. Much faithful work had been performed, and important good achieved before the London Missionary Society withdrew from Gujarat a few years ago, handing over an interesting body of converts to the Irish Presbyterian Mission, which had commenced its labours in the year 1841. Unhappily there have hardly ever been more than five or six missionaries labouring in the whole province, even when both Missions were in the field.

Less warlike than the Marathas, having few or no traditions of independence and empire, and split up into a larger number of conflicting sects, the people of Gujarat might seem likely to be less prejudiced against the Gospel than the inhabitants of the sister province. And so they probably are. Among the middle classes of the Hindus proper a hopeful entrance has been made; and Christian agricultural settlements at Ahmedabad and Borsud exhibit pleasing specimens of native Christianity. And about four years ago a new movement occurred, of a somewhat remarkable character;—fully 200 families of Dhers, a caste very much answering to the Mahars of the Maratha country, came to the missionaries—spontaneously, as one might say, yet surely the hand of God was there—and put themselves under Christian instruction. These were from twenty-eight different villages. Their motives, doubtless, were mixed; they were not actuated solely by a desire to know the truth; partly, they sought relief from the intolerable tyranny of the higher castes. But let no one blame them for this, nay, let us praise them; for he deserves the lash who consents to be a slave. This important movement has not disappointed the Mission. Additions are still made to the numbers under instruction; and a late report mentions an accession of twenty families at once. And so the influence spreads along the caste.

It would appear that the rural Christians whom Dr. Livingstone came in contact with were at the two settlements in Gujarat which we have mentioned. A friend who saw them lately describes their appearance as like that of respectable men of the small farmer class at home. Livingstone's remark is still more pointed. "One thing," says he, "struck me very forcibly, on looking at the Christian women of Ahmedabad, Borsud, and elsewhere—the change of expression in their countenances. They were pleasant to look at; while the women of the lower classes seem to have discontent imprinted on their faces." Precisely so. This is one of the most blissful changes that the Gospel effects in India; and it is also one of the most patent. Females of the higher classes may sometimes have a look of easy comfort and content; but those of the middle and lower classes have an expression of anxiety and suffering, and what one might call a kind of bewildered look, as if they not only groaned under the burden of care, but also (to quote Wordsworth's phrase) as if they "wondered at the sorrow of the time." In Christian women this has given place to an aspect of intelligence and peace. Exceptions, of course, will occur; but most certainly this is the rule. And the remark does not apply only to Western India. Anywhere, if on the outskirts of a village you come to a well and see the women drawing water, a glance will discover what religion they profess. In many cases the clothing shows this; for the clothing of the Christian woman is fuller and more modest than that of the Hindu. This is especially the case in the south of India, where the dress of some of the lower castes hardly conceals at all the upper portion of the body. But wholly apart from the dress, the religion is discoverable from the look and manner. The Gospel of the grace of God—the Gospel of purity and peace—has stamped itself on the features and demeanour, so as to be known and read of all men:—even the heathen have confessed that they are astonished at the change.

In Mr. Merivale's very suggestive book on "the Conversion of the Northern Nations" there occurs the following sentiment, which has much interest when taken in connection with the point I have been discussing. "The divorce of mothers from the moral training of their children was an inherent weakness of Paganism, which made it fall and collapse in presence of the Christians—of men themselves brought up by holy women in the fear and nurture of the Lord" (p. 152). Much has been said—and it is impossible to say too much—of the benefits which Christianity in India will confer on woman, now enslaved and trampled on; but it is well, likewise, to remember how nobly emancipated woman will repay the kindness by rising at once to the discharge of her highest duties, and so hastening the blessed day of India's Christianization.

As given in the Report of last year, the whole number of native Christians in the Gujarat Mission is 300. The baptisms last year were seventy-five. The number may seem small; but it implies a rapid increase during the last few years. And let us remember that in the whole province of Gujarat there have hardly been, for years, more than four missionaries labouring at once—a man to two millions, or thereabouts. Yet Gujarat is said to be "occupied!"

Thus far I have spoken almost exclusively of rural Christianity in Western India. This is native Christianity, pure and simple—not as surrounded and affected by the adjuncts of Western civilization. In their habits of life the native Christians in the villages resemble their native neighbours, unless in so far as the Gospel, by teaching a higher morality, has compelled a change. I would fain linger on the subject, and describe their mental and spiritual characteristics; but I must press on.

I come now to speak—but very briefly—of the large cities of Western India. Pre-eminent in the Maratha country are, of course, Bombay and Poona.

The main characteristic of the missionary work carried on in these places, as compared with the rural districts, is the amount of education. There are three large missionary institutions in Bombay; and a still larger one in Poona. There are other schools less advanced. In Gujarat the Irish Presbyterians have thought of establishing a Missionary College at the great city of Ahmedabad; and I shall be truly thankful when they can effect their purpose.

From the missionary institutions there issues forth a stream of youths, who are not only well trained in

the branches of general education, but familiar with the high teachings of Christianity. Some of the pupils are not only convinced of the truth of the Gospel, but converted. These do admirable service as preachers, teachers, translators of the Holy Scriptures, authors of tracts and often of tolerably large books, writers in periodicals, and so forth. I have lists now beside me of the publications of some of these educated Christians; their number and size would astonish most men; and, in several cases, the fluency is not more remarkable than the grace with which these writers use their mother tongue. Vernacular Christian literature is advancing in Western India; and whereas, at first, and for many years, the missionaries were almost the sole contributors, of late native Christian authorship has become quite a power in the land. The pity is that readers should still be sorrowfully few; for the productions I speak of are readily, often eagerly, purchased by the natives who can use them.

It is sometimes said that if an educated Christian youth leave the service of the Mission, and accept of secular employment, his influence in furthering the Gospel is nearly lost. Assuredly this is a great mistake. The young native Christians mingle in the various ranks of native society; and the example of pious men is a life-long proclamation of the Gospel. The testimony they render for Christ comes even with greater emphasis, when they are not in the pay of the Mission. The Missions of course require agents—increase of Mission work demands increase of agency; and there is a danger that a far higher rate of remuneration obtainable elsewhere may carry off to secular pursuits some whom we would fain see devoting their talents to the direct extension of the faith; the foreign field and the home field are in this respect alike. The question of the supply of fit agents is certainly a very grave one; but hitherto, at all events, there has been far less difficulty in obtaining the agents in India than in procuring from Britain the means wherewith to support them.

But I am reminded of the affecting truth that in our Mission colleges and schools in Western India, where twenty or forty are impressed or even convinced of the truth of Christianity, only one is actually baptized. Yes: the conductors of Mission colleges know full well the terrible anguish of

> Still travailing in second birth
> Of souls that will not be redeemed;—

and I have no wish either to conceal the sorrow or to undervalue its amount. While then we rejoice over the one baptized, what of the forty who are "almost persuaded?" They are not, in all cases, lost to Christ. Sometimes the seed sown lies dormant for years, and then springs up. Often there is a great movement in the heart and conscience, as death approaches. I venture to say often, for, in the great majority of cases, the heathen relatives no doubt are able to conceal it from the missionaries; and yet they come to know of such things from time to time. One of the most affecting cases I remember, was that of a young man, formerly a pupil in a Mission seminary, and not seemingly more impressed with the truth of the Gospel than many others, who died at a distance from all Christian friends. As death approached, he summoned his heathen relatives around his bed, declared he was in heart a Christian, expressed his deep shame and sorrow that he had not openly avowed his convictions, wondering whether such unfaithfulness could be forgiven. And then, saying he could not die with any measure of hope unless he obeyed Christ's command as far as in him lay, and feebly telling his young heathen wife the proper words, he made her sprinkle the water and repeat over him the formula. Was this baptism? Not such as qualifies for entrance into the Church on earth; but who shall say that poor Kesava Sakharam was not qualified for entering into the Church in Heaven? And during life such men as I have now referred to are often unimpeachable in moral conduct; in fact, the danger is that they make a religion of their morality, and so lull the conscience to repose.

In the great cities of India Christianity has to be at present, if I may use such an expression, its own forerunner. In the old Roman empire Judaism largely prepared the way for the spread of the Gospel by diffusing far higher thoughts than even a Socrates or a Seneca could supply, regarding God and the soul, and moral truth and duty, and heaven and hell. "The vanquished have given laws to the victors," is Seneca's expression, speaking of this very point; *victoribus victi leges dederunt.* But in India what shall prepare the way for the triumphs of the Gospel, by rousing the torpid conscience, and conveying right thoughts regarding God and man's relation to the Divine? Christianity herself must do it. And she is largely doing it. Every conception which the educated classes in India now form on religious subjects is powerfully influenced by Christianity; Christian thought diffuses itself like an atmosphere all around, and men perforce must breathe it.

Meanwhile, many influences come in as auxiliaries. Every change in India, if it be not positively bad, must be good, for it accustoms the mind to the idea of reform and facilitates future changes. But many of the changes are really good in themselves. Just administration, material improvement, increasing intercourse with Europeans, education,—above all, the wonderful readiness to have the females educated, and many other things that might be mentioned, will all co-operate with still higher agencies in preparing the way for the Christianization of India. They are, at all events in the large cities, rapidly revolutionising Indian mind, and slowly remodelling Indian life. A rather startling illustration of the change of sentiment occurred two years ago in Bombay. A number of educated young men, though themselves heathen, were shocked at the lengths to which the Portuguese native Christians, who are Romanists, carried their worship of the cross, and their use of images generally. A public meeting was held, at which the young Hindus and Parsees boldly taxed the Roman Catholics as idolaters, and as practising a form of worship condemned alike by the Bible and right reason. The priests (men educated at Goa, but very superficially) replied with what arguments they could; but certainly not to the silencing of their unlooked-for opponents. I should be glad, however, to feel assured that none of these very men who assailed the image-

worship of Romanism, would have defended it when they heard a Protestant missionary preaching against it as practised by their own countrymen, or even (strange inconsistency) by themselves.

I have not time to enter into any full explanation of the mental state of natives educated at Government colleges. Unhappily it is often decidedly hostile to Christianity, even when friendly, from personal considerations, to the men who preach it. One great counteraction to the evil of this educated infidelity would be the enlargement and multiplication of missionary colleges. If any of our readers have been led to think that Missions have in some cases paid too much attention to education, I must entreat them to dismiss the thought. Unless we have a great increase of Christian education in India, and of a high order, alas for the upper and middle classes! and alas even now for the multitudes issuing from Government colleges, whose belief in all revealed religion is destroyed, and who drift hopelessly on the great ocean of scepticism, without an anchor, without a compass, without a guiding star! But for the missionary seminaries and the influence they exert, the evil would be intensified tenfold. I have already exhibited the deep interest I take in rural Missions. Let them be prosecuted with all possible energy. But prosecute with equal zeal the city Missions; nay, if there be a difference, with more. For the rural districts will continue much as they are, if they are left to themselves. But the cities will not; in them all educated mind would speedily harden into a bitter contempt of Christianity. Now is the call for action—action prompt, energetic, and sustained. Already the number is sorrowfully great, of men trained at much expense in Government seminaries, who, while they welcome the civilisation, sharply reject the religion of Britain; whose faith is the unhappy creed that can be compounded out of the old philosophies of the East, as interpreted by the newest infidelities of the West.

I have hardly yet mentioned by name the Parsees. But we must not overlook them. They form an important element of native society; and in so far as the Western Presidency differs in character from the others, the difference is, in good measure, owing to the presence of this race. They are Zoroastrians; descendants of the old fire-worshippers of Persia, who fled before the sword of the victorious Arabs in the seventh century after Christ. The educated Parsees eagerly profess Monotheism; they only reverence fire, not worship it, they say; they have no images made by men's hands; and more important still, they do not, like the Hindus, ascribe any impure qualities to the object of worship. Their holy book, the Zendavesta, abounds with puerilities, but not with immoralities. Wholly practical in their cast of mind, they never lose themselves, as educated Brahmans are prone to do, in dreams of transcendental speculation. They have adopted many of the European habits of life; are zealous and generous supporters of female education; and altogether are earnest for what seems progress and reform. Approximating as in many points they closely do to European manners and Christian modes of expression, one rather wonders that they do not come over more rapidly to the profession of the Gospel. But the body, though influential, is small; and its parts strongly cohere. The feeling of race is powerful; and in fact, ever since the Persian monarchy was restored in the third century of the Christian era, nationality and religion have in the Parsee mind been inextricably blended. When they come over, they will probably do so in a body. Meantime, we watch the movements of the Parsees with much of interest and hope.

It is difficult to stop; but I constrain myself. Altogether it is a wonderful and a magnificent transformation which is begun in yon far Eastern land—glorious as the rising of the sun; let us hope, as irresistible in its march. Some time ago Garibaldi spoke, with that noble enthusiasm which flames out in all his words, of "the awakening of the nations." He meant the awakening of nations in Europe to the light and joy of civil liberty. We sympathise with the lion-heart of the patriot-soldier; we rejoice fervently in the freedom he has won, with his strong arm and pure mind, for his own loved Italy, and which he anticipates for other lands. But yonder, we think, is the true "awakening of the nations;" yonder, in the ancient East; there, vast populations are shaking off the sleep of innumerable ages, with all the ghastly visions of the night, and crying aloud for the light of heaven: nay, it is truly a resurrection of the dead, and the many-peopled regions of the grave are quivering with new life.

And now, what are we to do in the view of these things? Reform your modes of missionary action, say some. Well, nothing on earth is perfect; no agency is so, either at home or abroad; let us go on improving. But the grand reform which the state of India and the world demands, is extension. Let our missionary activities be doubled, trebled, quadrupled. At present, as the *Times* newspaper lately said, "for any purpose that can claim a shadow of duty or a chance of success, the nation will lavish millions; but as for our faith, we leave it take its chance, or fling it an occasional sovereign as we do a copper to a questionable beggar." To our task, then; our noble, and ennobling task! We have been playing at missions; now for steady work! For Christ, and with Christ! Let us gird up our loins, not for a holiday procession, but for hard work on the battle-field, and still harder in the trenches!

> Thou know'st the arduous strife, the eternal laws
> To which the triumph of all good is given,—
> High sacrifice, and labour without pause
> Even to the death.

J. Murray Mitchell.

NOTES FOR READERS OUT OF THE WAY.

The late Mr. Douglas of Cavers, in a little tract entitled "The May Meetings," ingeniously connected the character of the season of the year with the great religious gatherings that take place in the weeks of May. The natural Spring, he remarked, is connected in the Bible with the moral Spring, and the renovation of all things. When the Winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land, then is the time when the voice of the Beloved comes to stimulate the Church to activity — "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Following out this analogy between the natural and the spiritual, he thought that Christians ought to connect the opening of the season with times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and to hail the first milder breezes with the supplication of "Breathe, O south wind!" "May the spirit of life," he added, "breathe upon us and ours, upon those who are near at hand and those who are far off, while the vernal influences of the Spirit of all grace are descending around us, and the Sun of Righteousness is shining upon us like the clear shining of the sun after rain." The May Meetings bringing under the notice of God's servants the spiritual wants of the whole world, on the one hand, and the varied and struggling efforts of the Christian Church to supply them, on the other, constitute beyond doubt a great call to prayer, as well as a most appropriate occasion for recruiting the energies, and reviving the zeal of all who long for the coming of the Kingdom.

We cannot profess to give anything like an exhaustive view of these meetings, but we may advert to a few leading points brought out in some of the reports and speeches. The season for Church-gatherings is later in Scotland than in England or Ireland; our Scottish notices will, therefore, not appear this month.

In a former number of this Magazine, we noticed the difficulty which the financial question was causing, and the special efforts that had to be made by the great societies to obviate the necessity of curtailing their operations. It appears that for the most part the revenue of the societies has been at least equal to that of former years, but in one source of income there is a very noticeable and considerable decrease. The legacies have fallen off very greatly. The most considerable decrease in this source of revenue is reported by the Bible Society, whose receipts from legacies are less this year by no less a sum than £23,470. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel has suffered from the same source a decrease of £7260. Other societies have sustained corresponding losses. The fact is not wholly discouraging. It would seem to indicate that people are getting more than formerly into the habit of devoting their money to the purposes of Christian philanthropy in their lifetime. There is less of the tendency to save everything for their own use, or to reserve everything in their own custody, till the last moment, and then attempt to make compensation for life-long narrowness, by a large bequest to charity. In so far as this may account for the lessening of legacies, it indicates a wholesome spirit. The duties of Christian stewardship are surely better exercised by men deliberately and prayerfully giving from their income to Christian objects in which they are deeply interested, than by men accumulating money in a lump, and at their death coldly consigning it to be paid by the hands of a man of business into the treasury of a society. Of course there may be many cases in which, after having intelligently and prayerfully dedicated a part of their income to Christian societies in life, men will feel it their further privilege to destine a part or the whole of their realised property to the same objects after their death. But if the revenue from legacies is to fall off, ought there not to be a much larger increase from other sources? Mr. Gladstone adverted to a significant fact in the House of Commons a few weeks ago—that the proportionate produce of the income tax now is just double what it was a few years ago. In other words, the assessable income of Great Britain has doubled in a few years. It is certain that the benevolent outlay of the country has not increased in the same proportion. Does this not point to the absolute necessity of a more systematic culture of the habit of giving? The active and devoted men in our societies ought not to be always kept wasting their energies upon efforts to make ends meet, and the eloquent men in our societies ought not to have always to prepare their speeches to the tune of how cruel it would be to stop this rill and that of the stream of the water of life. Systematic giving would save many of the undesirable appeals that are now resorted to, and would probably provide the means for expanding the operations of our societies, according as Providence should open the door.

Looking first at the reports and speeches of those societies whose sphere of labour is chiefly or partly at home, it is interesting to ask what light they throw upon two very important questions—the state or progress of ritualism or of scepticism among the more educated classes of England, and the relation of the working masses to Christianity and its ordinances. It is remarkable, however, that direct allusions to these vital topics, especially to the former, do not occur very often. But one or two pronounced opinions may be found. At the meeting of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, Lord Shaftesbury gave utterance to his feelings in the strongest terms of excitement and terror. He thought that on every side the people were deluded by those who ought to be their guides. He hurled the most unqualified anathemas against "Ecce Homo" and all such books. "I confess," he said, "I was perfectly aghast the other day when speaking to a clergyman, and asking him his opinion of that most pestilential book ever vomited, I think, from the jaws of hell, I mean 'Ecce Homo:' when I asked him what was his opinion of that book, he deliberately told me—he being a great professor of Evangelical religion—that that book had excited his deepest ad-

miration, and that he did not hesitate to say that it had conferred great benefit upon his own soul. Why, if we are to have this miserable and uncertain teaching, if the guides to whom we look for light and help can approve such works as that, how can we expect that the mass of the people, the mass even of the educated middle classes who are supposed to think for themselves, will not be led to wander out of the right way? Look at the policy on which the neological party proceed. They are praising a sensuous religion. They hope to get rid of doctrines by sentiments. They hope to get rid of creeds by feelings. Take up the writings of the most gifted and fascinating among them, and you will find them conceding almost all that you desire. You will find that they concede to you the incarnation and divinity of our Lord, and almost everything that you could wish in the history of our Lord and the history of our religion. But when you come to the great fundamental work, when you come to the great turning-point of our religion, without which there is nothing in it worth having, when you come to the atonement which was made on the Cross, when you speak of the atoning blood of our blessed Lord, there they stop short, and they refuse it to you altogether."

On the other hand, at the meeting of the Bible Society, the Earl of Harrowby remonstrated mildly against the language of panic and despondency, and presented a more hopeful view of the state and prospects of the religious world. Referring to the report of the society, he said :—"I think the tone is occasionally a little too despondent. I think it expresses too much apprehension—perhaps natural to all of us—too much apprehension and anxiety on account of the present state of the religious mind of the world. I cannot but think that the struggle which is now going on, that the reviving energies of infidelity, are in fact the prelude to a greater extension of true faith. I cannot but feel that anything is preferable to indifference, that anything is preferable to the state in which the world was a century ago, when perhaps, although agreed not to say much against Christianity, very little was done or said in its favour. The struggle of the present time kindles all our interest and all our affection—compels us to review the foundation of the faith—and thus kindles a deeper interest in the extension of that noble structure. I believe at this moment those very infidel publications which are so distressing and agonising, must, whether in Italy, in Germany, or in France, excite an interest in the Scriptures which has been hitherto unknown in those countries. I believe that many are saying, "Who is this Jesus of whom we hear so much? We should like to hear a little more." And that, wherever these abominable publications have found their way, the Scriptures have followed in their course, and, being more satisfactory to the human heart and feeling, have struck a deeper root than the publications which have previously attracted the public attention. I think, further, that even the Roman Catholic population themselves, and even many of the Roman Catholic priesthood, have been led in some degree, by their apprehensions for a common faith, to look with less animosity upon the Scriptures and upon those who propagate them, and I believe that one of the strongest testimonies of this is to be found in the great centre of our neighbouring nation—in Paris itself. When we find a popular Roman Catholic preacher, who has been attracting thousands of cultivated and literary men around him to hear his harangues in favour of the Christian faith and against infidelity—when we find the Archbishop of Paris coming forward to thank the preacher for his zeal and the sentiments which he has expressed—when we find Roman Catholic priests joining with the Jews and Protestants in a common translation of the Scriptures into the French tongue, I think these are symptoms that, however widely separated, Christians have a common object, and are beginning to feel, and are ready to acknowledge, the source of all, the Holy Scriptures, and that they cannot but be led in some degree to greater community of faith."

The growing interest in the Word of God and reverence for its inspired character referred to by Lord Harrowby, has been variously illustrated by speeches from different parts of the world. Mr. Stuart, of Philadelphia, spoke in the most glowing terms of the efforts to circulate the Scriptures that had lately been made in America, and the cordial reception they had met with. The capacity of the American Bible Society to produce Bibles had been taxed to its utmost during the war. By its steam presses it could throw off twelve copies of the Bible every working minute, but at times during the war even this supply had been unequal to the demand. Altogether, they had circulated two million copies of the Word of God in the army and navy. In the State of Massachusetts inquiries had been instituted as to the character of the men who had been in the army, and it was reported that they had come back better men than they went, and that this was greatly due to the influence of the Bibles that had been distributed among them. Another American gentleman adverted to the facilities for circulating the Scriptures which the same society continues to enjoy. In the Freedmen's Schools in Richmond, Petersburg, and elsewhere, the freedmen were gladly welcoming the Word of God, and earnestly studying it. The children were trying to read it, and follow its teachings; and they were everywhere asking that as they are now at liberty to learn to read, the first book they shall have shall be the Book of books. A gentleman from China told of a missionary tour he had taken there some years ago along with a missionary, when the people ran after their boat along the banks of a river, clamouring for gifts of the Holy Scriptures; and one evening when they came to anchor, a native came and held a lengthened conversation with the missionary, and asked for further instruction in the way of life, his attention having been excited by a stray copy of a Chinese New Testament which he had received about a year before, at a distance of one hundred miles. Thus, whatever in other respects may be the signs of the times, there seems to be ample cause for believing that God is answering the prayer—"that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified."

If we inquire more particularly what views are

expressed upon the religious state of the masses at home, and their relation to Christian ordinances, we find on the whole a somewhat hopeful tone prevailing. The London City Mission reports an average amount of results; among which, statistically stated, are—the reclamation of 1102 drunkards, the closing of 173 shops on the Lord's-day, and the rescue of 368 fallen women. This society has been vigorously pushing forward its operations among particular sections of the London population, and often with considerable success. Among others, it has established missions to public houses, and on some future occasion we may have a word to say of its operations in this rather repulsive, but, as the result shows, by no means hopeless field. The Ragged School and Reformatory movement advances in its benevolent career; and Lord Shaftesbury has had, among other successful cases, a most interesting one to report, the case of a neglected boy, which first became known to the public in Mr. Greenwood's account of his visit to the Casual Ward of the Lambeth Workhouse. "In his opinion the gentleman who wrote that picturesque and interesting account of the casual ward in which he had the courage to spend a night, had rendered very great service to his fellow-creatures. They would remember that in that account Mr. Greenwood—for he believed that was the gentleman's name—described what appeared to be one of the most incorrigible boys that could possibly be imagined. The boy, who was called 'Punch,' was about sixteen years of age, and he made himself remarkable as doing everything and saying everything to give annoyance to everybody. That he ought to be hanged or made away with in some other effectual way must have been the opinion of all who read of him. But where did they think 'Punch' was now? In the Refuge at Great Queen-street, Lincoln's-inn-fields. At the supper which was given some time ago to homeless boys 'Punch' attended. The noble earl confessed that at that time he was not acquainted with 'Punch,' but he believed 'Punch' knew him. In the course of conversation he (the chairman), talking with some gentlemen about the 'Amateur Casual's' revelations, mentioned the name of the boy 'Punch,' when a voice close at hand cried out, 'I's here.' The little fellow was told to call the next day, which he did. From his expressed anxiety to get an opportunity of improving his position, he was got into the house in Great Queen-street, and he was now one of the best boys in it—as happy as possible, and in a way to become a good subject of the Queen, and a citizen of the kingdom to come."

The most careful attempt we have met with to estimate the Christian and social standing of working people is in an address at the meeting of the Church of England Scripture-readers' Association, by the Rev. Edward Garbett of Surbiton. On one point Mr. Garbett gave a very decided opinion,—that the unskilled labourers of London, though earning far less money, were in a better state morally and religiously than the skilled artizans. There was a strong class feeling among artizans, a strong love of respectability, but wanting the guidance of Scripture truth and the Spirit of God, the feeling was superficial and unreal. The semblance of respectability made the vices and discomfort and frivolity that often characterised the life of artizans the more deplorable. The labourers were more accessible to Scripture-readers and other Christian agents, and had more frankness, more disposition to learn, and more openness of heart. The navvy, for example, was quite a different man from what he was ten years ago. Then he was rude and discourteous, now he showed kindness, genial courtesy, respect for himself and for others, and a hearty desire to hear the Word of God. The mind of the artizan class, on the contrary, reflected the sceptical literature with which they were conversant. They were notoriously inaccessible to Christian labourers, and the consequence was, to use a Hibernicism, that the worst parts of London were not the worst. There were now greater evils in the west parts of London than in the east. But even the mechanic was beginning to improve. He was beginning to care less for the pleasures of the tap, and to appreciate domestic comfort more highly. His prejudice against the upper class was abating, and the conviction was gaining ground that many of them were sincerely desirous of his good. His mind was in a peculiarly receptive mood; and on such an important topic as the desecration of the Sabbath Day, as Mr. Hughes had cordially testified, the great mass of the working classes were sound. On the whole, he believed that there had been a slow and silent progress, which was more hopeful than any sudden and rapid change could be. The change was coming as surely and as silently as an English Spring, and before the soft May showers of the Divine blessing the verdure would burst forth in all its beauty. The Gospel of the Grace of God was their only effectual weapon, and their only source of strength. They hoped all things, because all things were possible with God.

Turning to survey the Continent of Europe, as reflected in the reports of the societies, there is little of a novel kind to attract our attention. Missions to the Jews are still mainly sustained by faith, and though here and there a few sounds as of the joy of harvest are heard, the labourer for the most part is still sowing in tears. The interest of Evangelistic work on the Continent centres mainly in Italy; and nothing can be more interesting than the glimpses we have of the progress of the truth in that peninsula. Prebendary Burgess in addressing the Tract Society, drew a striking contrast between the past and the present times in Italy. Formerly it was hardly possible to get a tract or a Bible across the Alps; now the whole of Italy, with the exception of two small portions, was open to both. Selecting Naples for special illustration, he said:—

"If you could have visited Naples in those days you would have seen, as regards the character of the scenery, a paradise; but, as a clever writer has said, it was a paradise inhabited by devils. The superstitions, the immoralities, the horrors of Naples under the old *régime* it would be impossible to describe, and the priests of St. Januarius 'loved to have it so.' But now, what do you see in that city? I have visited the Protestant schools in that city; I have examined

there the children of lazzaroni, excavated, as I may say, from the lowest strata of society. These children, when they first appeared at school, were so degraded as to be scarcely human in appearance; but in the course of a few weeks their aspect was entirely changed, and intelligence beamed from their bright Italian eyes. I heard them read well in a rather difficult book, and when I asked how long they had been reading it, I found that twenty-eight girls had mastered all of it within six months. What do you think happened last Christmas in Naples? It was a happy thought of some Christian ladies to collect all the children in the Protestant schools, and give them a treat in the shape of a Christmas-tree. Imagine, my friends, a Christmas-tree in Naples! The difficulty was to get a room large enough to hold them all, none of the school-rooms being sufficiently spacious for a children's festival. One of the Evangelists, a man of humble station, went to the Municipality and told them what we wanted. As soon as they heard the word children, the Municipality said, "Oh, we will give you a room, if it is connected with children and education;" and the result was that they placed at the disposal of the school-managers a magnificent room in which the Bourbon princes used to distribute prizes. Five hundred Protestant children went in procession through the streets of Naples, with banners displayed, to the place where the festival was to be held. In the room were seen in large characters several beautiful texts of Scripture, and among them was this one in Italian, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Hymns were sung on the occasion; the festival was conducted amid great joy; and the little presents that hung on the Christmas-tree were eagerly sought. Such was the scene witnessed in Naples no longer ago than last Christmas. 'Where are we living? In what world are we? or in what age of the world?'"

In like manner at the meeting of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, the Rev. W. Arthur gave a glowing account of his recent visit to Italy. Though his visits had been almost quite confined to stations connected with the Wesleyan Society, and though other older and more extensive operations were carried on by other bodies, what he witnessed was extremely interesting. In the course of his tour he fell in with meetings and classes, more or less numerous, placards announcing Protestant publications, records of labours carried on with great success among soldiers and others, instances of conversion caused by reading the Scriptures, as in the case of a man, now a most active Evangelist, to whom an English lady at a village near Como had given a Bible, the reading of which had been the means of opening his eyes. Sometimes, too, he heard sermons by native preachers, which struck him as remarkably clear and powerful expositions of the way of salvation by the sacrifice of Christ. Mr. Arthur contented himself with a simple statement of facts, feeling that nothing further needed to be added to induce his friends to continue their efforts on behalf of Italy.

When we pass from Europe to Asia, and survey the great fields of heathenism, a very important fact is borne in on our attention by the concurrent testimony of almost all missionaries. That fact is the decay of Hinduism. "The great moral iceberg," as Mr. Birks remarked, "which has been moored for thousands of years under a tropical sun, but which the natural sun could not melt away; seems now to be disappearing under the more powerful influence of the Sun of Righteousness, and the mass of Hinduism to be giving place to the moral and spiritual influence of the gospel of Christ." Almost at random, from the speeches of missionaries, we cull a few illustrations of this decadence of Hinduism. Mr. Kilner, Wesleyan missionary from Ceylon, says, "The Hindu begins to see that there are not three hundred and thirty millions of gods, but that there is one true and living God. Caste is relaxing its grip. The other day, at Madras, I had a request to attend a Hindu meeting and deliver a speech, the request coming from some thirty young men and others who had formed themselves into a confederation for the destruction of caste. I have conversed with three or four high priests, as they call themselves, who have told me that they must keep up the ceremonial of Hinduism with all its hurtfulness, simply to maintain their hold on the pockets of the people. At one of our stations in Southern India, I lately visited a great temple, with no fewer than seven inclosures, in each of which it is said are a thousand monkeys, and in the centre, a shrine of the great god Brahma. My attention was drawn to the many loose stones I saw in the building, and to a leak in the roof, but in calling the notice of a Brahmin to these things, he simply said—'Who cares?'" At the meeting of the Church Missionary Society, emphatic testimony to the same effect was borne by a well-known Christian officer, Sir Herbert Edwardes. Referring to the fact that it is the thoughtful few who influence the opinions of the mass, he asks:—"Now, what are the ideas of the educated natives of the day? Let us take the Hindus, for they are nine-tenths of the population of India; are the most thoughtful race, and are doubtless the race through whom India will be regenerated. It may surprise many of you—but no one who knows the India of to-day will deny what I now state—that a school of thoughtful and proselytising reformers has sprung up, who are actively engaged in what they call the reformation of Hinduism. The points on which they mainly insist are,—renunciation of idolatry and polytheism, and adoption of a pure Deism; abolition of caste; abolition of polygamy; abolition of infant marriages; female education, and general introduction of women into society; purity of morals. A still more advanced school have a dawning consciousness that even Deism is but a halting place, and real reformers must push on to a higher faith. The centre of all this movement has been the association called the Brahma-Somâj, in Calcutta; and what marks the vitality of their impulse, is their missionary zeal. The Brahma-Somâj are most active proselytisers, and have sent missionaries of their own to the other two capitals of India, to preach the reformation they have in hand."

Colonel Edwardes proceeded to give an account of a dinner-party at Lord Shaftesbury's, consisting of all the native gentlemen that were in London, studying for the bar or the civil service. They all joined in the

English meal without one thought of caste; and on being questioned as to their opinions of social life in England, they said that they had entirely changed, and they particularly dwelt on the necessity of a complete reform of domestic life in India. The Parsees were carrying on similar movements to the Hindus; the Mohammedans were the most difficult to move, though even among them there were some instances of movement. There was even a more advanced society of Hindus than the Brahma-Somâj of Calcutta, or the Seda-Somâj of Madras; a school that feel that Deism is no resting-place for the soul. They are eager to reform caste, yet they complain that their convictions are too feeble—the martyr-spirit cannot be evoked among them. In a remarkable article in a native newspaper there occurred a most touching appeal to England from this class, who felt, that while English education had robbed them of Hinduism, it had given them nothing instead. "Very strangely," say these people, "we daily see Hindus of every caste becoming Christians, and 'devoted missionaries of the Cross.' (Some people say we never see this—the natives tell a different tale.) They make an infinitely greater personal sacrifice than we as Hindu reformers are called upon to make. They give up Hinduism and their lives to protesting against it without any compromise; and they do it in spite of every family tie, and the active hatred sure to be excited against themselves for their apostacy. But they cannot help themselves. Truth, or what they believe to be the truth, is dearer to them than all the tender sanctities of parent, husband, wife, and child—than all the happiness of life, than very life itself. Strange that there should be such a difference between men of the same race, tongue, and caste! We begin to recognise this difference, and to inquire anxiously for its cause. It is evident that these men, who are so brave and single-minded for what they believe to be the truth, receive a new faith for the faith which education has destroyed within them. On the other hand, education provided by the State simply destroys Hinduism; it gives nothing in its place. It is founded on the benevolent principle of non-interference with religion, but in practice it is the negation of God in life. It is forgotten that, while interference in Christian countries would be a tyranny, in an idolatrous country education itself is interference with the established religion. Christians, holding a faith pure and rational in its essentials, may receive the highest education, and be only the more confirmed in their faith, and more tolerant of each other's minor differences. But education must destroy idolatry, and the State education of India, benevolent in its idea, practically teaches atheism. It leaves its victims faithless. Our young men are, many of them, forced by it into the unhappy position of the sceptics and infidels of Europe. Well may the reorganisation of society seem impossible under such circumstances. As soon as this is generally perceived and felt, the cry will go up to England, 'Father, Father, give us faith!' Knowledge alone does not suffice for men, nor material prosperity, nor good government; the things of this life are fleeting, the life to come is eternal; and men and nations can only be happy in recognising and acting righteously on this Divine fact. Without faith life is without an aim, death without hope, and there can be neither individual happiness nor national greatness. If England will not hear our cry, and, indeed, anticipate it, then will the shriek go up to our Father in heaven,—'Father, Father, gives us faith.'"

The immense interest excited by the system of examinations for honours at the University of Calcutta, unprecedented in any European university since the Middle Ages, is a sign of the times. The rage for education in the upper classes of India is unprecedented; and has much to do with the breaking down of belief in Hinduism.

At the meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society, Mr. Robinson, a missionary from Dacca in India, bore similar testimony to the progress of the Hindu reform movement. He told of a young man in Dacca who came in contact with Christian truth about a year ago, and, from a Bible which he obtained, became convinced of the truth of Christianity. He had never formally renounced Brahminism, nor been baptized; but he called himself a Christian; and it was his custom, when he went to his native village, to call the young men together, and teach them the lessons of Christianity. He had applied for a number of Bibles to teach this class, of whom he said that there were two or three who, he was sure, had learned to love Jesus Christ, and trust to Him as their Saviour. Mr. Robinson felt assured that there were many of the Brahmins who were not far from the kingdom of heaven, though they had yet made no formal avowal of Christianity. Nothing but lack of space prevents us from quoting similar testimonies from missionaries connected with other societies. For the same reason we cannot go into the subject of missions in other countries. We should particularly have liked to copy some of Mr. Ellis's remarks on Madagascar, at the meeting of the London Missionary Society.

We have dwelt at such length on the Meetings of the Evangelical Societies at London that we can hardly advert to the interesting intelligence which lies before us connected with various countries.

From Ireland, we have a letter in the *Times* from Archbishop Trench, containing an account of a visit to the wild region of Connemara, and a most hearty testimony to the reality of the work of conversion that has been going on there. The new congregations, formed largely of converts from Popery, and the schools, giving most efficient instruction, especially in the Holy Scriptures, are represented by Dr. Trench as most flourishing; and the impression left on his mind by his visit has been of the most gratifying nature. Dr. Trench adverts only to the congregations of the Established Church; but much has been done by the Presbyterians also.

At Paris, there has been held a Conference of Protestant Pastors, which has had a lively discussion. This meeting has been wont to be held for upwards of thirty years, and its object was to unite the pastors and elders of the different Protestant communities. For several years no effort was made to exclude the rationalists, but the boldness with which these have lately been asserting their dogmas, caused a proposal to be submitted that from and after the year 1867,

these words should be added to the second article of the Constitution of the Conference :—"The Pastoral Conferences acknowledge, as the basis of their deliberations, the supreme authority of Scripture in matters of faith, and the Apostles' Creed, as the summing up of the miraculous facts therein contained." In the course of the discussion, which lasted four days, this motion was withdrawn, and a proposal to dissolve the Conference, and reconstitute it on a definite religious basis, supported by MM. Bersier and E. de Pressensé, obtained a very large majority : 162 votes being given in its favour.

It appears that the course of the Bible Translation Society, to which reference was made in our last number, is not very smooth. The *Monde* newspaper continues to abuse it, and some of the ultramontane prelates have fulminated against it the most terrible anathemas. They are indignant at it, as an attack on the principles and privileges of the Church, and an act of gratuitous folly. The consequence is, that most of the clergy have withdrawn from it. It is remarkable how easily the Romish prelates have been excited by a proposal which might have invested the Sacred Scriptures with a considerable measure of popular interest; and it is instructive to observe how completely the Romish priesthood in France are bereft of all individual liberty of action, and forced, at the sound of the episcopal voice, to crawl back into their shell.

Among other items of recent intelligence from Paris, we are told that the Archbishop of Paris lately called on M. de Pressensé, the Independent minister, to thank him for his book, "Jesus Christ, his Life and Work ;" that the Carmelite preacher, Hyacinthe, also called on M. de Pressensé, and on the family of the late Adolphe Monod, to thank them for books and to pray the Lord's Prayer with them ; and that at the meeting in the Oratoire of the Protestant Bible Society, M. Guizot made a speech on the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures that filled the rationalist part of his audience with astonishment.

The Pope has taken a new mode of upholding the influence of the Roman Church, by erecting, through a pontifical brief, into a permanent Jesuit College, all the staff of writers connected with the *Civiltá Cattolica*, —a paper conducted by Jesuits for the advancement of Papal interests. The members chosen by the Superior to conduct the *Civiltá Cattolica*, or any similar work, are to devote all their time and labour to composing and publishing writings for the defence of the [Roman] Catholic religion and the Holy See. Some idea of the principles and pretensions of this paper may be got from the following extracts :—

"The Sovereign Pontiff," says the *Civiltá*, "is unshakeable in the vindication of his rights. The whole world admires his courage, and the bishops conjure him to remain firm. The restitution of the provinces is a necessary condition of the pontifical sovereignty. If Rome remains, as we doubt not it will, in the possession of the Sovereign Pontiff, it must return to its former position, and re-enter into possession of all that liberalism has taken from it. But how can that ever be reconciled with Italian liberalism ?

"The Papacy and liberalism are two masters as contrary as Christ and Satan. It is impossible to serve one without separating from the other. We may be told that such an opinion is only true where liberalism is understood in its extreme and antichristian sense ; but that the effort must be made to Christianise liberalism, and so render it acceptable to the Pope. Christianise liberalism ! The idea is purely poetic. To Christianise it, you must bring it to confess the authority of the Encyclic : that is, to condemn the principle that the civil power has any right to impose bounds on the Church's liberty of action ; to condemn civil marriages, the doctrine of *faits accomplis*, the principle of non-intervention, of liberty of worship, liberty of thought, liberty of the press, separation of Church and State. You must bring it also to confess that the people have no right to revolt against their legitimate princes ; that the Church has a right to a corrective power, even as regards corporal punishments ; that she has a right to preside over the instruction and education of youth ; that the *placet* of the State, the *appel comme d'abus*, the interference in seminaries and pious establishments, are only so many usurpations of the secular power, &c. And after all this has been confessed, what remains of liberalism ?"

From the United States, we have great accounts of the celebration of the Centenary of Methodism. It appears that the two branches of the Methodist Church in the States, North and South, contain more than 1,600,000 members, and more than 22,000 travelling and local preachers. This probably represents an aggregate of several millions of persons connected with the Methodist body. Its Sunday Schools, its publications, and its missions, are all on a scale of very great magnitude. Its missionary contributions of last year exceed half a million dollars; but for the centenary year, it is proposed to raise two million dollars, and it is confidently expected that this sum will be largely exceeded. A great Centenary Hall is to be erected, and an Institution endowed for the training of missionaries and preachers. Chief Justice Chase took part in the meeting at which these projects were announced, and the enthusiasm of the assembly, though not noisy, is said to have been intense.

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ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BY THE VICAR.

XXVI.

I WAS within a mile of the village, returning from my visit to the Misses Crowther, when my horse, which was walking slowly along the soft side of the road, lifted his head, and pricked up his ears at the sound, which he heard first, of approaching hoofs. The riders soon came in sight—Miss Oldcastle, Judy, and Captain Everard. Miss Oldcastle I had never seen on horseback before. Judy was on a little white pony she used to gallop about the fields near the Hall. The Captain was laughing and chatting gaily as they drew near, now to the one, now to the other. Being on my own side of the road I held straight on, not wishing to stop or to reveal the signs of a distress which had almost overwhelmed me. I felt as cold as death, or rather as if my whole being had been deprived of vitality by a sudden exhaustion around me of the ethereal element of life. I believe I did not alter my bearing, but remained with my head bent, for I had been thinking hard just before, till we were on the point of meeting, when I lifted my hat to Miss Oldcastle without drawing bridle, and went on. The Captain returned my salutation, and likewise rode on. I could just see, as they passed me, that Miss Oldcastle's pale face was flushed even to scarlet, but she only bowed and kept alongside of her companion. I thought I had escaped conversation, and had gone about twenty yards farther, when I heard the clatter of Judy's pony behind me, and up she came at full gallop.

"Why didn't you stop to speak to us, Mr. Walton?" she said. "I pulled up, but you never looked at me. We shall be cross all the rest of the day, because you cut us so. What have we done?"

"Nothing, Judy, that I know of," I answered, trying to speak cheerfully. "But I do not know your companion, and I was not in the humour for an introduction."

She looked hard at me with her keen gray eyes; and I felt as if the child was seeing through me.

"I don't know what to make of it, Mr. Walton. You're very different somehow from what you used to be. There's something wrong somewhere. But I suppose you would all tell me it's none of my business. So I won't ask questions. Only I wish I could do anything for you."

I felt the child's kindness, but could only say—

"Thank you, Judy. I am sure I should ask you if there were anything you could do for me. But you'll be left behind."

"No fear of that. My Dobbin can go much faster than their big horses. But I see you don't want me, so good-bye."

She turned her pony's head, as she spoke; jumped the ditch at the side of the road, and flew after them along the grass like a swallow. I likewise roused my horse and went off at a hard trot, with the vain impulse so to shake off the tormenting thoughts that crowded on me like gadflies. But this day was to be one of more trial still.

As I turned a corner, almost into the street of the village, Tom Weir was at my side. He had evidently been watching for me. His face was so pale, that I saw in a moment something had happened.

"What is the matter, Tom?" I said, in some alarm.

He did not reply for a moment, but kept unconsciously stroking my horse's neck, and staring at me "with wide blue eyes."

"Come, Tom," I repeated, "tell me what is the matter."

I could see his bare throat knot and relax, like the motion of a serpent, before he could utter the words,

"Kate has killed her little boy, sir."

He followed them with a stifled cry—almost a scream, and hid his face in his hands.

"God forbid!" I exclaimed, and struck my heels in my horse's sides, nearly overturning poor Tom in my haste.

"She's mad, sir; she's mad," he cried, as I rode off.

"Come after me," I said, "and take the mare home. I shan't be able to leave your sister."

Had I had a share, by my harsh words, in driving the woman beyond the bounds of human reason and endurance? The thought was dreadful. But I must not let my mind rest on it now, lest I should be unfitted for what might have to be done. Before I reached the door, I saw a little crowd of the villagers, mostly women and children, gathered about it. I got off my horse, and gave him to a woman to hold till Tom should come up. With a little difficulty, I prevailed on the rest to go home at once, and not add to the confusions and terrors of the unhappy affair by the excitement of their presence. As soon as they had yielded to my arguments, I entered the shop, which to my annoyance I found full of the neighbours. These likewise I got rid of as soon as possible, and locking the door behind them, went up to the room above.

To my surprise, I found no one there. On the hearth and in the fender lay two little pools of blood. All in the house was utterly still. It was very dreadful. I went to the only other door. It was not bolted, as I had expected to find it. I opened it, peeped in, and entered. On the bed lay the mother, white as death, but with her black eyes wide open, staring at the ceiling; and on her arm lay little Gerard, as white, except where the blood had flowed from the bandage that could not confine it, down his sweet deathlike face. His eyes were fast closed, and he had no sign of life about him. I shut the door behind me, and approached the bed. When Catherine caught sight of me, she showed no surprise or emotion of any kind. Her lips, with automaton-like movement, uttered the words—

"I have done it at last. I am ready. Take me away. I shall be hanged. I don't care. I confess it. Only don't let the people stare at me."

Her lips went on moving, but I could hear no more till suddenly she broke out—

"Oh! my baby! my baby!" and gave a cry of such agony as I hope never to hear again while I live.

At this moment I heard a loud knocking at the shop door, which was the only entrance to the house, and remembering that I had locked it, I went down to see who was there. I found Thomas Weir, the father, accompanied by Dr. Duncan, whom, as it happened, he had had some difficulty in finding. Thomas had sped to his daughter the moment he heard the rumour of what had happened, and his fierceness in clearing the shop had at least prevented the neighbours, even in his absence, from intruding further.

We went up together to Catherine's room. Thomas said nothing to me about what had happened, and I found it difficult even to conjecture from his countenance what thoughts were passing through his mind.

Catherine looked from one to another of us, as if she did not know the one from the other. She made no motion to rise from her bed, nor did she utter a word, although her lips would now and then move as if moulding a sentence. When Dr. Duncan, after looking at the child, proceeded to take him from her, she gave him one imploring look, and yielded with a moan; then began to stare hopelessly at the ceiling again. The doctor carried the child into the next room, and the grandfather followed.

"You see what you have driven me to!" cried Catherine, the moment I was left alone with her. "I hope you are satisfied."

The words went to my very soul. But when I looked at her, her eyes were wandering about over the ceiling, and I had and still have difficulty in believing that she spoke the words, and that they were not an illusion of my sense, occasioned by the commotion of my own feelings. I thought it better, however, to leave her, and join the others in the sitting-room. The first thing I saw there was Thomas on his knees, with a basin of water, washing away the blood of his grandson from his daughter's floor. The very sight of the child had hitherto been nauseous to him, and his daughter had been beyond the reach of his forgiveness. Here was the end of it—the blood of the one shed by the hand of the other, and the father of both, who had disdained both, on his knees, wiping it up. Dr. Duncan was giving the child brandy; for he had found that he had been sick, and that the loss of blood was the chief cause of his condition. The blood flowed from a wound on the head, extending backwards from the temple, which had evidently been occasioned by a fall upon the fender, where the blood lay both inside and out; and the doctor took the sickness as a sign that the brain had not been seriously injured by the blow. In a few minutes he said—

"I think he'll come round."

"Will it be safe to tell his mother?" I asked.

"Yes: I think you may."

I hastened to her room.

"Your little darling is not dead, Catherine. He is coming to."

She *threw* herself off the bed at my feet, caught them round with her arms, and cried,—

"I will forgive him. I will do anything you like. I forgive George Everard. I will go and ask my father to forgive me."

I lifted her in my arms—how light she was!—and laid her again on the bed, where she burst into tears, and lay sobbing and weeping. I went to the other room. Little Gerard opened his eyes, and closed them again as I entered. The doctor had laid him in his own crib. He said his pulse was improving. I beckoned to Thomas. He followed me.

"She wants to ask you to forgive her," I said. "Do not, in God's name, wait till she asks you, but go and tell her that you forgive her."

"I dare not say I forgive her," he answered. "I have more need to ask her to forgive me."

I took him by the hand, and led him into her room. She feebly lifted her arms towards him. Not a word was said on either side. I left them in each other's embrace. The hard rocks had been struck with the rod, and the waters of life had flowed forth from each, and had met between.

I have more than once known this in the course of my experience—the ice and snow of a long estrangement suddenly give way, and the boiling geyser-floods of old affection rush from the hot deeps of the heart. I think myself that the very lastingness and strength of animosity have their origin sometimes in the reality of affection: the love lasts all the while, freshly indignant at every new load heaped upon it; till, at last, a word, a look, a sorrow, a gladness, sets it free; and, forgetting all its claims, it rushes irresistible towards its ends. Thus was it with Thomas and Catherine Weir.

When I rejoined Dr. Duncan, I found little Gerard asleep, and breathing quietly.

"What do you know of this sad business, Mr. Walton?" said the doctor.

"I should like to ask the same question of you," I returned. "Young Tom told me that his sister had murdered the child. That is all I know."

"His father told me the same; and that is all I know. Do you believe it?"

"At least we have no evidence about it. It is tolerably certain neither of those two could have been present. They must have received it by report. We must wait till she is able to explain the thing herself."

"Meantime," said Dr. Duncan, "all I believe is, that she struck the child, and that he fell upon the fender."

I may as well inform my reader that, as far as Catherine could give an account of the transaction, this conjecture was corroborated. But the smallest reminder of it evidently filled her with such a horror of self-loathing, that I took care to avoid the subject entirely, after the attempt at explanation which she made at my request. She could not remember with any clearness what had happened. All she remembered was that she had been more miserable than ever in her life before; that the child had come to her, as

he seldom did, with some childish request or other; that she felt herself seized with intense hatred of him; and the next thing she knew was that his blood was running in a long red finger towards her. Then it seemed as if that blood had been drawn from her own over-charged heart and brain; she knew what she had done, though she did not know how she had done it; and the tide of her ebbed affection flowed like the returning waters of the Solway. But beyond her restored love, she remembered nothing more that happened till she lay weeping with the hope that the child would yet live. Probably more particulars returned afterwards, but I took care to ask no more questions. In the increase of illness that followed, I more than once saw her shudder while she slept, and thought she was dreaming what her waking memory had forgotten; and once she started awake, crying, "I have murdered him again."

To return to that first evening:—When Thomas came from his daughter's room, he looked like a man from whom the bitterness of evil had passed away. For the time, at least, it seemed as if self had been utterly slain in him. His face had that child-like expression in its paleness, and the tearfulness without tears haunting his eyes, which reminds one of the feeling of an evening in summer between which and the sultry day preceding it has fallen the gauzy veil of a cooling shower, with a rainbow in the east.

"She is asleep," he said.

"How is it your daughter Mary is not here?" I asked.

"She was taken with a fit the moment she heard the bad news, sir. I left her with nobody but father. I think I must go and look after her now. It's not the first she's had neither, though I never told anyone before. You won't mention it, sir. It makes people look shy at you, you know, sir."

"Indeed I won't mention it.—Then she mustn't sit up, and two nurses will be wanted here. You and I must take it to-night, Thomas. You'll attend to your daughter, if she wants anything, and I know this little darling won't be frightened if he comes to himself, and sees me beside him."

"God bless you, sir," said Thomas.

And from that hour to this there has never been a coolness between us.

"A very good arrangement," said Dr. Duncan; "only I feel as if I ought to have a share in it."

"No, no," I said. "We do not know who may want you. Besides, we are both younger than you."

"I will come over early in the morning, then, and see how you are going on."

As soon as Thomas returned with good news of Mary's recovery, I left him, and went home to tell my sister, and arrange for the night. We carried back with us what things we could think of to make the two patients as comfortable as possible; for, as regarded Catherine, now that she would let her fellows help her, I was even anxious that she should feel something of that love about her which she had so long driven from her door. I felt towards her somewhat as towards a new-born child, for whom this life of mingled weft must be made as soft as its material will admit of; or rather, as if she had been my own sister, as indeed she was, returned from wandering in weary and miry ways, to taste once more the tenderness of home. I wanted her to read the love of God in the love that even I could show her. And, besides, I must confess that, although the result had been, in God's great grace, so good, my heart still smote me for the severity with which I had spoken the truth to her; and it was a relief to myself to endeavour to make some amends for having so spoken to her. But I had no intention of going near her that night, for I thought the less she saw of me the better, till she should be a little stronger, and have had time, with the help of her renewed feelings, to get over the painful associations so long accompanying the thought of me. So I took my place beside Gerard, and watched through the night. The little fellow repeatedly cried out in that terror which is so often the consequence of the loss of blood; but when I laid my hand on him, he smiled without waking, and lay quite still again for a while. Once or twice he woke up, and looked so bewildered that I feared delirium; but a little jelly composed him, and he fell fast asleep again. He did not seem even to have headache from the blow.

But when I was left alone with the child, seated in a chair by the fire, my only light, how my thoughts rushed upon the facts bearing on my own history which this day had brought before me! Horror it was to think of Miss Oldcastle even as only riding with the seducer of Catherine Weir. There was torture in the thought of his touching her hand; and to think that before the summer came once more, he might be her husband! I will not dwell on the sufferings of that night more than is needful; for even now, in my old age, I cannot recall without renewing them. But I must indicate one train of thought which kept passing through my mind with constant recurrence:—Was it fair to let her marry such a man in ignorance? Would she marry him if she knew what I knew of him? Could I speak against my rival?—blacken him even with the truth—the only defilement that can really cling? Could I for my own dignity do so? And was she therefore to be sacrificed in ignorance? Might not some one else do it instead of me? But if I set it agoing, was it not precisely the same thing as if I did it myself, only more cowardly? There was but one way of doing it, and that was—with the full and solemn consciousness that it was and must be a barrier between us for ever. If I could give her up fully and altogether, then I might tell her the truth which was to preserve her from marrying such a man as my rival. And I must do so, sooner than that she, my very dream of purity and gentle truth, should wed defilement. But how bitter to cast away my *chance!* as I said, in the gathering despair of that black night. And although every time I said it—for the same words would come over and over as in a delirious dream—I repeated yet again to myself that wonderful line of Spenser,—

> It chanced—Eternal God that chance did guide,

yet the words never grew into spirit in me; they remained "words, words, words," and meant nothing to my feeling—hardly even to my judgment meant anything at all. Then came another bitter thought,

the bitterness of which was wicked: it flashed upon me that my own earnestness with Catherine Weir, in urging her to the duty of forgiveness, would bear a main part in wrapping up in secresy that evil thing which ought not to be hid. For had she not vowed—with the same facts before her which now threatened to crush my heart into a lump of clay—to denounce the man at the very altar? Had not the revenge which I had ignorantly combated been my best ally? And for one brief, black, wicked moment I repented that I had acted as I had acted. The next I was on my knees by the side of the sleeping child, and had repented back again in shame and sorrow. Then came the consolation that if I suffered hereby, I suffered from doing my duty. And that was well.

Scarcely had I seated myself again by the fire when the door of the room opened softly, and Thomas appeared.

"Kate is very strange, sir," he said, "and wants to see you."

I rose at once.

"Perhaps, then, you had better stay with Gerard."

"I will, sir; for I think she wants to speak to you alone."

I entered her chamber. A candle stood on a chest of drawers, and its light fell on her face, once more flushed in those two spots with the glow of the unseen fire of disease. Her eyes, too, glittered again, but the fierceness was gone, and only the suffering remained. I drew a chair beside her, and took her hand. She yielded it willingly, even returned the pressure of kindness which I offered to the thin trembling fingers.

"You are too good, sir," she said. "I want to tell you all. He promised to marry me. I believed him. But I did very wrong. And I have been a bad mother, for I could not keep from seeing his face in Gerard's. Gerard was the name he told me to call him when I had to write to him, and so I named the little darling, Gerard. How is he, sir?"

"Doing nicely," I replied. "I do not think you need be at all uneasy about him now."

"Thank God. I forgive his father now with all my heart. I feel it easier since I saw how wicked I could be myself. And I feel it easier, too, that I have not long to live. I forgive him with all my heart; and I will take no revenge. I will not tell one who he is. I have never told any one yet. But I will tell you. His name is George Everard—Captain Everard. I came to know him when I was apprenticed at Addicehead. I would not tell you, sir, if I did not know that you will not tell any one. I know you so well that I will not ask you not. I saw him yesterday, and it drove me wild. But it is all over now. My heart feels so cool now. Do you think God will forgive me?"

Without one word of my own, I took out my pocket Testament and read these words:—

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."

Then I read to her, from the seventh chapter of St. Luke's gospel, the story of the woman who was a sinner and came to Jesus in Simon's house, that she might see how the Lord himself thought and felt about such. When I had finished, I found that she was gently weeping, and so I left her, and resumed my place beside the boy. I told Thomas that he had better not go near her just yet. So we sat in silence together for a while, during which I felt so weary and benumbed, that I neither cared to resume my former train of thought, nor to enter upon the new one suggested by the confession of Catherine. I believe I must have fallen asleep in my chair, for I suddenly returned to consciousness at a cry from Gerard. I started up, and there was the child fast asleep, but standing on his feet in his crib, pushing with his hands from before him, as if resisting some one, and crying—

"Don't. Don't. Go away, man. Mammy! Mr. Walton!"

I took him in my arms, and kissed him, and laid him down again; and he lay as still as if he had never moved. At the same moment, Thomas came again into the room.

"I am sorry to be so troublesome, sir," he said; "but my poor daughter says there is one thing more she wanted to say to you."

I returned at once. As soon as I entered the room, she said eagerly:—

"I forgive him—I forgive him with all my heart; but don't let him take Gerard."

I assured her I would do my best to prevent any such attempt on his part, and making her promise to try to go to sleep, left her once more. Nor were either of the patients disturbed again during the night. Both slept, as it appeared, refreshingly.

In the morning, that is, before eight o'clock, the old doctor made his welcome appearance, and pronounced both quite as well as he had expected to find them. In another hour, he had sent young Tom to take my place, and my sister to take his father's. I was determined that none of the gossips of the village should go near her if I could help it; for, though such might be kind-hearted and estimable women, their place was not by such a couch as that of Catherine Weir. I enjoined my sister to be very gentle in her approaches to her, to be careful even not to seem anxious to serve her, and so to allow her to get gradually accustomed to her presence, not showing herself for the first day more than she could help, and yet taking good care she should have everything she wanted. Martha seemed to understand me perfectly; and I left her in charge with the more confidence that I knew Dr. Duncan would call several times in the course of the day. As for Tom, I had equal assurance that he would attend to orders; and as Gerard was very fond of him, I dismissed all anxiety about both, and allowed my mind to return with fresh avidity to the contemplation of its own cares, and fears, and perplexities.

It was of no use trying to go to sleep, so I set out for a walk.

XXVII.

It was a fine frosty morning, the invigorating influences of which, acting along with the excitement following immediately upon a sleepless night, overcame in a great measure the depression occasioned by he contemplation of my circumstances. Disinclined

notwithstanding for any more pleasant prospect, I sought the rugged common where I had so lately met Catherine Weir in the storm and darkness, and where I had stood without knowing it upon the very verge of the precipice down which my fate was now threatening to hurl me. I reached the same chasm in which I had sought a breathing space on that night, and turning into it, sat down upon a block of sand which the frost had detached from the wall above. And now the tumult began again in my mind, revolving around the vortex of a new centre of difficulty.

For, first of all, I found my mind relieved by the fact that, having urged Catherine to a line of conduct which had resulted in confession—a confession which, leaving all other considerations of my office out of view, had the greater claim upon my secrecy that it was made in confidence in my uncovenanted honour,—I was not, could not be at liberty to disclose the secret she confided to me, which, disclosed by herself, would have been the revenge from which I had warned her, and at the same time my deliverance. I was relieved I say at first, by this view of the matter, because I might thus keep my own chance of some favourable turn; whereas, if I once told Miss Oldcastle, I must give her up for ever, as I had plainly seen in the watch of the preceding night. But my love did not long remain skulking behind the hedge of honour. Suddenly I woke and saw that I was unworthy of the honour of loving her, for that I was glad to be compelled to risk her well-being for the chance of my own happiness; a risk which involved infinitely more wretchedness to her, than the loss of my dearest hopes to me; for it is one thing for a man not to marry the woman he loves, and quite another for a woman to marry a man she cannot even respect. Had I not been withheld partly by my obligation to Catherine, partly by the feeling that I ought to wait and see what God would do, I should have risen that moment and gone straight to Oldcastle Hall, that I might plunge at once into the ocean of my loss, and encounter, with the full sense of honourable degradation, every misconstruction that might justly be devised of my conduct. For that I had given her up first, could never be known even to her in this world. I could only save her by encountering and enduring and cherishing her scorn. At least so it seemed to me at the time; and, although I am certain the other higher motives had much to do in holding me back, I am equally certain that this awful vision of the irrevocable fate to follow upon the deed, had great influence, as well, in inclining me to suspend action.

I was still sitting in the hollow, when I heard the sound of horses' hoofs in the distance, and felt a foreboding of what would appear. I was only a few yards from the road upon which the sand-hill opened, and could see a space of it sufficient to show the persons even of rapid riders. The sounds drew nearer. I could distinguish the step of a pony and of two horses besides. Up they came and swept past—Miss Oldcastle upon Judy's pony, and Mr. Stoddart upon her horse, with the Captain upon his own. How grateful I felt to Mr. Stoddart! And the hope arose in me that he had accompanied them at Miss Oldcastle's request.

I had had no fear of being seen, sitting as I was on the side from which they came. One of the three, however, caught a glimpse of me, and even in the moment ere she vanished I fancied I saw the lily-white grow rosy-red. But it must have been fancy, for she could hardly have been quite pale upon horseback on such a keen morning.

I could not sit any longer. As soon as I ceased to hear the sound of their progress, I rose and walked home—much quieter in heart and mind than when I set out.

As I entered by the nearer gate of the vicarage, I saw Old Rogers enter by the farther. He did not see me, but we met at the door. I greeted him.

"I'm in luck," he said, "to meet yer honour just coming home. How's poor Miss Weir to-day, sir?"

"She was rather better, when I left her this morning, than she had been through the night. I have not heard since. I left my sister with her. I greatly doubt if she will ever get up again. That's between ourselves, you know. Come in."

"Thank you, sir. I wanted to have a little talk with you.—You don't believe what they say—that she tried to kill the poor little fellow?" he asked, as soon as the study door was closed behind us.

"If she did, she was out of her mind for the moment. But I don't believe it."

And thereupon I told him what both his master and I thought about it. But I did not tell him what she had said confirmatory of our conclusions.

"That's just what I came to myself, sir, turning the thing over in my old head. But there's dreadful things done in the world, sir. There's my daughter been a-telling of me——"

I was instantly breathless attention. What he chose to tell me I felt at liberty to hear, though I would not have listened to Jane herself.—I must here mention that she and Richard were not yet married, old Mr. Brownrigg not having yet consented to any day his son wished to fix; and that she was, therefore, still in her place of attendance upon Miss Oldcastle.

"——There's my daughter been a-telling of me," said Rogers, "that the old lady up at the Hall there is tormenting the life out of that daughter of hers—she don't look much like hers, do she, sir?—wanting to make her marry a man of her choosing. I saw him go past o' horseback with her yesterday, and I didn't more than half like the looks on him. He's too like a fair-spoken captain I sailed with once, what was the hardest man I ever sailed with. His own way was everythink, even after he saw it wouldn't do. Now, don't you think, sir, somebody or other ought to interfere? It's as bad as murder that, and anybody has a right to do summat to perwent it."

"I don't know what can be done, Rogers. I *can't* interfere."

The old man was silent. Evidently he thought I might interfere if I pleased. I could see what he was thinking. Possibly his daughter had told him something more than he chose to communicate to me. I could not help suspecting the mode in which he judged

I might interfere. But I could see no likelihood before me but that of confusion and precipitation. In a word I had not a plain path to follow.

"Old Rogers," I said, "I can almost guess what you mean. But I am in more difficulty with regard to what you suggest than I can easily explain to you. I need not tell you, however, that I will turn the whole matter over in my mind."

"The prey ought to be taken from the lion somehow, if it please God," returned the old man solemnly. "The poor young lady keeps up as well as she can before her mother; but Jane do say there's a power o' crying done in her own room."

Partly to hide my emotion, partly with the sudden resolve to do something, if anything could be done, I said:—

"I will call on Mr. Stoddart this evening. I may hear something from him to suggest a mode of action.

"I don't think you'll get anything worth while from Mr. Stoddart. He takes things a deal too easy like. He'll be this man's man and that man's man both at oncet. I beg your pardon, sir. But *he* won't help us."

"That's all I can think of at present, though," I said; whereupon the man-of-war's-man, with true breeding, rose at once, and took a kindly leave.

I was in the storm again. She suffering, resisting, and I standing aloof! But what could I do? She had repelled me—she would repel me. Were I to dare to speak, and so be refused, the separation would be final. She had said that the day might come when she would ask help from me: she had made no movement towards the request. I would gladly die to serve her—yea more gladly far than live, if that service was to separate us. But what to do I could not see. Still, just to do something, even if a useless something, I would go and see Mr. Stoddart that evening. I was sure to find him alone, for he never dined with the family, and I might possibly catch a glimpse of Miss Oldcastle.

I found little Gerard so much better, though very weak, and his mother so quiet, notwithstanding great feverishness, that I might safely leave them to the care of Mary, who had quite recovered from her attack, and her brother Tom. So there was something off my mind for the present.

The heavens were glorious with stars,—Arcturus and his host, the Pleiades, Orion, and all those worlds that shine out when ours is dark; but I did not care for them. Let them shine: they could not shine into me. I tried with feeble effort to lift my eyes to Him who is above the stars, and yet holds the sea, yea, the sea of human thought and trouble, in the hollow of his hand. How much sustaining, although no conscious comforting, I got from that region

> Where all men's prayers to Thee raised
> Return possessed of what they pray Thee,

I cannot tell. It was not a time favourable to the analysis of feeling—still less of religious feeling. But somehow things did seem a little more endurable before I reached the house.

I was passing across the hall, following the "white wolf" to Mr. Stoddart's room, when the drawing-room door opened, and Miss Oldcastle came half out, but seeing me drew back instantly. A moment after, however, I heard the sound of her dress following us. Light as was her step, every footfall seemed to be upon my heart. I did not dare to look round, for dread of seeing her turn away from me. I felt like one under a spell, or in an endless dream; but gladly would I have walked on for ever in hope, with that silken vortex of sound following me. Soon, however, it ceased. She had turned aside in some other direction, and I passed on to Mr. Stoddart's room.

He received me kindly, as he always did; but his smile flickered uneasily. He seemed in some trouble, and yet pleased to see me.

"I am glad you have taken to horseback," I said. "It gives me hope that you will be my companion sometimes when I make a round of my parish. I should like you to see some of our people. You would find more in them to interest you than perhaps you would expect."

I thus tried to seem at ease, as I was far from feeling.

"I am not so fond of riding as I used to be," returned Mr. Stoddart.

"Did you like the Arab horses in India?"

"Yes, after I got used to their careless ways. That horse you must have seen me on the other day, is very nearly a pure Arab. He belongs to Captain Everard, and carries Miss Oldcastle beautifully. I was quite sorry to take him from her, but it was her own doing. She would have me go with her. I think I have lost much firmness since I was ill."

"If the loss of firmness means the increase of kindness, I do not think you will have to lament it," I answered. "Does Captain Everard make a long stay?"

"He stays from day to day. I wish he would go. I don't know what to do. Mrs. Oldcastle and he form one party in the house; Miss Oldcastle and Judy another; and each is trying to gain me over. I don't want to belong to either. If they would only let me alone!"

"What do they want of you, Mr. Stoddart?"

"Mrs. Oldcastle wants me to use my influence with Ethelwyn, to persuade her to behave differently to Captain Everard. The old lady has set her heart on their marriage, and Ethelwyn, though she dares not break with him, she is so much afraid of her mother, yet keeps him somehow at arm's length. Then Judy is always begging me to stand up for her aunt. But what's the use of my standing up for her if she won't stand up for herself; she never says a word to me about it herself. It's all Judy's doing. How am I to know what she wants?"

"I thought you said just now she asked you to ride with her?"

"So she did, but nothing more. She did not even press it, only the tears came in her eyes when I refused, and I could not bear that; so I went against my will. I don't want to make enemies. I am sure I don't see why she should stand out. He's a very good match in point of property and family too."

"Perhaps she does not like him," I forced myself to say.

"Oh! I suppose not, or she would not be so troublesome. But she could arrange all that if she were inclined to be agreeable to her friends. After all I have done for her! Well, one must not look to be repaid for anything one does for others. I used to be very fond of her; I am getting quite tired of her miserable looks."

And what had this man done for her, then? He had, for his own amusement, taught her Hindostanee; he had given her some insight into the principles of mechanics, and he had roused in her some taste for the writings of the Mystics. But for all that regarded the dignity of her humanity and her womanhood, if she had had no teaching but what he gave her, her mind would have been merely "an unweeded garden that grows to seed." And now he complained that in return for his pains she would not submit to the degradation of marrying a man she did not love, in order to leave him in the enjoyment of his own lazy and cowardly peace. Really he was a worse man than I had thought him. Clearly he would not help to keep her in the right path, not even interfere to prevent her from being pushed into the wrong one. But perhaps he was only expressing his own discomfort, not giving his real judgment, and I might be censuring him too hardly.

"What will be the result, do you suppose?" I asked.

"I can't tell. Sooner or later she will have to give in to her mother. Everybody does. She might yield with a good grace."

"She must do what she thinks right," I said. "And you, Mr. Stoddart, ought to help her to do what is right. You surely would not urge her to marry a man she did not love."

"Well, no; not exactly urge her. And yet society does not object to it. It is an acknowledged arrangement, common enough.

"Society is scarcely an interpreter of the Divine will. Society will honour vile things enough, so long as the doer has money sufficient to clothe them in a grace not their own. There is a God's-way of doing everything in the world, up to marrying, or down to paying a bill."

"Yes, yes. I know what you would say; and I suppose you are right. I will not urge any opinion of mine. Besides, we shall have a little respite soon, for he must join his regiment in a day or two."

It was some relief to hear this. But I could not with equanimity prosecute a conversation having Miss Oldcastle for the subject of it, and presently took my leave.

As I walked through one of the long passages, but dimly lighted, leading from Mr. Stoddart's apartment to the great staircase, I started at a light touch on my arm. It was from Judy's hand.

"Dear Mr. Walton——" she said, and stopped.

For at the same moment appeared at the further end of the passage towards which I had been advancing, a figure of which little more than a white face was visible; and the voice of Sarah, through whose softness always ran a harsh thread that made it unmistakeable, said,

"Miss Judy, your grandmamma wants you."

Judy took her hand from my arm, and with an almost martial stride the little creature walked up to the speaker, and stood before her defiantly. I could see them quite well in the fuller light at the end of the passage, where there stood a lamp. I followed slowly that I might not interrupt the child's behaviour, which moved me strangely in contrast with the pusillanimity I had so lately witnessed in Mr. Stoddart.

"Sarah," she said, "you know you are telling a lie. Grannie does *not* want me. You have *not* been in the dining-room since I left it one moment ago. Do you think, you *bad* woman, *I* am going to be afraid of you? I know you better than you think. Go away directly, or I will make you."

She stamped her little foot, and the "white-wolf" turned and walked away without a word.

If the mothers among my readers are shocked at the want of decorum in my friend Judy, I would just say, that valuable as propriety of demeanour is, truth of conduct is infinitely more precious. Glad should I be to think that the even tenour of my children's good manners could never be interrupted, except by such righteous indignation as carried Judy beyond the strict bounds of good breeding. Nor could I find it in my heart to rebuke her wherein she had been wrong. In the face of her courage and uprightness, the fault was so insignificant that it would have been giving it altogether undue importance to allude to it at all, and might weaken her confidence in my sympathy with her rectitude. When I joined her she put her hand in mine, and so walked with me down the stair and out at the front door.

"You will take cold, Judy, going out like that," I said.

"I am in too great a passion to take cold," she answered. "But I have no time to talk about that creeping creature.—Auntie *doesn't* like Captain Everard; and Grannie keeps insisting on it that she shall have him whether she likes him or not. Now do tell me what you think."

"I do not quite understand you, my child."

"I know Auntie would like to know what you think. But I know she will never ask you herself. So *I* am asking you whether a lady ought to marry a gentleman she does not like, to please her mother."

"Certainly not, Judy. It is often wicked, and always a mistake."

"Thank you, Mr. Walton. I will tell her. She will be glad to hear you say so, I know."

"Mind you tell her you asked me, Judy. I should not like her to think I had been interfering, you know."

"Yes, yes; I know quite well. I will take care. Thank you. He's going to-morrow. Good night."

She bounded into the house again, and I walked away down the avenue. I saw and felt the stars now, for hope had come again in my heart, and I thanked the God of hope. "Our minds are small because they are faithless," I said to myself. "If we had faith in God, as our Lord tells us, our hearts would share in his greatness and peace. For we should not then be shut up in ourselves, but would walk abroad in Him." And with a light step and a light heart I went home.

XXVIII.

Very severe weather came, and much sickness followed, chiefly amongst the poorer people, who can so ill keep out the cold. Yet some of my well-to-do parishioners were laid up likewise—amongst others Mr. Boulderstone, who had an attack of pleurisy. I had grown quite attached to Mr. Boulderstone by this time, not because he was what is called interesting, for he was not; not because he was clever, for he was not; not because he was well-read, for he was not; not because he was possessed of influence in the parish, though he had that influence; but simply because he was true: he was what he appeared, felt what he professed, did what he said; appearing kind, and feeling and acting kindly. Such a man is rare and precious, were he as stupid as the Welsh giant in "Jack the Giant-Killer." I could never see Mr. Boulderstone a mile off, but my heart felt the warmer for the sight. Even in his great pain he seemed to forget himself as he received me, and to gain comfort from my mere presence. I could not help regarding him as a child of heaven, to be treated with the more reverence that he had the less aid to his goodness from his slow understanding. It seemed to me that the angels might gather with reverence around such a man, to watch the gradual and tardy awakening of the intellect in one in whom the heart and the conscience had been awake from the first. The latter safe, they at least would see well that there was no fear for the former. Intelligence is a consequence of love; nor is there any true intelligence without it.

But I could not help feeling keenly the contrast when I went from his warm, comfortable, well-defended chamber, in which every appliance that could alleviate suffering or aid recovery was at hand, like a castle well appointed with arms and engines against the inroads of winter and his yet colder ally Death,—when, I say, I went from his chamber to the cottage of the Tomkinses, and found it, as it were, lying open and bare to the enemy. What holes and cracks there were about the door, through which the fierce wind rushed at once into the room to attack the aged feet and hands and throats! There were no defences of three-fold draperies, and no soft carpet on the brick floor,—only a small rug which my sister had carried them laid down before a weak-eyed little fire, that seemed to despair of making anything of it against the huge cold that beleaguered and invaded the place. True, we had had the little cottage patched up. The two Thomas Weirs had been at work upon it for a whole day and a-half in the first of the cold weather this winter; but it was like putting the new cloth on the old garment, for fresh places had broken out, and although Mrs. Tomkins had fought the cold well with what rags she could spare, and an old knife, yet such razor-edged winds are hard to keep out, and here she was now lying in bed, and breathing hard, like the sore-pressed garrison which had retreated to its last defence, the keep of the castle. Poor old Tomkins sat shivering over the little fire.

"Come, come, Tomkins! this won't do," I said, as I caught up a broken shovel that would have let a lump as big as one's fist through a hole in the middle of it. "Why don't you burn your coals in weather like this? Where do you keep them?

It made my heart ache to see the little heap in a box hardly bigger than the chest of tea my sister brought from London with her. I threw half of it on the fire at once.

"Deary me, Mr. Walton! you *are* wasteful, sir. The Lord never sent his good coals to be used that way."

"He did though, Tomkins," I answered. "And He'll send you a little more this evening, after I get home. Keep yourself warm, man. This world's cold in winter, you know."

"Indeed, sir, I know that. And I'm like to know it better afore long. She's going," he said, pointing over his shoulder with his thumb towards the bed where his wife lay.

I went to her. I had seen her several times within the last few weeks, but had observed nothing to make me consider her seriously ill. I now saw at a glance that Tomkins was right. She had not long to live.

"I am sorry to see you suffering so much, Mrs. Tomkins," I said.

"I don't suffer so wery much, sir; though to be sure, it be hard to get the breath into my body, sir. And I do feel cold-like, sir."

"I'm going home directly, and I'll send you down another blanket. It's much colder to-day than it was yesterday."

"It's not weather-cold, sir, wi' me. It's grave-cold, sir. Blankets won't do me no good, sir. I can't get it out of my head how perishing cold I shall be when I'm under the mould, sir; though I oughtn't to mind it when it's the will o' God—till the resurrection, sir."

"But it's not the will of God, Mrs. Tomkins."

"Ain't it, sir? Sure I thought it was."

"You believe in Jesus Christ, don't you, Mrs. Tomkins?"

"That I do, sir, with all my heart."

"Well, He says that whosoever liveth and believeth in Him shall never die."

"But, you know, sir, everybody dies. I *must* die, and be laid in the churchyard, sir. And that's what I don't like."

"But I say that is all a mistake. *You* won't die. Your body will die, and be laid away out of sight; but you will be awake, alive, more alive than you are now, a great deal."

And here let me interrupt the conversation to remark upon the great mistake of teaching children that they have souls. The consequence is, that they think of their souls as of something which is not themselves. For what a man *has* cannot be himself. Hence, when they are told that their souls go to heaven, they think of their *selves* as lying in the grave. They ought to be taught that they have bodies; and that their bodies die; while they themselves live on. Then they will not think, as old Mrs. Tomkins did, that *they* will be laid in the grave. It is making altogether too much of the body, and is indicative of an evil tendency to materialism, that we talk as if we *possessed* souls, instead of *being* souls. We should teach our children to think no more of their bodies when dead

than they do of their hair when it is cut off, or of their old clothes when they have done with them.

"Do you really think so, sir?" said the old woman.

"Indeed I do. I don't know anything about *where* you will be. But you will be with God—in your Father's house, you know. And that is enough, is it not?"

"Yes, surely, sir. But I wish you was to be there by the bedside of me when I was a-dyin'. I can't help bein' summat skeered at it. It don't come nat'ral to me, like. I ha' got used to this old bed here, cold as it has been—many's the night—wi' my good man there by the side of me."

"Send for me, Mrs. Tomkins, any moment, day or night, and I'll be with you directly."

"I think, sir, if I had a hold ov you i' the one hand, and my man, there, the Lord bless him, in the other, I could go comfortable."

"I'll come the minute you send for me—just to keep you in mind that a better friend than I am is holding you all the time, though you mayn't feel His hands. If it is some comfort to have hold of a human friend, think that a friend who is more than man, a divine friend, has a hold of you, who knows all your fears and pains, and sees how natural they are, and can just with a word, or a touch, or a look into your soul, keep them from going one hair's-breadth too far. He loves us up to all our need, just because we need it, and He is all love to give."

"But I can't help thinking, sir, that I wouldn't be troublesome. He has such a deal to look after! And I don't see how He can think of everybody, at every minute, like. I don't mean that He will let anything go wrong. But He might forget an old body like me for a minute, like."

"You would need to be as wise as He is before you could see how He does it. But you must believe more than you can understand. It is only common sense to do so. Think how nonsensical it would be to suppose that one who could make everything, and keep the whole going as He does, shouldn't be able to help forgetting. It would be unreasonable to think that He must forget because you couldn't understand how He could remember. I think it is as hard for Him to forget anything as it is for us to remember everything; for forgetting comes of weakness, and from our not being finished yet, and He is all strength and all perfection."

"Then you think, sir, He never forgets anything?"

I knew by the trouble that gathered on the old woman's brow what kind of thought was passing through her mind. But I let her go on, thinking so to help her the better. She paused for one moment only, and then resumed—much interrupted by the shortness of her breathing.

"When I was brought to bed first," she said, "it was o' twins, sir. And, oh! sir, it was *very* hard. As I said to my man after I got my head up a bit, 'Tomkins,' says I, 'you don't know what it is to have *two* on 'em cryin' and cryin', and you next to nothin' to give 'em; till their cryin' sticks to your brain, and ye hear 'em when they're fast asleep, one on each side o' you.' Well, sir, I'm ashamed to confess it even to you; and what the Lord can think of me, I don't know."

"I would rather confess to Him than to the best friend I ever had," I said; "I am so sure that He will make every excuse for me that ought to be made. And a friend can't always do that. He can't know all about it. And you can't tell him all, because you don't know all yourself. He does."

"But I would like to tell *you*, sir. Would you believe it, sir, I wished 'em dead? Just to get the wailin' of them out o' my head, I wished 'em dead. In the court-yard o' the squire's house, where my Tomkins worked on the home-farm, there was an old draw-well. It wasn't used, and there was a lid to it, with a hole in it, through which you could put a good big stone. And Tomkins once took me to it, and, without tellin' me what it was, he put a stone in, and told me to hearken. And I hearkened, but I heard nothing, as I told him so. 'But,' says he, 'hearken, lass.' And in a little while there came a blast of noise like from somewheres. 'What's that, Tomkins?' I said. 'That's the ston',' says he, 'a strikin' on the water down that there well.' And I turned sick at the thought of it. And it's down there that I wished the darlins that God had sent me; for there they'd be quiet."

"Mothers are often a little out of their minds at such times, Mrs. Tomkins. And so were you."

"I don't know, sir. But I must tell you another thing. The Sunday afore that, the parson had been preachin' about 'Suffer little children,' you know, sir, 'to come unto me.' I suppose that was what put it in my head; but I fell asleep wi' nothin' else in my head but the cries o' the infants and the sound o' the ston' in the draw-well. And I dreamed that I had one o' them under each arm, cryin' dreadful, and was walkin' across the court the way to the draw-well; when all at once a man come up to me and held out his two hands, and said, 'Gie me my children.' And I was in a terrible fear. And I gave him first one and then the other, and he took them, and one laid its head on one shoulder of him, and t'other upon t'other, and they stopped their cryin', and fell fast asleep; and away he walked wi' them into the dark, and I saw him no more. And then I woke cryin', I didn't know why. And I took my twins to me, and my breasts was full, if ye'll excuse me, sir. And my heart was as full o' love to them. And they hardly cried worth mentioning again. But afore they was two year old, they both died o' the brown chytis, sir. And I think that He took them."

"He did take them, Mrs. Tomkins; and you'll see them again soon."

"But, if He never forgets anything——"

"I didn't say that. I think He can do what He pleases. And if He pleases to forget anything, then He can forget it. And I think that is what He does with our sins—that is, after He has got them away from us, once we are clean from them altogether. It would be a dreadful thing if He forgot them before that, and left them sticking fast to us and defiling us. How then should we ever be made clean?—What else does the prophet Isaiah mean when he says, 'Thou hast cast my sins behind thy back'?

Is not that, where He does not choose to see them any more? They are not pleasant to Him to think of any more than to us. It is as if He said—'I will not think of that any more, for my sister will never do it again,' and so He throws it behind his back."

"They *are* good words, sir. I could not bear Him to think of me and my sins both at once."

I could not help thinking of the words of Macbeth, "To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself."

The old woman lay quiet after this, relieved in mind, though not in body, by the communication she had made with much difficulty, and I hastened home to send some coals and other things, and then call upon Dr. Duncan, lest he should not know that his patient was so much worse as I had found her.

From Dr. Duncan's I went to see old Samuel Weir, who likewise was ailing. The bitter weather was telling chiefly upon the aged. I found him in bed, under the old embroidery. No one was in the room with him. He greeted me with a withered smile, sweet and true, although no flash of white teeth broke forth to light up the welcome of the aged head.

"Are you not lonely, Mr. Weir?" I asked.

"No, sir. I don't know as ever I was less lonely. I've got my stick, you see, sir," he said, pointing to a thorn stick which lay beside him.

"I do not quite understand you," I returned, knowing that the old man's gently humourous sayings always meant something.

"You see, sir, when I want anything, I've only got to knock on the floor, and up comes my son out of the shop. And then again, when I knock at the door of the house up there, my father opens it and looks out. So I have both my son on earth and my father in heaven, and what can an old man want more?"

"What, indeed, could any one want more?"

"It's very strange," the old man resumed after a pause, "but as I lie here, after I've had my tea, and it is almost dark, I begin to feel as if I was a child again. They say old age is a second childhood; but before I grew so old, I used to think that meant only that a man was helpless and silly again, as he used to be when he was a child: I never thought it meant that a man felt like a child again, as light-hearted and untroubled as I do now."

"Well, I suspect that is not what people do mean when they say so. But I am very glad—you don't know how pleased it makes me, to hear that you feel so. I will hope to fare in the same way when my time comes."

"Indeed, I hope you will, sir; for I am main happy. Just before you came in now, I had really forgotten that I was a toothless old man, and thought I was lying here waiting for my mother to come in and say good-night to me before I went to sleep. Wasn't that curious, when I never saw my mother, as I told you before, sir?"

"It was very curious."

"But I have no end of fancies. Only when I begin to think about it, I can always tell when they are fancies, and they never put me out. There's one I see often—a man down on his knees at that cupboard nigh the floor there, searching and searching for somewhat. And I wish he would just turn round his face once for a moment that I might see him. I have a notion always it's my own father."

"How do you account for that fancy, now, Mr. Weir?"

"I've often thought about it, sir, but I never could account for it. I'm none willing to think it's a ghost; for what's the good of it? I've turned out that cupboard over and over, and there's nothing there I don't know."

"You're not afraid of it, are you?"

"No, sir. Why should I be? I never did it no harm. And God can surely take care of me from all sorts."

My readers must not think anything is going to come out of this strange illusion of the old man's brain. I questioned him a little more about it, and came simply to the conclusion, that when he was a child, he had found the door open and had wandered into the house, at the time uninhabited, had peeped in at the door of the same room where he now lay, and had actually seen a man in the position he described, half in the cupboard, searching for something. His mind had kept the impression after the conscious memory had lost its hold of the circumstance, and now revived it under certain physical conditions. It was a glimpse out of one of the many stories which haunted the old mansion. But there he lay like a child, as he said, fearless even of such usurpations upon his senses.

I think instances of quiet un*self*conscious faith are more common than is generally supposed. Few have along with it the genial communicative impulse of old Samuel Weir, which gives the opportunity of seeing into their hidden world. He seemed to have been, and to have remained, a child, in the best sense of the word. He had never had much trouble with himself, for he was of a kindly, gentle, trusting nature; and his will had never been called upon to exercise any strong effort to enable him to walk in the straight path. Nor had his intellect, on the other hand, while capable enough, ever been so active as to suggest difficulties to his faith, leaving him, even theoretically, far nearer the truth than those who start objections for their own sakes, liking to feel themselves in a position of supposed antagonism to the generally acknowledged sources of illumination. For faith is in itself a light that lightens even the intellect; and hence the shield of the complete soldier of God, the shield of faith, is represented by Spenser as "framed all of diamond, perfect, pure, and clean," (the power of the diamond to absorb and again radiate light being no poetic fiction, but a well-known scientific fact), whose light falling upon any enchantment or false appearance, destroys it utterly: for

> "all that was not such as seemed in sight,
> Before that shield did fade, and suddaine fall."

Old Rogers had passed through a very much larger experience. Many more difficulties had come to him, and he had met them in his own fashion and overcome them. For while there is such a thing as truth, the mind that can honestly beget a difficulty must at the same time be capable of receiving that light of the

truth which annihilates the difficulty, or at least of receiving enough to enable it to foresee vaguely some solution, for a full perception of which the intellect may not be as yet competent. By every such victory Old Rogers had enlarged his being, ever becoming more child-like and faithful; so that, while the child-likeness of Weir was the childlikeness of a child, that of Old Rogers was the childlikeness of a man, in which submission to God is not only a gladness, but a conscious will and choice. But as the safety of neither depended on his own feelings, but on the love of God who was working in him, we may well leave all such differences of nature and education to the care of him who first made the men different, and then brought different conditions out of them. The one thing is whether we are letting God have his own way with us, following where he leads, learning the lessons he gives us.

I wished that Mr. Stoddart had been with me during these two visits. Perhaps he might have seen that the education of life was a marvellous thing, and, even in the poorest intellectual results, far more full of poetry and wonder than the outcome of that constant watering with the watering-pot of self-education which, dissociated from the duties of life and the influences of his fellows, had made of him what he was. But I doubt if he would have seen it.

A week had elapsed from the night I had sat up with Gerard Weir, and his mother had not risen from her bed, nor did it seem likely she would ever rise again. On a Friday I went to see her, just as the darkness was beginning to gather. The fire of life was burning itself out fast. It glowed on her cheeks, it burned in her hands, it blazed in her eyes. But the fever had left her mind. That was cool, oh, so cool, now! Those fierce tropical storms of passion had passed away, and nothing of life was lost. Revenge had passed away, but revenge is of death, and deadly. Forgiveness had taken its place, and forgiveness is the giving, and so the receiving of life. Gerard, his dear little head starred with sticking-plaster, sat on her bed, looking as quietly happy as child could look, over a wooden horse with cylindrical body and jointless legs, covered with an eruption of red and black spots.—Is it the ignorance or the imagination of children that makes them so easily pleased with the merest hint at representation? I suspect the one helps the other towards that most desirable result, satisfaction.—But he dropped it when he saw me, in a way so abandoning that—comparing small things with great—it called to my mind those lines of Milton:—

> "From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Eve,
> Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed."

The quiet child *flung* himself upon my neck, and the mother's face gleamed with pleasure.

"Dear boy!" I said, "I am very glad to see you so much better."

For this was the first time he had shown such a revival of energy. He had been quite sweet when he saw me, but until this evening, listless.

"Yes," he said, "I am quite well now." And he put his hand up to his head.

"Does it ache?"

"Not much now. The doctor says I had a bad fall."

"So you had, my child. But you will soon be well again."

The mother's face was turned aside, yet I could see one tear forcing its way from under her closed eyelid.

"Oh I don't mind it," he answered. "Mammy is so kind to me! She lets me sit on her bed as long as I like."

"That *is* nice. But just run to Auntie in the next room. I think your mammy would like to talk to me for a little while."

The child hurried off the bed, and ran with overflowing obedience.

"I can even think of *him* now," said the mother, "without going into a passion. I hope God will forgive him. *I* do. I think He will forgive me."

"Did you ever hear," I asked, "of Jesus refusing anybody that wanted kindness from Him? He wouldn't always do exactly what they asked Him, because that would sometimes be of no use, and sometimes would even be wrong; but He never pushed them away from Him, never repulsed their approach to Him. For the sake of his disciples, He made the Syrophenician woman suffer a little while, but only to give her such praise afterwards and such a granting of her prayer as is just wonderful."

She said nothing for a little while; then murmured.

"Shall I have to be ashamed to all eternity? I do not want not to be ashamed; but shall I never be able to be like other people—in heaven I mean?"

"If He is satisfied with you, you need not think anything more about yourself. If He lets you once kiss his feet, you won't care to think about other people's opinion of you even in heaven. But things will go very differently there from here. For everybody there will be more or less ashamed of himself, and will think worse of himself than he does of anyone else. If trouble about your past life were to show itself on your face there, they would all run to comfort you, trying to make the best of it, and telling you that you must think about yourself as He thinks about you; for what He thinks is the rule, because it is the infallible right way. But perhaps rather, they would tell you to leave that to Him who has taken away our sins, and not trouble yourself any more about it. But to tell the truth, I don't think such thoughts will come to you at all when once you have seen the face of Jesus Christ. You will be so filled with his glory and goodness and grace, that you will just live in Him and not in yourself at all."

"Will He let us tell Him anything we please?"

"He lets you do that now: surely He will not be less our God, our friend there."

"Oh, I don't mind how soon He takes me now! Only there's that poor child that I've behaved so badly to! I wish I could take him with me. I have no time to make it up to him here."

"You must wait till he comes. He won't think hardly of you. There's no fear of that."

"What will become of him, though? I can't bear the idea of burdening my father with him."

"Your father will be glad to have him, I know. He will feel it a privilege to do something for your sake. But the boy will do him good. If he does not want him, I will take him myself."

"Oh! thank you, thank you, sir."

A burst of tears followed.

"He has often done me good," I said.

"Who, sir? My father?"

"No. Your son."

"I don't quite understand what you mean, sir."

"I mean just what I say. The words and behaviour of your lovely boy have both roused and comforted my heart again and again."

She burst again into tears.

"That is good to hear. To think of your saying that! The poor little innocent? Then it isn't all punishment?"

"If it were *all* punishment, we should perish utterly. He is your punishment; but look in what a lovely, loving form your punishment has come, and say whether God has been good to you or not."

"If I had only received my punishment humbly, things would have been very different now. But I do take it—at least I want to take it—just as He would have me take it. I will bear anything He likes. I suppose I must die?"

"I think He means you to die, now. You are ready for it now, I think. You have wanted to die for a long time; but you were not ready for it before."

"And now I want to live for my boy. But His will be done."

"Amen. There is no such prayer in the universe as that. It means everything best and most beautiful. Thy will, O God, evermore be done."

She lay silent. A tap came to the chamber-door. It was Mary, who nursed her sister and attended to the shop.

"If you please, sir, here's a little girl come to say that Mrs. Tomkins is dying, and wants to see you."

"Then I must say good-night to you, Catherine. I will see you to-morrow morning. Think about old Mrs. Tomkins; she's a good old soul; and when you find your heart drawn to her in the trouble of death, then lift it up to God for her, that He will please to comfort and support her, and make her happier than health—stronger than strength, taking off the old worn garment of her body, and putting upon her the garment of salvation, which will be a grand new body, like that the Saviour had when He rose again."

"I will try. I will think about her."

For I thought this would be a help to prepare her for her own death. In thinking lovingly about others, we think healthily about ourselves. And the things she thought of for the comfort of Mrs. Tomkins, would return to comfort herself in the prospect of her own end, when perhaps she might not be able to think them out for herself.

ESHCOL.

"And they came unto the brook [Heb. *nachal*] of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes; and they bare it between two upon a staff."—*Numbers* xiii. 23.

I.

Where, in the purling streamlet's track, had sprung
Life and lush greenery from the sultry ground,
A goodly vine-branch, with rare cluster hung,
Two way-worn wanderers found.

From the sweet-smiling valley where it grew,
The vine-branch on a staff they 'tween them bare,—
Earnest of that good land to all who through
The dreary desert fare.

Who walk'd before, scarce saw, with straining eye,
Its shadow flit upon the barren waste:
Who walk'd behind, gazed on it ever-nigh,
And could its dainties taste.

But both must toil 'neath many a burning sun,
And chide the changeless seasons of the wild;
And many a fight must each see lost and won,
And live but in his child:

Yea, pass away must many a weary year,
Ere they possess that land of corn and wine,
Ere they who wander in the desert drear
Sit under their own vine.

No more by hunger, nor by thirst distrest,
Then shall they drink of that life-giving rill,
Dwell safely in the land, and be at rest,
And take and eat their fill.

II.

Christ is this goodly vine-branch: patriarch gray
Long through the world's drear desert wander'd sad,
Bearing the heat and burden of the day,—
Then found Him, and was glad.

As—after parch'd waste found in valley fair,
That hath its verdure from some purling stream—
Shows goodly vine-branch hung with cluster rare,
Such Christ in patriarch's dream.

Christ is this goodly vine-branch: they of old
Saw fitfully a shadow of his face;
The Branch himself, rare-fruited, *we* behold,
And taste, and know his grace.

Yet *we* but know in part: much toil, much woe,
Must *us* unto the Land of Promise bring;
We must encounter many a ghostly foe,
And Death's relentless sting:

Yea, time shall be no more, earth pass away,
Ere we the Vine in all his beauty see,
Ere we, who through the world's drear desert stray,
Sit under our own Tree.

Hunger and thirst for righteousness shall we
Not then: for Christ shall give us of his store
To drink,—yea, Life's pure stream itself; and He
Shall feed us evermore.

John Hoskyns Abrahall.

WORDS TO THE WEARY.

"To the weary!" Many a one listens at the word. To many a one it is like a personal salutation; the next thing to naming the name. No one, perhaps, would take in a single letter with only the superscription of our article upon it, as though it were intended for himself. But when the address is general, when it is made to a large constituency, each one of the multitude thus described and addressed is almost as ready to listen to the communication as though it had been sent to him under his own name. Hardly any experience is more common among men than that of weariness. The causes of it are very manifold; and the degrees of it range from utter exhaustion, bordering on blank despair, up to its slightest forms and appearances, when it seems no more than a passing shadow. But, whatever be its causes, and whatever its degree, weariness is a state which, more than most other states, inclines a man *to listen*—not indeed to the strife of tongues and the shock of conflict, and all the hot surgings and wild stir of life, which are heard by a weary man with pleasure only when they come in softened murmurs as from distance, but—eagerly to any words spoken expressly and fitly to himself. A weary man is, in some respects, a much better hearer than a working-man. Strength is bold; weariness is tender. Strength uses the arm, the foot, the tongue, the brain; weariness is all ear and heart. She sits by life's way-side, with feeble pulse and lack-lustre eye, heedless apparently of all that may come and go, of all that may rise or fall in the world about her; but let any one speak tenderly *to her*, and although there will in the nature of the case be no passionate and pronounced indications of her interest, she will listen, as the long-parched earth may be supposed to listen to the patter of the falling rain. She will open the exhausted fountains of being and "receive," which is only less "blessed" than "to give."

God in his word speaks often to the weary. "At sundry times and in divers manners." This, simply as a general consideration, and apart from the particular messages delivered, should bring some consolation and nourishment to those who are thus addressed. Surely it *is* a reviving thing to know that this extreme condition of our human experience, this condition of disadvantage, inability, prostration, is tenderly recognised and fully provided for. He who never wearies, whose light is never lost in shadow, whose emotion is in unsubsiding fulness, whose existence is everlasting strength, looks to the weary among men, pities them, makes gracious provision for their strengthening. The knowledge of this ought to be comfort and strength to weak and weary spirits. There may be failure in the administration of the provided help. Even those among us who are appointed to give the consolation, lacking wisdom, or lacking tenderness, may fail to give it in particular instances, in any sensible or helpful measure. But it *is* provided, and He who means it to be given will find some way to accomplish his purpose. The great "river" of his love flows into innumerable "streams," which not only "make glad the city of God," but which find their way to the "desert" places far and near, making "the wilderness" of weary lonely spirits "like Eden, and their desert like the garden of the Lord." The very thought of this is reviving—the thought of what lies behind all our human endeavours to express and communicate. These endeavours may fail in part or entirely, and yet—

> "The barren wilderness shall smile,
> With sudden green and herbage crown'd,
> And streams shall murmur all around."

But let us at least try to direct some of these streams towards those who are athirst; or, what will be in result the same, let us try to guide the faltering steps of those who need to drink of them to the channels where they flow.

I.

To "him that is weary" by the overtoil of life, we have some "words in season" to speak. Of course we are not alluding simply to bodily fatigue, and that sympathetic gentle exhaustion of the spirit, which are the natural results of a certain measure of activity. No word of comfort is needed for a state like that. For such a condition of mind and body ample compensation is given in the rest which the evening brings. It is wholesome, it is almost delightful to be moderately weary with honest labour of any kind when we can sink back into untroubled rest. It is the *overtoil* that brings the distressing weariness. And there is so much of that now-a-days! All kinds of industries and enterprises are pushed on, as far as may be, by all kinds of activities and devices. Human strength, of muscle, brain, and will, is calculated and used much as the power of a steam-engine is tested and applied. More than that. For a steam-engine cannot be pushed *beyond* its power. Not one atom or pulsation of force can be got out of it that is not fairly in it. You cannot deal unfairly by it. You cannot draw out of the *ultimate* fountains of force in nature. They are kept in such entire secrecy, and so closely under the hand of the Almighty, that no man can avail himself of them, or, indeed, even approach them. It is otherwise with the human being. The force here is not merely mechanical; it is vital. It is not merely statical or dynamical pressure; it is *life*. It is life under the control of will which is free. Here the fountains *are* open to the man. He *can* draw too much out of them; he does many a time. The life that would run on to three-score years and ten, and even beyond, in some freshness, is spent and gone at fifty. Under the pressure of modern necessities men do draw from the organic springs during one day more than ought to be taken out for the day. To use a homely image, they sink the bucket deep down into the well of life, and draw it fast up, brimming; then sink it down again, and yet again, until the well is dry. Or—to use another familiar figure—they draw out of the account current in the bank of their

strength, day by day, more than nature puts into it. They touch the deposit account, the far-down strength that should never be touched until the dying days; and then of course they are "weary," very weary.

You will allow that one right word to some who are in this case, one seasonable word to these weary, is *a word of frank and strong remonstrance.* You should not do this. You should not, willingly, extend and enlarge your affairs so much as to necessitate this excessive draft on normal organic strength. You plead the example of others; the necessity of the case; the needs of the children; the uncertainties of the future. I plead the law of God; the higher necessities; the best examples; the eternal certainties. I point you to the fact that you are over-drawing your account, and hastening a crisis. You are sinking the bucket too deeply into the well of your own life. You are shortening your days, and overclouding them with mist and rain. You are bringing on a weariness for which you never can have so much consolation as you would have if it came on you lawfully. Yes—"Let a man strive *lawfully*," and then—let him fear no results which can come, to others or to himself. There is a perfect Providence. There is an everlasting Love. All things work together for good to loving and obedient souls.

But one is quite aware that in many cases it is hard to say where, exactly, the line is, beyond which a man ought not to go. One man is more capable naturally than another, and claims therefore a wider sphere. One man is in better health than another, and does not need to circumscribe the natural limits of activity. One man works in a better atmosphere than another, and amid happier social conditions. One man has a business which is greatly easier of transaction than that of another; and so, amid these diversities and complications, it comes to pass, that many are weary, without, wittingly, having gone beyond what duty demands; and many by a kind of necessity, out of which no way presents itself which duty would clearly sanction. Naturally, *they* would feel that hard measure was being meted to them, if, on the day of rest, when looking, among other things, at "words to the weary," we should meet them only with the sharp message that they have been breaking the laws of God. But no. We have a word in season to those who are thus unwillingly overtaken in the fault of the age, to those who are weary by the overtoil from which, to them, there seems to be no escape. Work you must: *then think how divine is work.* Nothing is more divine than work, except love. "God *is* love." God is known by work. "My Father worketh hitherto." He is working still, in every place, through every moment, in every visible thing—in the greening of the leaf, in the yellowing of the corn, in the kindling of the stars: in rolling rivers, in fluctuating seas, in breathing winds—in all the life that lives, in all the death that dies, God is working.

Work is as proper to a human life as to the Divine. In "the image of God" possessed by the human being the activities have due place, and to a perfect development, *doing* is as necessary as knowing and loving. See how soon the new-created man is working! We behold him rising into life under the hand and quickening breath of God, and then—does he stand on sunny heights in all the radiance of perfection, a spectacle to angels, a picture to his successors among men? Does he recline on flowery banks, or sit, in meditative mood, in bowers of ease, gazing on the majestic hills which stand about the cradle of the human race, soothed by the birds, the wandering breeze, the rippling stream? "And the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden, *to dress it and to keep it.*" At once he is appointed to work. The perfect life is not "still life." It has the glow of labour in it, and is exercised with the "light burden" of a sinless care. For remember, this was before the fall. Labour—of head, and heart, and hand—is holy, is divine. People sometimes speak of it as if it were the curse (which, indeed, in part it may be, when it is turned to ill account, or when it is hard, excessive, or unrequited), as if the direst earthly punishment God had in reserve for the erring man was this—"Go work in my vineyard." No mistake could be greater. The curse fell on the ground for man's sake, but never on the labour which tills it. That is the vanquisher of the curse. By that, blessed and sanctified, the curse shall *be* vanquished in the end, and Eden then will be, not in any one place, or here and there, but all the world over. A man working, therefore, working hard, in lawful work, putting forth his nature into a strenuous activity, and, in consequence, touched at times with a sad weariness, may, for his encouragement and cheer, think, and think truly, "I am like God in this. If I stir up the strength that is in me, if I work wisely and well, as wisely and as well as I know how, then I am in my little human measure like the ever-working God. In this respect, if I will, I may be partaker of the divine nature, and escape the corruption that is in the world through idleness. I am not like God in my weariness, for He fainteth not, and is never weary, but I *am* like Him in my work; and it makes my weariness less to think that in these daily toils, rude and exhausting as they sometimes are, I yet have such a glorious fellowship."

Think, too, how this overtoil, which you cannot resist or control, tends, in some ways, *to enhance the consolations and blessings of the gospel.* It imparts the peculiar zest of contrast to all the mild, quiet, refreshing things of grace. It impairs perhaps the penetrative power, and may lessen therefore the amount of *intellectual* religious attainment. An overwrought man is not so likely to enrich himself in the treasures of pure thought. But then, on the other hand, his weariness, unless it be excessive, will be likely to add eagerness and quickness to the receptive faculties. It may seem a play upon the words, but we mean it as a literal and simple truth, that no receiver is so thankful and humble as "an exhausted receiver." As the dry ground drinks the rain—the parched plants stretching out their leafy hands for it, the flowers holding up their cups to catch it as it falls; as the over-heated room pulls in the vital air at every crevice, and at the open window in a stream—so the overwearied spirit drinks in some of the *consolatory* gifts of the gospel, with peculiar avidity and relish. Because

work has been hard, rest is more restful. Because the week has been busy, the Sabbath stillness is more calm. Because other days have heat and stir and darkness in them, you are able to apostrophize your Sabbath and say, "O day, most calm, most bright!" Many a promise finds you out in your weak and worn times, which you would not see, or seeing, fail to appreciate in times of full capacity and sufficiency. "Out of weakness" you "are made strong." Lapsing sometimes into the helplessness of the little child, you enter into a very Kingdom of Heaven.

Think, too, how all this earthly labour, when well-wrought, *is instrumentally preparing, refining, sweetening the heavenly rest.* It may seem almost idle to make comparison between the entrance of one sinful man and that of another into heaven,—the rest will be so welcome to all, the joy so great to each. But surely, in so far as heaven is rest after labour, it *must* be more delightful, at least for a season, and that probably not a brief one, to those who enter it from life-long toil and strife, than it can be to those who had, in their own allotment on the earth, become accustomed to some beginning of its tranquillities. "They rest from their labours, and their works do follow them," as it were increasing and deepening the rest. Fancy the arrival at the gate of the celestial city, at the same moment, of two spirits just released from earth and sin. One is a veteran from long and hard service, seamed and scarred in many a conflict, weary with many a long journey, to whom even death has been struggle and "sacrifice." The other is a gentle spirit who has dwelt much in calmness, had but little conflict, lived in the beauty of a lowly love, and who has just now awoke out of the sweet "sleep" of death, and is waiting at the gate to enter into the everlasting peace. Each enters without challenge; each is welcome home. But tell me not that the emotion of the one can be like that of the other. Ah, how delicious the "green pastures" to the feet that have trodden so many rough ways! How soothing "the still waters" to one who has had so many tossings amid the storms! Is it possible that gentle Isaac, from his flocks and fields and eventide meditations, should enter "the city of habitation," and sink into the depths of its overcoming and abiding peace with that sense of unutterable satisfaction which is given to stormy Paul, who comes up from Titanic wrestlings, from "journeyings," "prisons," "seas," and "deaths?" Be not weary, then, in the making of your own heaven; for indeed you are making it, instrumentally, if only you are working aright. All earthly work is hallowed, and touched to finest issues in the heavenly world, if only the principle of it be right. To speak with plain applications,—you, skilled and cunning worker, you are shaping your destiny in the articles you construct. You, clerk and ready writer, you are securing heaven in the figures of your calculation. You, busy trader, are buying it in what you buy, if you buy fairly, and confirming the purchase by what you sell, if you sell fairly. You, far-looking merchantman, seeking goodly pearls until often you are weary in the search, and sometimes cannot but sigh, "What a vanity it is!" whatever you may miss or find in your more immediate objects, whatever may come of the nearer earthly ventures, so you do all in love, and by divine law, you gain certainly at length a pearl of greater price than any to be found here. You, mother and mistress of the house, worn down each day, sometimes almost to literal fainting, with children, servants, visitors, cares, see you not what path you are treading? It is toilsome, secluded, and has no glory to the common sight, but it is taking you up step by step to fields of heavenly rest. You, servant, doing your duty well, perhaps amid many difficulties—the harsh words of an unreasonable mistress assailing you every day, the hasty temper of a fellow-servant trying yours, the lack of a tender sympathy in any fellow-creature who is near filling your heart sometimes with "the drought of summer,"—think whose "servant" you are; from whose lips, in a while, you expect to hear, "Well done! Be ruler now." And so of all others who are true. Hard work, when wrought in faith, has the grand function of preparing the worker for the fuller enjoyment of the heavenly rest.

II.

To him that is weary, not so much by the hardness and excess of the labour of life, as by *its commonness and comparative meanness*, there is surely a word in season. There are undoubtedly many who are affected far more by what we call "the drudgery of life" than by the positive severity of its tasks. It is not that they have not strength enough to do all that is to be done, but it is that what they do seems so little *worth* doing. They have strength and to spare; strength which frets in the leash of circumstances, which goes off sometimes in murmurings and moanings, and which is apt even to darken into disdain of those ignoble conditions by which they feel so fettered and hindered as to their best development. For in proportion as they can think highly of their own nature, they are compelled to think unfavourably of their circumstances and their tasks. It seems strange to them that a divinely-gifted creature, carrying the light of immortality in his breast, and a mirror that reflects the image of God, and a heart that holds his love, and thoughts that keep company with his thoughts, should be set to such mean employment, and kept at it so long—figuring through endless calculations, talking superficial talk—of the weather, of the markets, of the news, of the quality of some piece of manufactured goods; asking the same questions, saying the same things, smiling the same smile, a great many times each day; trudging through the same streets, meeting the same people,—in short, going the same "trivial round" of life from day to day, with the same small, inappreciable results! O, it is wearisome! And in those moments when the soul is touched with ambition, or moved by any of its great instinctive desires, the scene darkens almost into a prison, and the man in his own esteem is the poor prisoner pacing the dull weary rounds! It is wearisome, too, in scenes and walks of life still more private—in homes. How many must there be in this great forest of houses called "city"—how many, too, in villages and country places, to whom daily life is a daily burden, not because of the greatness, but because of the

littleness and obscurity of their duties, because they have so little on which they *can* write the great name of Duty clearly? It seems all drudgery, triviality, nothing.

What is the word in season here? Surely in part it is this—*that life is noble and not common.* We cannot indeed controvert the outer facts. They are what they seem. Many things in the lives of Christian people are little in themselves—they could not well be less. But they lose their littleness when they are associated with the higher things in which true Christian life consists, and especially with that right internal motive which consecrates all. If I am faithfully serving Christ, does it really so much matter whether my hand holds a sceptre, a pen, or a spade?—whether I touch thousands every day, or only shillings and pence?—whether I meet many people, or only few?—whether my house is large or small?—whether my name is famous or utterly unknown? It is but "a little while," and the stir and tumult of life, be it in high or low degree, will be over, the drudgery all gone through, the commonness ended in the shining of eternal sublimity. Not *where* I am, but *what* I am; and, still more, what I am becoming, is the thing! Not what I do, but how I am doing it! Not high or low in earthly place and estimate, but high or low in purpose, tone, temper! Now, supposing that you are really in the place where God's providence has put you, and that you are really "called" to the duties (or as you say tasks and trivialities) which wait for you every day—then call them not "common." God has "cleansed" them. He has prepared and appointed them *for you;* and they are at least as good as any other circumstances would be for the accomplishment of life's moral ends.

If anything of nobler outward aspect can be inserted into your life, well. If you can have the seeming commonness associated and relieved with something visibly greater and better—some new task, endeavour, friendship, possibility—well. But if not, we say again, call not that life which God in his infinite wisdom has appointed for you; which by his great redeeming act He has purified; which from the roll of his providence is unfolding itself under his very eye; which is quick with the stirrings of his Spirit; which has the seeds of immortal glory in its bosom: call it not common. It is great, unless you make it little. It is good, unless you make it evil. When God calls his "kings" from earth to heaven, He finds many of them where Elijah found Elisha—at the plough: many where Samuel found David—with the sheep: many where the Saviour found Peter, James, and John—at the nets and the fishing. "The Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

III.

A word in season now to him that is weary *amid the perplexities and difficulties of life.* By these, great spirit-weariness often comes—by the multitudinous character of life—by the multiplicity of things—by the varieties of them. By their crossings and intercrossings. By the sudden changes that come, so altering circumstances that duty cannot remain the same. Life, with those who are much in society, is not simple. It is very complex. Civilisation, so far, seems to involve and necessitate complexity; but how to get through? How to consider each claim, that *is* a claim, and each person whose claim it is? How to make just, and no more than just, allowance, for peculiarities of disposition, for differences of judgment, and for ever-changing circumstances—how hard it is! And what a weariness it sometimes brings on! Let the scene be no larger than just a family of ordinary size, and with no extraordinary circumstances or troubles in it—you have there the materials of a constant perplexity and of much heart-weariness. Suppose that any member of that family, parent or child, wishes to do his or her duty fathfully and fully by all the rest, will it be quite easy? I do not think we at all know what a trouble we are to each other, at home: what shadows we cast (not designing it) on each other's way: how hard we make to another the path that runs close by our own. Young people, do you know what an anxious care you are, sometimes, to father or mother? How you load them with invisible burdens, and perplex them with difficulties which are none the less because they are not likely to explain or express them to you? Do you know what an anxiety it sometimes is, simply to know, whether to speak or keep silence, whether to give advice or "hold their peace even from good;" whether to act with authority, or wait in patience and prayer? And how, when they are doing all for the best, and have no complaint to make of you, and no heart-sorrow about you, they are yet, against their own will, wearied and worn out, with the ceaseless ministrations of love?

Then, if we go beyond the family, there are "the cares of the world," and all the perplexities of its business, the writing of difficult letters, the making important engagements and promises, the duties consequent on success or failure. There is the watching of the action of others; and, in a word, all the flux and reflux of this ever-moving world. Surely it is not surprising, that, here and there at least, there should be a weary Spirit—one tired of ceaseless bargain-making; one sick almost to disgust with the daily necessity for watching against the guile and the over-reaching of others; one ready to say with Job, "I loathe it, I would not live alway."

The seasonable word—what shall it be? This, at any rate—*Seek the Master's feet.* Be sure you cast all your care on Him who careth for you. Be sure you take the help He is so near to give. Take each day fresh baptisms of his love; by one quick thought you can bring it around you like the air. The unreserved communication of your difficulties TO HIM will much endear and strengthen the bond of attachment between Him and you, and will also very likely make some crooked things straight and some rough places plain. "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."

IV.

To him that is weary in well-doing there is a word in season. The whole of a good life is well-doing, in a sense, as we have seen. All is religious, and nothing is "common." Yet is there a clear enough distinction between higher and lower in every life. Labours undertaken and pursued exclusively with reference to spiritual ends are the highest of all. In quality, at least, they are superlative. But success does not always seem to attend them in anything like proportion to the time, the thought, the solicitude which are expended. Often there is apparently no success at all. "That which is wanting cannot be numbered." Then "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." The hands hang down, the knees are feeble, the eye is dim, the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint with sowing which is never followed by reaping, and with long waiting which never ends in joy. The word in season is—the old word which has cheered and delivered so many in every age, which has nerved many a sinking arm, stayed many retreating steps, and brightened many a darkening field with the glow of new promise—the clear, bold, freshening word—"*In due season ye shall reap if ye faint not.*" "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." May God fill every faithful, toilsome heart with the light and power of that undying promise.

V.

To him that is weary with the strife—the *great* strife of every good man's life, the strife *with sin*—there is a word in season. Every vital process in this world is subject to pause, blight, hindrance. Buds are nipped with frost. Green leaves are shrivelled with east wind. Young creatures pine and sicken sometimes, and for a while do not grow. The *most* vital process of any is subject to the same vicissitude. The divine life in the soul grows in conflict, in aspiration, by hope, by endeavour. But every one knows—every one who has had much experience of this life—that there are times of pausing and uncertainty, even of apparent retrogression, when all that is past seems quite in vain, and the imagined progress has brought the soul circling round again, apparently to the very beginning. How discouraging is this! and how wearisome to the spirit!—wearisome to have the two principles *still* at war, as if the conflict would never end! To have the "evil" still present, while striving to do the "good!" To have old misbelievings come back upon us, old fears revived, old swervings repeated! Does it not sometimes seem as though there were no necessary perseverance of saints, or, at any rate, as if we are not saints persevering? Ah, why are the serene heights, where walk the victors, clad in white, yet so far above us? Why is the progress so uncertain? and when shall the struggle end at last? and where? and how? In victory or in defeat?

The word in season is, PERSEVERE. "Be of good courage, and God shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord." Did you ever hear of a river which runs *straight* from its source to the sea? There is not such a one in the world. There are some which bend and turn and almost circle round again and again. Yet "all the rivers run into the sea" at length. What tree grows right up to heaven, never bending a branch to the wind, never losing a leaf in frost or gale? The largest, noblest trees are shaken with the greatest number of tempests, exposed to the winters of the greatest number of years. Is there a bird that can soar right upwards to the zenith? Not one. Even the eagle has some sinuosity and curving, however little it may seem, as he goes up the sky. Is there in God's book or in any of men's, recorded life of any good man who grew up without one pause, without any fear or doubt, shadow or weariness? What is his name? Is it Jacob, who said, "All these things are against me?" Is it Moses, who prayed in the deepest despondency, "If not—blot me out of thy book?" Is it David, who so often "cried out of the depths?" Is it Elijah, who asked that he might die in the wilderness? or Jonah, who repeated the prayer? or Peter, who sank in the waves he tried to tread, who wept in the dark night as he thought of the Master he had denied? or even the intrepid Paul, who certainly must have had his mournful and desponding moods (although perhaps only at considerable intervals), else it could hardly be written of him with such emphasis, that on one occasion, the sight of brethren who had come to meet him on the way, made him "thank God and take courage." To be weary in such weariness is to be in good company. Persevere.

VI.

The last word is to *those* "*who labour and are heavy laden,*" *with sin* of which they would fain repent, from the guilt and power of which they would fain be delivered; who feel how heavy God's hand is, who see how fiery is his law, whose moisture has become summer drought, who long for rest and cannot find it. And *this* is the word in season—not our word, nor even an inference of ours from *his* word; but the very word of God the Saviour,—"*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" Doubtless this, in the first instance, is the rest of a free forgiveness, without merit or price of any kind. Yet is it most closely associated with the new law of duty and obedience, "*Take my yoke upon you.*" It has often been observed and said that weary men find relief very pleasantly, not in the entire cessation of work, but in change of occupation. A book is seldom more pleasant than after a long walk. A walk is refreshing after some continuance of mental occupation. The most sublime application of this principle is found when struggling men, weary at last of sin—not merely of its inconveniences and penalties, and through fear of its unknown results, but of its nature and its presence—come to Christ, to the sin-bearing, sin-forgiving, sin-consuming Christ, because He has invited all, and especially *them* to come; and, lo! He puts his "yoke" upon them, a yoke which they are never to cast off: He weights them with his "burden," which they are to carry for evermore. And this is rest—the rest of eternity—the very rest of God.

Indeed, *Christ and his yoke* is the greatest and best word we can speak to the weary of every kind, and

all the world over. There is not one of any of the classes which have been specified but will find relief from his particular trouble by *taking the yoke and bearing the burden.* This holy service daily renewed will lessen the severities of overwork, will dignify the commonness of life, will dissolve the coils of perplexity, will disperse the shadows of care, will invigorate as nothing else can do the faltering purpose of obedience, will break the bands and blot out the stains of sin, and will fill all the life with sweetness, and gladness, and strength—for, "*His yoke is easy, and his burden is light.*"

ALEXANDER RALEIGH.

THE ENGLISH HYMNS OF THE ELIZABETHAN ERA.

"A HYMN is a singing angel, and goes walking through the earth, scattering the devils before it. Therefore, he who creates hymns imitates the most excellent and lovely works of our Lord God, who made the angels. These hymns watch our chamber door, they sit upon our pillow, they sing to us when we are awake, and therefore our Master was resolved to sow the minds of his young people with them as our beautiful Italy is sown with the seeds of all coloured flowers." From the Gulf of Genoa to the Adriatic Sea—in the deep valleys among the purple Apennines—in the air-hung villages which gleam among the pine and chestnut trees on the southern slopes of the Alps—and even in queenly Florence, which a few years later sent the bold friar of San Marco to heaven in a chariot of fire, simple Italian ballads containing some of the elementary truths of the Gospel were winning their way among the common people with such rapidity that Antonio Sforza was hardly guilty of a poet's licence of speech when he wrote of them as being as universal as those flower seeds which slept beneath the soil of his own fair land. And his beloved master Savonarola was right and wise when he trusted the truths which make men wise unto salvation to these airy messengers; it was not the first time that God had chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty. So, at the close of the fifteenth century, in the chilly solemn hour of mist and darkness which preceded the daybreak, the white wings of these singing angels were glimmering here and there, and in some homes in which sorrow dwelt, and round which death hovered, and in some hearts which were mourning for sin, there was a light, new, unearthly, and, perchance, feeble, yet one destined to shine more and more unto the perfect day.

Thirty years later the German churches were ringing with the hymns of Luther, Eber, and Sachs, and the poetry of the Reformation, wedded to popular music, was sung in every household. By the middle of the sixteenth century the reformed hymnology of Denmark had assumed such a position as to call for a history from the pen of Thomïsson, but still no answering voice from England told that the new doctrines had reached the heart of the people. Yet England had been stirred by an impulse altogether new, and English piety might afford to forget the courtly and inauspicious rise of the Reformation in the days when the blood of the witnesses for Jesus Christ was scarcely dry upon the scaffolds, and the ashes of the piles of Smithfield were hardly given to the winds; yet, of that goodly company which had gone to swell the noble army of martyrs, none were singers. The walls of our English prisons echoed the deep earnest tones of prayer, and voices declaring defiantly for Christ's truth against lying wrong, but no trace remains of such melodies as made the prison of Philippi ring, and startled the soldiers who guarded the dungeons where the followers of Huss suffered for the right. Protestantism rejoiced in the accession of Elizabeth,—the monks were cast out from the cloisters, and the leisure, of which the Latin hymns were the fruit, was no more—in the churches mass was no longer chanted, and the Bible was accessible in the vernacular; but still the "singing angels" were few, and appeared with wings so marvellously and grotesquely clipped, that they could not fly through the land, if indeed it be true, which I much misdoubt, that they were angels at all! The Latin hymns, with their wonderful pathos and beauty, were banished from the churches, and people fell back upon the Psalms of David done into verse by Sternhold and Hopkins, content, though under the clear shining of the Sun of the New Testament, to sing to the Head of the Church only in poetry in which the Name which is above every name is not found.

This age, of which the hymnology is so scant and meagre, was the most brilliant in English literature. Round Spenser, Shakespeare, Bacon, and Raleigh clustered a host of lesser luminaries, any one of whom was worthy to be the sun of a duller era. Imagination, genius, thought, all flooded it with light—the lingering spirit of chivalry gave a singular stateliness to words which breathe the spirit of modern freedom and enlightenment; and thought ranged over every field of fact, creation, and speculation, with a riotous strength never equalled. Of all the forces which combined to produce "The Elizabethan Age," the strongest was that spirit which breathed over England announcing freedom of religious thought. It appears at first sight singular that between the newly revealed spiritual world and the lingering picturesqueness of the middle ages, so few sparks of even tolerable sacred poetry should have been struck out. But the Elizabethan age was not the golden age of Christ's Church in England. The rigid ecclesiastical orthodoxy forced upon the country by the Queen had not a genial influence upon piety. While Catholic dissent was sternly repressed with one hand, the other was equally heavy on all Protestant departures from the stereotyped ecclesiastical polity, and if there was not the violent antagonism between the Old and the

New which rent Germany and Scotland at the same period, neither was there that hearty religious abandonment and energy which flourish in the atmosphere of vehement differences. So complete was the external uniformity produced by the repressive influences of the government, that though Puritanism existed, it has not in any shape a place in literary history until the reign of James I.

There was something manifestly unfavourable to hymn-writing in such an atmosphere, and it does not appear that the religion of the day felt any necessity for hymn-singing. There is a stereotyped piety, which even martyr fires cannot warm, and the staid Churchmen of that era to whom religion and a settled government meant one and the same thing, were not the men either to require or patronise unauthorised singing. Whatever be the cause, our forefathers seem to have been quite content with the absence of devotional poetry. The Latin hymns which breathed the strains of a warmer and more devout piety—the exquisite beauties of Bernard of Clugny and his namesake of Morlaix, were banished from the churches, and after Cranmer, who undertook the task of translation and miserably failed, no person seems to have thought it worth while to make them accessible. It was not until 1562 that the version of the Psalms by Sternhold and Hopkins received the permissive authorisation of the Queen, and the popular element was re-introduced into worship. Not a single hymn suitable on the whole for public use has come down to us from this glorious reign, for the obvious reason that unlicensed singing was not permitted, and the devotional poetry for private use is not of a high order. This last conclusion is an unsatisfactory one, if the piety of an age is to be gauged in any measure by its hymnology, and most of all is it so in England, for perhaps the chiefest part which has been allotted to our English hymns is that of consoling, stimulating, and edifying individual believers. Sighs and prayers inarticulate, wordless aspirations and hopes, experiences none the less deep for being unspoken, all find expression in our hymns, and will be uttered in them till the songs, often mingled with, and faltered through tears here, are exchanged for those which tell only of victory.

Although in our innumerable collections of hymns scarcely six survive of the reign of Elizabeth, we have a great interest in knowing on what species of poetry the piety of our forefathers nourished itself, though the most of it has become obsolete. The first thing worthy of remark is, that the hymn-writers of this period, Spenser, Raleigh, Gascoigne, Wotton, Wither, &c., were not men of the deep devotion and absorbing piety of the German contemporary poets, and the English hymn-writers of the 18th century. Indeed there is occasionally such an incongruity between the hymns and the known character of the writers, as to warrant the supposition that some of them wrote merely because the fashion of the day demanded that poets and dramatists should show their versatility and eclecticism by an occasional exercise of their powers on sacred themes. This fashion ran riot at the Restoration, when men of infamous character indited litanies to the Spirit of truth and holiness.

Oftentimes men stepped aside from the whirl of court, political, or military life, to write hymns; and it may be believed that they came sometimes in all sincerity from hearts compelled to turn heavenwards for that earth had been made so blank and bare; but it is seldom that anything which gives the impression of being the spontaneous utterance of the spirit is to be found in the whole range of the Elizabethan hymns. Something of this is due to the stilted and fantastic style of the poetry of the period, and the fashion of far-fetched and subtle allusions, which were as great a tax upon the comprehension of the reader as upon the ingenuity of the composer. It appeared to be the aim of poets to clothe their thoughts in quaint and fanciful conceits of speech, hampered by rhyme and metre of the most difficult and perverse description. The style of Adam of St. Victor seemed to be the model of the hymn-writers, and we find them reproducing his fanciful applications of Scripture, and imitating his inordinate use of types, without those singular merits which made him the greatest of the medieval hymnologists. A verse from "A hymn to God my God," by Donne, is one of the most favourable specimens which can be selected of the fanciful allusions to Scripture which mark many of the hymns:

> "We think that Paradise and Calvary,
> Christ's cross, and Adam's tree, stood in one place:
> Look, Lord! and find both Adams met in me:
> As the first Adam's sweat surrounds my face,
> May the last Adam's blood my soul embrace."

It was scarcely possible for the liveliest religious feeling to take wing under the incumbrance of such fetters. It is not wonderful that hardly any of the hymns of the Elizabethan era survive, for the fashion of the time was on them, and it has passed away; and a stanza by Charles Wesley, or Oliver the Welsh blacksmith, stirs our spirits more than all the grandiloquence of the "Divine Poems" of Spenser, Drayton, and Gascoigne.

It was an age of conceit and allegory, both in prose and poetry: conceits which in poetry attained their perfect caricature afterwards in the poems of Herbert and Francis Quarles. The love of emblems was something extraordinary, yet it is impossible to believe that it took hold generally of our direct and matter-of-fact English mind,—it seems rather that the emblematists and allegorists wrote for the enjoyment of a choice few, and that their hymns even in their own day never were the property and delight of the many. In prose, Sir Thomas Browne's "Garden of Cyrus" still torments the curiosity and taxes the ingenuity of readers. In poetry there was hardly an exception to the prevailing taste for the catching up of remote resemblances, and the cunning invention of them where none existed. The reader becomes absolutely weary of the perverse conceits, laboured quaintness, contorted ideas, and ingenious symbolism of the "Divine Poems" of Spenser, Wotton, Gascoigne, Crashaw, Herrick, and others. Yet there is a charm in the strong thought which here and there struggles to develop itself through the medium of metaphor. Here is a fragment of a "Midnight Meditation," by King:

"The beating of thy pulse when thou art well
Is just the tolling of thy passing bell.
Night is thy hearse, whose sable canopy
Covers alike diseased day and thee;
All, all these weeping dews that nightly fall,
Are but the tears shed for thy funeral."

BISHOP KING.

In the two first lines we recognise the germ of the fine lines by Longfellow—

"And our hearts so bold and brave,
Still like muffled drums are beating
Funeral marches to the grave."

The "Colloquy with God," by Sir T. Browne, who lived at the close of this era, is a fine specimen of the *best* manner of the period. It is perfectly free from exaggeration, and seems the original of that Evening Hymn of Bishop Ken, which has a world-wide celebrity.

"The night is come. Like to the day,
Depart not Thou, great God, away;
Let not my sins, black as the night,
Eclipse the lustre of Thy light:
Keep still in my horizon, for to me
The sun makes not the day, but Thee.

"Thou whose nature cannot sleep,
On my temples sentry keep:
Guard me 'gainst those watchful foes
Whose eyes are open while mine close;
Let no dreams my head infest,
But such as Jacob's temples blest.

"While I do rest my soul advance,
Make my sleep a holy trance;
That I may, my rest being wrought,
Awake into some holy thought,
And with as active vigour run
My course as doth the nimble sun.

"Sleep is a death: O make me try
By sleeping what it is to die;
And as gently lay my head
On my grave as now my bed.
Howe'er I rest, great God! let me
Awake again at last with Thee:

"And thus assured behold I lie,
Securely or to wake or die.
These are my drowsy days; in vain,
I now do wake to sleep again;
O come sweet hour, when I shall never
Sleep again, but wake for ever!"

SIR T. BROWNE.

Again, from the Hymn on Hope, by Faithful Tate—

"Hope is next door to Heaven's gate,
'Tis but a step from this to that,
Nay Hope doth Heaven antedate,
And bring down hither.
Hope is the antidote against despair,
Coffin of fear, and couch of care,
Cradle of patience, Hope hath fair,
Even in foul weather.

"Yet bony Death sometimes looks in,
Bringing a list of all my sin,
Pinching my hope till it looks thin,
And like to die.
Death in my very face doth stare,
So ghastly as if it meant to scare
And fright my hope into despair
While sin stands by."

FAITHFUL TATE.

These quaint stanzas, though perhaps distasteful to the modern ear, are full of concentrated force. Some of the hymns descend to language too absolutely colloquial, and rhyme too absolutely jingling to befit their themes, as if by way of reaction from the stilted style demanded by the age. The fine hymn, "The Soul's Errand," now generally attributed to Raleigh, concludes thus:—

"When thou hast, as I
Commanded thee, done blabbing,
Although to give the lie
Deserved no less than stabbing," &c.

Browne uses a simile which excites a smile by its grotesque want of dignity:—

"There will I sit like that industrious flie,
Buzzing thy praises."

The marvellous "industry" is so opposed to our notions of the perfect spontaneity of the praises of the redeemed, and the "buzzing" suggests a most unattractive monotony of occupation. The most poetic minds fall into the vice of obscure metaphor and fanciful allusions. Crashaw, in a fine but fanciful hymn, has the following unpleasant stanza:—

"But O Thy side, Thy deep digged side,
That hath a double Nilus going;
Nor ever was the Pharian tide
Half so fruitful, half so flowing."

The great fault of the hymns of the Elizabethan era remains to be alluded to. Many of the monkish hymns offend our modern taste by the terms of passionate endearment applied to our Lord; the hymn movement, under Zinzendorf, in Germany, produced hymns which erred in the same direction; and two or three of the Methodist hymns are so tinctured with this leaning, as to repel the sensitively reverent nature; but the Elizabethan hymns not only go far beyond any in the commission of the same fault, but have a type of coarse familiarity peculiarly their own. Some of those which breathe the deepest piety, breathe it in language which can only gratify the profane; and the most exaggerated and languishing epithets of an earthly tenderness, not of the most respectful kind, are applied, not only to the Saviour, but to Him before whom the cherubim veil their faces. Many of the "Divine Poems" are as repellant to the tasteful from their coarseness, as are some of the works of the contemporary dramatists. Some of the best of the hymn writers in their adventurous imitations of the Canticles, used the most exaggerated language of the mystics,*

* A fine communion hymn, of high poetic merit, contains some stanzas which may be given in illustration of the mystical style of writing:—

"O let Thy wretch find that relief
Thou did'st afford the faithful thief;
Plead for me, Love! allege and show
That faith hath further yet to go
And less to lean on; because, than
Though hid as God, wounds writ Thee man.

Sweet, consider then that I,
Though allowed not hand nor eye
To reach at Thy loved face, nor can
Taste thee God, or touch thee Man,
Both of it believe and witness Thee,
My Lord too, and my God to be.

O soft, self-wounding pelican!
Whose breast wept balm for wounded man,
Ah, this way bend thy benign flood,
To a bleeding heart that gasps for blood;
That blood whose least drops sovereign be
To wash my worlds of sins from me.

but apparently without the excuse, either of their deep piety or fervid temperament, and the monkish, love-sick sentimentalism of Crashaw and others, is of the earth earthy, oftener sinking to hell than rising to heaven. It is impossible to transfer to these pages any specimens of this reprobate style of hymn-writing; it absolutely excludes from our notice half of the hymns of the Elizabethan era.

The faults of the hymnology of the period may be briefly recapitulated. Artificiality, exaggerated emblematicism, coarse materialism, affectation, and frigidity. Clear statements of evangelical doctrine, tersely expressed thought, and vigorous imagery are constantly to be found, but the soaring flight of faith, the lowly fervour of reverent love, the joyful utterances of conscious emancipation, the peace of life and thought brought into a loving captivity unto Jesus Christ, are wofully absent. Christianity, though escaped from the fetters of Roman Catholicism, was not yet disentangled from ecclesiasticism—its praise is feeble and stilted, its prayer is slavish and fearful, and the hymns of the English Reformation stand in dismal isolation between the grand poetic lyrics of the medieval darkness, and the fervid, joyful, irregular, spiritual songs which, like true "singing angels," soared gaily into the sunlight in the jubilee of Germany. A solitary hymn, "The Highway to Mount Calvary," by a writer little known, breathes a sweeter spirit and a more simple piety than any of the "Divine Poems" by the great masters of the day.

A Cento from "The Highway to Mount Calvary."

Repair to Pilate's hall,
Which place when thou hast found,
There shalt thou see a pillar stand
To which thy Lord was bound.
'Tis easy to be known
By any Christian eye;
The bloody whips do point it out
From all that stand thereby.

A little from that place,
Upon the left-hand side,
There is a curious portlie door,
Right beautiful and wide.
Leave that in any wise,
Forbid thy foot go thither;
For out thereat did Judas go,
Despair and he together.

But to the right-hand turn,
Where is a narrow gate,
Forth which St. Peter went to weep
His poor distrest estate.
Do imitate the like,
Go out at sorrow's door,
Weep bitterly as he did weep,
That wept to sin no more.

By this direction, then,
The way is understood—
No porch, no door, nor hall to pass,
Unsprinkled with Christ's blood.
So shall no error put
Misguiding steps between,
For every drop sweet Jesus shed
Is freshly to be seen.

A crown of piercing thorns
There lies imbrued in gore!
The garland that thy Saviour's head
For thy offences wore;
Which when thou shalt behold,
Think what his love hath been,
Whose head was laden with those briars
T' unload thee of thy sin.

Follow his feet that goes
For to redeem thy loss,
And carries all our sins with Him
To cancel on his cross.
Look on with liquid eyes,
And sigh from sorrowing mind,
To see the death's-man go before,
The murdering troupes behind.

Then press amongst the throng,
Thyself with sorrows wed;
Get very near to Christ and see
What tears the women shed;
Tears that did turn Him back,
They were of such a force—
Tears that did purchase daughter's names,
Of Father's kind remorse.

Think on their force by tears—
Tears that obtained love;
Where words too weak could not persuade,
How tears had power to move.
Then look towards Jesus' load,
More than He could endure,
And how for help to bear the same
A hireling they procure.

Join thou unto the cross,
Bear it of love's desire:
Do not as Cyrenæus did,
Who took it up for hire.
The voluntary death
That Christ did die for thee,
Gives life to none but such as joy
Cross-bearing friends to be.

Up to Mount Calvary
If thou desire to go,
Then take thy cross and follow Christ,
Thou canst not miss it so.
When thou art there arrived
His glorious wounds to see,
Say but as faithful as the thief,
"*O Lord, remember me.*"

Assure thyself to have
A gift all gifts excelling,
Once sold by sin, once bought by Christ,
For saints eternal dwelling.
By Adam Paradise
Was sin's polluted shade;
By Christ, the dunghill Golgotha
A Paradise was made.

Samuel Rowlands, 16th century.

The quaintness and tenderness of this hymn are far more akin to the poetry of an earlier age and the piety of a later than to the contemporary "Divine Poems," and lead us to hope that unknown men as well as great men wrote hymns, and that pious men and women were edified thereby; that the devotions of the feeble were aided, and the faith of the strong expressed in similar unpretending hymns which have become obsolete. But the hymns of the Elizabethan era, with the merits we know to be few, and the demerits we know to be many, unlike the German hymns of the same period, have fallen into a complete disuse. A few are to be met with in modern collec

Come Love! come Lord! and that long day
For which I languish, come away,
When this dry soul these eyes shall see
And drink the unsealed source of Thee,
When glory's sun faith's shade shall chase;
Then for Thy veil give me Thy face."

tions of sacred poetry, but they are little known and less esteemed. One only, "A Litany to the Holy Spirit," is used in public worship, and that only rarely, while of translations and imitations of the Ambrosian and medieval Latin hymns, nearly two hundred are retained. It is a cause of some thankfulness that the inauspicious rise of our English hymnology is so forgotten in its later glories both of poetry and thought which are not eclipsed by those of any country. We may well afford to part with that which has decayed and waxed old from a lack of inherent life. Ernst Woltersdorf used to say, "The day will come when many an old schoolmaster, peasant, or shoemaker, who has made three halting stanzas from his heart, shall have the crown on Mount Zion before those masters of verse." So in our Zion, the Church of Jesus Christ within these realms, the names of Watts, Wesley, Oliver, and Newton are held in higher repute than those of Spenser, Sidney, Raleigh, Gascoigne, and the other writers of "Divine Poems" in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Isabella L. Bird.

FLORAL AND BOTANICAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE HOLY LAND.

(*Continued from page* 490.)

From the seething hollows of the wadys by the Dead Sea, the mouths of the Arnon and Callirrhöe, still crowded with luxuriant palm-trees, and from the tropical splendour of the plain of the Safieh (the southern Nimrim), the traveller rapidly ascends to the bare yet verdant downs which form the plains of Moab, and the rich heritage of the pastoral Reubenites. The northern portion we visited; of the southern part of the highlands we had only distant views. There are no traces here of primæval forest; probably the country has always been an open down. Its rolling pastures are to this day as fertile as when "the children of Reuben and the children of Gad saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, that, behold, the place was a place for cattle" (Numbers xxxii. 1). Here and there may be seen a solitary terebinth tree (*Pistachia terebinthus*), the "Foustak" of the Arabs, sometimes spreading its gnarled and knotted boughs under the shelter of a cliff, at the foot of which its roots straggle, half-exposed, yet with a tenacious grasp of every cranny; sometimes standing forth like a land-mark on the top of a green knoll. One of the most remarkable of these trees crowns the summit of Jebel Attarus, the Pisgah of several writers, though I believe incorrectly so identified. The heap of stones underneath the shadow of the tree marks the burial-place of some old sheikh or saint; and these ancient trees, still hallowed in the eyes of the neighbouring Arabs, remind us of the groves and high places of olden idolatry, of which they are doubtless the relics. "They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks, and poplars, and elms (Hebr. *ţerebinths*), because the shadow thereof is good" (Hos. iv. 13).

But these trees are few and far between. The western highlands of Moab are covered with an even springy turf, closely cropped by flocks of thousands of sheep, reared for their fleeces rather than their mutton, for the rich men of Kerak and the Belka are still sheepmasters, like Mesha, king of Moab of old, who "rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool" (2 Kings iii. 4). One of these grassy slopes was the field of Zophim, on the top of Pisgah. When we rode over this region the season of flowers was past, though the herbage in the early summer was still green and growing; and the only relics of its vernal colouring were the half-buried seed-pods of crocuses and the flower-stalks of hyacinths.

Passing northwards from Heshbon into the land of Jazer, the finest portion of the inheritance of Reuben, wrested from Sihon, king of the Amorites, the botany as well as the scenery becomes more varied. Eastward, indeed, towards Amman, the ancient Rabbah, the country is open, but intersected by many a perennial streamlet, near the edges of which the luxuriant herbage rose to our horses' knees, varied by the red or purple blossom of several species of *Centaurea*, by the bright gladiolus, just emerging from its sheath, by luxuriant *malvæ*, scorzoneras, ranunculuses, crimson and yellow, and a bright pheasant's eye (*Adonis æstivalis*). Terebinth trees become more numerous in the valleys; and on some few elevated portions of the plateau, where fragments of red sandstone overlie the chalky limestone, are patches of rather stunted pine-wood, *Pinus carica*, poor and insignificant when compared with those of Gilead. Further west, however, and especially on the western side of the watershed of the Gilead range, near Arak el Emir, the ruins of the great palace and fortress of Hyrcanus, the botany is infinitely more varied; the terebinth attains a size unknown elsewhere in Palestine; the streams are shaded and protected from evaporation by long lines of oleanders ("willows by the watercourses"), with stems often several feet in circumference; cane brakes shelter the wild boars in the lower parts, and the butcher's broom (*Ruscus aculeatus*), with its bright green leaf, flourishes conspicuously on the mounds of the perished villages.

The day's journey from the plains of Jordan to the summit of Jebel Osha (Mount Gilead) illustrates admirably the perpendicular distribution of the Palestine forest flora. Everywhere else the ancient system of terrace cultivation has precluded the possibility of the primæval forest resuming its sway. When the terraces were neglected and allowed to fall into decay, and the fruit trees disappeared, the soil on the hill-sides, which had been held together by their roots and been kept up by the terrace walls, was rapidly washed down by the sudden rains which follow the long droughts; and the rocky sides have been left bare and barren. But Reuben and Gad, with a vast extent of fertile

prairie, rich in cattle, enjoying the ease of a pastoral life rather than intent on developing their agricultural wealth, were content with partial clearings round their scattered villages, and never scarped their slopes into terraces for vines and fig-trees. Thus the whole country from Nimrim to the Yarmuk is now a series of open parklike glades, surmounted with noble forests of oak or of pine, according to the elevation. The sites of towns are marked by turf-clad mounds, and often by more distinct ruins round the well, and by spaces more open than elsewhere, where decaying olive trees and unfenced patches of wheat and barley yield a rich return for the light labour of the Arabs most grudgingly bestowed.

The forest flora of Gilead may be grouped perpendicularly into four zones: the lower, commencing with the plains of Moab, marked by the jujube tree (*Zizyphus spina-Christi*), the acacia (*A. seyal*), and an occasional palm; the second, where the oleander, the oriental plane-tree (*Platanus orientalis*), the olive and the fig-tree predominate; the third, for the most part a belt of oak, evergreen and deciduous (*Quercus ægilops* and *Q. pseudo-coccifera*) interspersed with many an arbutus, myrtle, and bay-tree; and above these, on the highest peaks, an unvaried forest of pine-trees.

This pine-forest covers a considerable part of Jebel Ajlun and J. Kafkafka, the former being the highest part of the whole range south of Hermon. It is all of one species, *P. carica*, very closely allied to, if anything more than a variety of *Pinus halepensis*. It differs however from the ordinary form of that species in its habit of growth and general appearance, and is a very noble, sombre tree. We found many Bedouin women busily engaged in collecting the cones, which they scorch on a fire to open them, and then beat out the pips for food. We searched in vain for any trace of the cedar in these forests. Two distinct Hebrew words are translated pine-tree in our version, but only one of them, occurring in Is. lx. 13, can refer to this tree: "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary." The word translated "fir tree" refers probably to the cypress or the juniper.

Descending from the gloomy pine-forests to the region of the holm oak and arbutus, the undergrowth of shrubs becomes rapidly more varied, especially when the trees give place to open glades, and on the edge of old clearings. Here and there we noticed the walnut-tree, an elm, of what species I cannot pronounce, a few locust-trees, a beautiful white flowering hawthorn, having rather downy leaves (*Cratægus azarolus*) with several species of broom (*Genista*) wild roses, myrtles and bay-tree. The deciduous oak (*Quercus ægilops*) does not ascend so high as the prickly evergreen *Q. pseudo-coccifera*, and is generally more open in its growth and far more abundant in Bashan than in Gilead. Below this forest zone we descend to the rich belt of vegetation to which Gilead owes its ancient renown, the zone of the olive, the vine, and the various fruits. Here once grew the balsam. But now, I fear, there is no balm in Gilead. Carefully we searched for it wherever we were, but in vain. The *Paliurus aculeatus*, and *Eleagnus angustifolius*, or false balsam, were common enough, but no trace of the *Amyris opobalsamum* from which the balm of Mecca is derived. Probably it never was indigenous, but always cultivated, and held very precious. "I am come into my garden . . . I have gathered my myrrh with balsam" (Cant. v. 1). "His cheeks are as a bed of balsams" (v. 13). It is still grown near Mecca, and is said to be a stunted, prickly evergreen tree, about the size of an old hawthorn, from both the fruit and bark of which the balm is obtained, and considered by the Arabs the choicest of all odoriferous unguents.

Here and there a noble forest tree, sometimes called the lotus tree (*Celtis australis*), stood out alone, recalling the appearance of the English lime-tree. As we descend lower, the trees become more scattered, arranged in park-like clumps, with olive-yards here and there, and green corn in the glades. A beautiful ride down the valley of the Ezrak leads to Es Salt, the ancient Ramoth Gilead, and the only remaining town of Gilead. Here and here alone is seen the rich cultivation of ancient times; the hill sides are clad with vineyards, which gradually give place to olive-groves. The slopes below the town are thick with trees, which at the time of our visit were laden with green fruit, figs, apricots, medlars, plums, peaches, and walnuts, and under their shade were watered beds of onions, melons, and cucumbers. The season was too far advanced to enable us to notice the indigenous flora, and most of the plants were already in seed.

The lower botanical zone of Gilead presents no features differing from those of Jericho and the warmer Judean valleys, and we explored them at a less favourable season; while my botanical recollections of Bashan are chiefly marked by the predominance of the deciduous over the evergreen oak, the trees scattered instead of being in groups or masses, and by the noble size to which they attain. As we crossed again to the western side, the Upper Jordan valley, which three weeks before had been a brilliant garden of colour, was now a scorched and withered desert, where the tall brown stems of thistles and centaureas crackled under our horses' hoofs. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass" (Is. xl. 7). In this passage the illustration of suddenness of destruction has a force which cannot be fully appreciated without bearing in mind the rapid transition from spring to the sere and withered leaf, unknown in our temperate clime.

The flora of Mount Carmel, which may be regarded as the last preserve of nature remaining in western Palestine, has close affinities with that of Gilead. Its very name—"Carmel" signifying a park or fruitful place, a mixture of cultivated ground and woodland, "the excellency of Carmel"—marks it as having been ever the boast of Israel for sylvan beauty. Not possessing many evergreen trees, it is in winter dreary enough, but in early spring the atmosphere is heavy with the perfume of its shrubs. When we first visited it in the rains of December, few of these were in blossom, the bright-red barked *Arbutus andrachne* alone was in fruit. The crest of the mount is clothed

with a line of pine-trees (*Pinus halepensis*), much inferior in growth and beauty to the pines of Gilead. The most conspicuous shrub in early spring is the Judas-tree (*Cercis siliquastrum*), which before its leaves are in bud puts forth a mass of bunches of a brilliant red laburnum-shaped bloom, and, but for the contrast in colour, recals the effect of a fine clump of laburnum in an English pleasure-ground. It is particularly abundant on the north-eastern shoulder of the range.

The western end of the hill, near Caiffa, is bare and scrubby, having been entirely denuded for charcoal; but further inland are many fine forest trees scattered here and there. Oaks of both species (a noble Turkey oak overshadowing the well at the place of Elijah's sacrifice), chestnut-trees here and there, a very few Oriental plane-trees, an ash-tree (*Fraxinus ornus*), an elm, the locust tree, terebinth, and a few relics of probably all the native sylva of Palestine linger on its sides. Of smaller trees and shrubs the linden-tree (*Phyllyræa*) of more than one species, a kind of guelder-rose (*Viburnum tinus*), the wild olive, the lentisk-bush in profusion, a large tree-broom (*Genista*), with golden blossoms, the wild-olive, the hoary-leaved hawthorn (*Cratægus azarolus*), the service-apple (*Sorbus aucuparia*), and many others, bewildered our botanical ignorance. The bay-tree (*Laurus nobilis*), whether or no it be the "green bay-tree" of our version, flourishes plentifully on Carmel, as does the myrtle, about the identity of which no question has been raised. It is still a favourite with the people of the country, who gather and dry both the leaves and flowers, and twine its boughs with the oleander for their summer booths.

On Carmel we first found the almond-tree wild—the earliest of the trees to put forth its blossoms, diversifying the glades in January as the blackthorn does in England in the early spring. We may note that its Hebrew name signifies "haste," from its early blooming. Thus, in Jer. i. 11, 12, "I see a rod of an almond-tree. Then said the Lord unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will *hasten* my word to perform it." In the neighbourhood of the many deserted villages of Carmel, among the olive-groves, which are still partially tended, were pomegranate-trees, just coming into flower in April, when we paid our last visit to Carmel. It must surely have been the beauty of its blossom which led to its being selected as a sacred ornament. "I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the pomegranates budded" (Cant. vi. 11).

Another biblical plant, the rose-flowering cistus, or ladanum-tree (*Cistus villosus* and *Cistus salvifolius*), flourishes abundantly on Carmel. It produces the gum translated as myrrh in Gen. xliii. 11: "Carry down the man a present, a little balm, spices, and myrrh;" and is "the rose of Sharon" of Canticles. Its delicate and beautiful pink, or sometimes white flowers, cover the bare and rocky parts of Carmel for some days in March, and both species blossom there far more freely and luxuriantly than under cultivation with us. But the most abundant of all the perfume-yielding trees of Carmel is the storax (the stacte of Ex. xxx. 34), (*Styrax officinalis*), a shrubby tree from twelve to twenty feet high, one mass of pure white blossom, rivalling the orange in its beauty and its fragrance.

The ground carpet of Carmel is equally varied. Every open space in March is covered with flowers, many of them identical with those which occur in the south, but later in their time of appearing—valerians, red linums, gladiolus, a pink convolvulus, a large red antirrhinum, ranunculuses and pheasant's eye (*Adonis*), of endless variety in size and colour, and as large and brilliant as the anemone, which is now out of flower; the tufts of cyclamen are still in blossom among the roots of the shrubs and in the crevices of the rocks, and the tall red hollyhock (*Althæa acaulis*) towers above the rest, whether in the glens or from the crannies of the cliffs. In and under Mount Carmel we found our first orchideous plants in Palestine, *Serapias cordigera* (?); and five species of orchis, *O. palustris*, growing in the swamps of the Kishon, with flower-spikes a foot long, and other species which we could not succeed in drying for identification; the curious *Ophrys atrata*, with its dark bee-like lip, another *Ophrys* resembling the spider orchis, a third like the man orchis, and another which looked like a large and fine variety of the drone orchis. Four species of *Onosma*, and especially the brilliant yellow *O. syriacum*, hung from the rocks. It was the garden of Eden run wild. But before May had begun all was over.

Under Carmel, too, we first observed the mandrake, one of the most curious and peculiar plants of the country (*Mandragora officinalis*). It is twice mentioned in Scripture, once as growing in Mesopotamia, "Reuben found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah" (Gen. xxx. 14); and "The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits" (Cant. vii. 13). The mandrake pushes very early in the season, and sends up a large disk of very broad primrose-like leaves, which lies flat on the ground, without any foot-stalk. The leaves are often four inches in width and thrice that length, and in their centre shoots up a thick bunch of dark-blue bell-shaped blossoms, which afterwards yield a yellowish berry the size of a plum, with a pleasant sweetish pulp, prized by the natives both as a fruit and medicinally as an opiate. It has a long top root, smaller than that of the parsnip, with a pungent smell, which is cooked for food, though rather disagreeable to European palates. The blossom has a pleasant, pungent odour, unlike that of any other plant, but not fetid or disagreeable. We afterwards found the mandrake in most of the plains of northern Palestine, especially where the soil was soft and peaty.

Mount Carmel intersects the long maritime plains of Palestine, dividing that of Sharon on the south from those of Acre and Esdraelon on the north. The botanical characters of all these are similar, and less interesting than those of any other part of the country. They are all more or less cultivated, and little space is left for the indigenous flora. The most attractive plants of the plains are those near the Kishon on the one side, and in the marshes of the Crocodile river on the other. In both of these occurs the splendid *Papyrus syriacus*, very closely allied to the classic

papyrus of the Nile, and among the brakes of which the crocodile is believed still to linger. Here, too, the tamarisk and the willow abound, and the marsh orchis and gladiolus covered many a patch with a sheet of crimson. The rose of Sharon no longer grows on the plains, but, as has just been stated, is most abundant on the hills.

The whole of these plains are from time to time under cultivation, though after the rudest fashion. The soil is alluvial, and of exuberant fertility. Manure is never used, and the fellahin from the villages on the hills, or the inhabitants of the towns on the coast, claim their respective shares of the plains, according to certain ancient and recognised landmarks. Each autumn they scratch the surface with their wooden ploughs, harrow it with brushwood, and throw in their seed. Wheat or barley is sown time after time, till the soil shows symptoms of exhaustion, when it is simply left fallow, often for three or four years, to yield a spontaneous crop of thistles and knapweed (*centaurea*). Barley is grown perhaps to a larger extent than wheat, as it is not only largely employed for human food, but is the sole provender for horses and cattle in travelling, or when the grass crops are over. There seems to be but one variety cultivated, a fine bright grain, with well-filled ears and very silvery hue. The crops are often equal to those of our better cultivated fields. Not so the wheat crops, which are very light, though the individual ears are large, but so few in number that persons may walk or ride through the standing corn without treading it down. The wheat is all bearded. The most hardy sort has a black beard and husk, and in two varieties the beard is fully as long as in any barley. Everywhere the barley harvest is a month in advance of the wheat, though the latter is generally over by the end of May. It was interesting to hear our muleteers using the expressions of "wheat harvest," "barley harvest," to mark the date of past occurrences, just as the phrases occur in sacred history—"time of wheat-harvest," "time of barley harvest" (Judg. xv. 1; 2 Sam. xxi. 9., &c.).

Occasionally in the plain of Sharon we noticed patches of millet, mentioned as an ingredient of bread by Ezekiel (iv. 9). The plant looks very much like a luxuriant broad-leaved grass, for which, indeed, we took it at first. The ear is solid and heavy but the grain very small, yet it yields abundantly, and is considered a profitable crop, while the straw is finer and more nourishing for cattle than that of wheat or barley. Oats of course do not exist in so low a latitude, and rye we never observed to be cultivated in Palestine. Perhaps the "rye" of Ex. iv. 32, is a synonym for spelt, a coarse wheat.

In many places, especially where the soil was strong, lentiles were cultivated instead of grain. They are a species of vetch (*Ervum lens*), and have, when growing, very much the appearance of a very poor field of vetches in England. The pod is larger, and the lentiles give a good yield. When threshed out they are used for human food in various ways. Thus, in Gen. xxv. 34, "Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles." "And Barzillai the Gileadite brought . . . lentiles for David" (2 Sam. xvii. 28). "Take thou lentiles and make thee bread thereof" (Ezek. iv. 9). We certainly preferred lentile pottage, which was equal to vermicelli soup, to the lentile bread, which was bitter, heavy, and coarse.

While these were the crops of the cultivated parts of the plains, the fallow portion was covered with a prickly wilderness of tall thistles, artichokes, and knapweeds, which afforded shelter and security to the gazelle and the wild boar. The predominant plants were a very large artichoke (*Cynara sp. ?*) Many species of knapweed (*centaurea*), with blossoms, some blue, some yellow, some white, and some purple, but however differing in colour and shape, all agreeing in the abundance and the sharpness of their crowded spines: *Prasium majus*, *Acanthus spinosus*, *Ononis antiquorum*, and a tall labiate, ten feet high, whose leaves were edged with prickles of the most penetrating power; and occasionally a tall white hollyhock, *Althæa filicifolia*. So tall was this wilderness of thorns and briars, that the heads of the gazelles could scarcely be seen as they bounded through it. Thorns, indeed, and thistles are the characteristics of Palestine weeds, whether in the thickets of Jericho, or on the plains of Sharon and Galilee. Some of them are so strong, that in reclaiming the fallow the ploughmen do not take the trouble to clear them, but only plough round them. Many an expression in the imagery of Holy Writ is brought to mind by the sight of these thorny plains. "Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers" (Is. xxxii. 13). "The thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars" (Hos. x. 8). "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee" (Gen. iii. 18). "I will tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers" (Jud. viii. 7). "And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor any grieving thorn of all that are round about them" (Ez. xxviii. 24). "That which beareth thorns or briers is rejected" (Heb. vi. 8). Among the other weeds is frequently to be seen a gigantic umbelliferous plant (*Conium sp. ?*) probably the hemlock of Hosea x. 4: "Judgment springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field." "Ye have turned the fruit of righteousness into hemlock" (Amos vi. 12).

Most of the fruit-trees mentioned in Scripture are to be found in the gardens round Jaffa (Joppa), Caiffa, Tyre and Sidon, the most extensive orchards in the country. Many of these we have already mentioned, as the date-palm, fig, almond, and pomegranate. The orange and the lemon, now so common, and the chief product of Jaffa, are more modern introductions, and the citron was the only fruit of the kind cultivated during the Scripture period. The quince is very common, and is called the apple, yet though fragrant and tempting-looking, it is astringent and disagreeable when eaten raw, but is largely used in making the conserves and sweetmeats, of which the Eastern ladies are so fond. The true apple we hardly ever saw except in highest mountain regions, nor will it flourish in so warm a climate. Several writers who have talked of it as grown at Askelon and Jaffa have evidently confounded the quince and the apple. But the tappuach or "apple" of our version must refer to some fruit well known and esteemed. It was a

fragrant fruit: "the smell of thy nose (is) like apples" (Cant. vii. 8), and a beautiful fruit, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. xxv. 11). I would identify this fruit with the apricot. Everywhere the apricot is cultivated, and yields most abundant crops from Damascus to Jaffa. Next to the fig, it is the fruit of most general consumption, and certainly can yield to none either for fragrance or for beauty. Nor is there any reason to believe that it is a very recent introduction into the country, or indeed that it has been introduced more recently than the vine, since both are natives of the same region, Eastern Armenia, and would naturally be among the very first cultivated fruits brought into Syria by its Mesopotamian colonists.

Under the shadow of these fruit orchards, in the gardens "watered by the foot," where the labourer turns with his foot the little rills from the well, to the roots of each tree, or round each bed in turn; are cultivated carrots, onions, pumpkins, melons, and above all, cucumbers. The water-melon is also largely grown on the sandy hillocks outside, and reaches an enormous size, equalling the pumpkin in bulk and weight. "The lodge in the garden of cucumbers"—the rude wattled hut, where some decrepid old fellâh sits from morning to night, and from night to morning, to scare away the wild boars and jackals, "the little foxes that spoil the grapes," and to warn off human pilferers—may still be seen in many a plot of unfenced or ill-paved garden ground, an apt type of squalor and desolation. The consumption of melons, and especially of cucumbers, is prodigious, nor have the indigestible qualities of the latter been as yet discovered in the East. The ordinary dinner of the children of the poorer class is a hunch of barley or millet bread, with two good-sized cucumbers, which are eaten with the rind, and on which the lads thrive and are hearty. We habitually followed their example without any ill effects.

When from the plains we ascend into the less sultry hill-country of Galilee, there is little new to remark in the botany. Visiting, as we did, the neighbourhood of Tabor and Nazareth almost monthly from November to June, we had an opportunity of noticing the succession of its flowers, from the very earliest appearance of the crocus after the autumnal rains, to the last arums and astragaluses which survive the scorching heats of May. The frosts of winter are seldom severe, as is evidenced by the predominance of the olive tree in all the sheltered valleys, while in some favoured nooks, even close to Nazareth, the date palm bears its fruit. But on the whole we feel we are approaching a more northern flora. The woods about Tabor and to the north are composed generally of the same trees as clothe Carmel, but the proportions are changed, the oaks more decidedly predominate, the wild olive has disappeared, the storax tree is less abundant, while the hardier shrubs, as the bay tree, partially supplant it, the woodbine (*Lonicera implexa*) becomes common, and in the higher grounds we notice for the first time the wild pear tree.

In some of the olive-yards the oriental mistletoe (*Viscum cruciatum*) grows in profusion on every tree, and is the staple food of the noisy jays which swarm there, while its solid mass of glossy but deep green foliage and bright crimson berries, relieve with much beauty the blue foliage and purple fruit of the tree which supports it. This mistletoe seems, however, to be more tender than the olive tree, and we did not observe it on the higher grounds, while as we approach Hermon, we find the European mistletoe (*Viscum album*) on the poplars. The walnut tree gradually supplants the olive in the higher parts of Galilee, and its fruit is gathered green for the manufacture of oil.

But in its floral riches Galilee certainly surpasses the plains, and rivals the hill country of Judæa. Labiates and leguminous plants abound, the catalogue of the names of which could only interest the botanical student. These supply the inhabitants of Galilee with one of their staple products in the honey which they yield. The bees are not here wild as in the southern wilderness, though of the same species, *Apis fasciata* (erroneously named by me *Apis ligustica* at p. 488). Every peasant in Galilee is a bee-master, and the hives, which are simply great tubes of half-burnt clay, about a yard and a half long, and closed at each end with mud, excepting a small aperture in the middle, are piled one upon another to the number of from twenty to thirty in the form of a pyramid in the yard of every house. Dead boughs of trees are stuck around them, partly for shade and partly to assist the bees in alighting. Their bee is smaller than ours, more wasp-like in appearance, with bright yellow bands on the abdomen; and the produce of honey is enormous, while the stocks are never, after the barbarous fashion too common in this country, destroyed so soon as they have stored a harvest for their owners.

The mandrake is common in moist places throughout Galilee, and in early spring the glorious scarlet anemone (*A. coronaria*) is resplendent on hill-side, in valley, and in corn-field alike. Besides these, two species of tulip, one striped and the other red (*Tulipa gesneriana* and *T. montana?*), are often found side by side with the grape hyacinth (*Muscari racemosum*) on the stony slopes. Under the shrubs in shady places are many species of arum, *Dracunculus vulgaris*, *Colocasia antiquorum*, and at least half-a-dozen species of the more restricted genus arum, some of them, and those the most gorgeous, emitting an odour so insupportably fetid, that they poisoned the botany box, in which an incautious collector had placed them, for days afterwards. Later in the season the most attractive flowers were of the iris family, most of them preferring the shade of woods on the north of Tabor, and near Keder (Kedesh Napthali). Some were of surpassing loveliness, but so delicate and soft that we could not preserve them, and were compelled to be content with drawings kindly furnished by Mrs. Zeller of Nazareth, in order to identify them. The most conspicuous of these has been written of, though not described, by Dr. Thomson, under the name of the Huleh lily. It is a very large tuberous-rooted iris, pink, with rich purple blotches.

When from the hills of Galilee we descend to the calm basin of the Lake of Gennesareth, or to the wide-spreading swamps of Huleh (Merom), we again meet with a semi-tropical flora, Fagonia, Zizyphus, and

various Astragali, and some gorgeous convolvuluses, especially *Ipomea palmata*, overhanging the circular fountain of Gennesareth; the castor-oil tree (*Ricinus communis*), supposed, but erroneously, to be the gourd of the prophet Jonah, grows here to a great size; and the brilliant little sun-bird suspends its nest from its leaves. The wild-rose, of three species yet undetermined, occurred to us here for the first time in Palestine, far more showy and conspicuous than our species, the sheet of snow-white blossom of one kind contrasting finely with the rich pink of the oleander, with which it was intermingled. The shores of both the lakes are fringed with oleanders in their full beauty at the end of April, and in the marshes of Huleh a small tamarisk (*Tamarix pallasii*) with feathery plumes of pink catkins, gracefully blend with the oleander and the papyrus.

The papyrus of the sea of Galilee and of Huleh is peculiarly interesting. It is not the *Papyrus syriacus* of the coast, but a distinct and finer species, *P. antiquorum*, the true papyrus of ancient Egypt, the bulrush of which the ark which saved the infant Moses was constructed, the depository of all the learning of the old Egyptians. It still preserves its ancient name in the Arabic "Babeer," handed down to us in our familiar "paper." On the lower Nile it has been long extinct, nor is it found in Egypt or Nubia, and only in Abyssinia 4° N. of the equator. Yet here it lingers on the plain of Gennesareth, and is abundant in the waters of Merom. It is the finest species of the bulrush tribe, or *Cyperaceæ*. The stem, which sometimes reaches the length of sixteen feet, springs from a dense mass of root in the water or floating mud, sheathed at first in many leaves, but very soon standing out quite bare, and is sharply triangular, each of the three equilateral sides being about three inches at the thickest part. The stem is surmounted by a large feathery tuft or umbel of long spiculæ, about a foot long, which droops gracefully on one side, and supplies an excellent fly-flip to the natives. Its application to literature has long been lost, and it is now only cut down to form the matting with which the Bedouins of the district construct the huts which serve them in lieu of tents.

Sheltered by the papyrus in the shallower parts of Lake Huleh are acres of water-lily, both yellow and white, of our English species, *Nymphæa alba* and *Nuphar lutea*. We did not observe these in any other part of Palestine. The floating brakes of papyrus afford shelter to thousands of ducks and herons of the rarest species, as the white egret; while the beautiful purple gallinule or great water-hen, probably the "swan" of our English Bible, may often be seen by a patient observer, with its great red feet daintily treading on the floating leaves of the water-lily, the under surface of which are covered with myriads of the peculiar fresh-water shells of the lake, *Neritina jordani* and *Melanopsis costata*, which almost form the shingle of the sea of Galilee.

In the neighbourhood of Huleh, as in the maritime plains, the cultivation of cotton has recently received a great impulse, and we saw large tracts laid down for its growth, which have probably remained fallow since the days of the Crusaders.

On ascending from the banks of the upper Jordan towards Hermon and Lebanon, the flora entirely changed. The olive, which flourishes at Banias (Cæsarea Philippi), becomes stunted at Hasbeiya, and at Rasheiya gives place altogether to the walnut. When from Rasheiya we make the ascent of Hermon, at almost every step we come upon some member of a semi-Alpine or Alpine flora, quite new to us, and of course not found in the lower altitudes of the Holy Land. With one notable exception—the cedar—none of the peculiar plants of the northern mountain ranges can be looked on as Scriptural, but geographically and botanically they can scarcely be surpassed in interest.

A little out of the ordinary route, between Hasbeiya and Rasheiya, is to be seen the finest tree in Syria, though quite unknown—the oak of Libbeiya. It is an evergreen oak (*Quercus pseudo-coccifera*), of the same species as the oak of Mamre. At four feet from the ground, the narrowest part, it measures thirty-seven feet in circumference, and at about six feet it begins to send out its lateral branches, each a fine piece of timber in itself. The tree forms a perfectly symmetrical dome, covering a circumference of over ninety yards, and extending with even sweep to within five feet of the ground in an exact circle, trimmed artificially to that height by the browsing of the cattle.

In the valley of the Leontes, not very far from Libbeiya, at El Kuweh, is one of the best botanical fields in northern Palestine, and the only spot where eight species of fern may be gathered close together. During two or three days by the Leontes and on Hermon, we collected more additional species of plants than we had done in the previous three months of our journeyings.

On Hermon itself, above the line of the oak forests, when the trees begin to dwindle into coppice, there is no timber at all, and we did not observe any species of pine. At the height of 4000 feet we lost the trees, and thenceforward there was nothing larger than the little bushes of the pretty *Cerasus prostrata*, a very dwarf cherry, with an exquisite red blossom. There were several species of prickly astragalus bushes, particularly *A. coluteoides*, with clusters of axillary pale yellow flowers buried behind the defence of its spines. It deserves note as one of the plants from which gum-tragacanth (translated "spicery" and "spices" in Gen. xxxvii. 25, and xliii. 11) is obtained. Other plants growing only at the height of above 4000 feet, were the pretty little poppy, *Papaver rhœas*, *Glaucium vitellinum*, the little *Rosa spinosissima*, *Lepidium sativum* (our common cress), *Alsine juniperina*, several Galiums, the Persian goatsbeard, (*Tragopogon persicum*), an alkana, *myosotis* (or Forget-me-not), a speedwell (*Veronica polifolia*), six or seven salvias or sages, and many other less conspicuous plants. Hermon is within a few feet of 10,000 feet in height, and is abundantly clothed with alpine plants to its very summit. At or near the top we found a *Fumaria*, *Draba vesicaria*, and *D. villosa*, *Geranium tuberosum* and *Bierberstenia multifida*, the pretty little primrose, *Androsace villosa*, two anchusas, the beautiful little blue *Ixolirion montanum*, a very

beautiful red tulip, and a Fritillaria, neither of which were we able to identify. The three latter were pushing forth their blossoms just at the edge of the melting snow in the month of June.

Lebanon, though generally a counterpart, as we might expect, of Hermon in its botany, yet has some marked features in contrast with it, especially in its wood. Unlike Hermon, or Anti-Lebanon, Lebanon is only bare where the hand of man has denuded it. The flowers of Hermon generally occur again on Lebanon, and we noticed many others in addition, especially the common berberry, and on the very highest ridge of Lebanon, over the cedar-grove, among the melting snow, the lovely little *Daphne oleoides* was covered with a profusion of white blossom, with a perfume richer and stronger than the jasmine. Then there was many a tree mentioned in Scripture along with "the glory of Lebanon . . . the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary" (Is. lx. 13). Unless where man has cleared them for the mulberry, the lower slopes of Lebanon are still clad with oak, and ash, and cedar, and cypress. Higher up, the gnarled juniper is more sparingly scattered; while in the rugged recesses of many an unexplored ravine the Syrian bear still scrambles among the relics of the primæval forests, among the mingled pine-trees, junipers, and that with which we may fitly close our reminiscences of the flora of the Holy Land,—the cedar of Lebanon.

It was long supposed that it was alone in the secluded grove above Hazrun that "the cedar in Lebanon" could now be seen, "with fair branches, and with a shadowy shroud, and of a high stature," that cedar of which we read, "the fir-trees were not like his boughs, and the chestnut-trees were not like his branches, nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty" (Ez. xxxi. 3, 8). The cedars of this famed grove are indeed unrivalled in grandeur and majesty, yet in many other nooks of the Lebanon, not only on the western face, but in the southern spurs, and even on the east side of the Lebanon, where they were not anticipated, large tracts of cedar forest have been found. They are unfortunately grievously pillaged, being recklessly destroyed for firewood, but enough remains to prove the ancient empire of the cedar, in the days when, not confined to ravines too inaccessible or too poor to tempt agriculture, or to heights too cold to permit profitable cultivation, it so frequently suggested the glorious and majestic imagery of the prophets. As I have elsewhere remarked ("Land of Israel," p. 636), "The prophets spoke to men to whom the splendour of these monarchs of the forest was familiar. In the cedars of the famous grove, we have living evidence handed down to us, that that imagery was no exaggeration. The scattered relics on other parts of the mountain are a living evidence that the range of the cedar was wide-spread, and, therefore, that illustrations from it were familiar and forcible."

H. B. Tristram.

THE GERMAN FAMILY IN LONDON.

One September day there was an open-air missionary meeting in the neighbourhood of Barmen, in the lovely Wupperthal. The friends of missions in the vicinity had flocked together from all quarters. There was scarcely a village within a circuit of ten miles which did not send its minister with his deacons and the better portion of his church members. Men and women, old and young, rich and poor, crowded together, exhibiting that true and wonderful equality and fraternity, which political communism can at best but caricature, and nothing but Christian communion can realise. On a small platform, under the broad foliage of a gigantic beech tree, some of the leaders of the mission were sitting in committee, directing the proceedings of the day. At a distance, amidst the slender stems of tall firs, between which the September sun cast his cheerful rays, long rows of tables and forms were placed to accommodate the numerous guests at dinner-time, when a roll, a bit of meat, and a cup of coffee would refresh them for the work of the afternoon.

Several speakers, famous for their eloquence or their practical knowledge of mission-work, addressed the assembly. Each speech was closed with a hymn, and in the pauses hymn after hymn was raised by the people themselves, making the forest and the neighbouring hills resound with the sweet melodies of the *Deutschen Kirchenlieder*. And when afterwards the people were seated at the tables, and the blessing was asked by the chairman, the speeches and the hymns were continued in uninterrupted succession, every one being desirous of expressing the feelings of his heart on this happy day, and of contributing something towards building up the congregation in their faith, hope, and love. And so it went on from hour to hour, till at last the long shadows of the firs announced the setting of the sun, and gave the signal for departure. In numerous groups, dotting the roads that crossed the hills in all directions, the people returned to their homes, keeping up the enthusiasm of the day by their evening hymns, which echoed through the valleys.

A little group walked up the steep road leading to the village of Kirchheim. It consisted of Hermann Stahl, the farmer, Peter Vormann, the schoolmaster, with their wives and children, and a few neighbours of the working class. Hermann and Peter were engaged in a lively conversation, to which the rest of the company listened evidently with great interest, the women now and then dropping in a word of affirmation, explanation, or correction. The subject regarded Hermann's plan of emigrating to America in the spring.

Hermann Stahl was a man in the prime of life,

with a robust appearance, broad shoulders, and a manly face. On his little farm, which he cultivated with the ability of a well-taught husbandman, he had brought up a family of six children, who possessed in his wife a most kind and tender-hearted mother. With the exception of the eldest, a girl of eighteen, the children were boys, of whom the eldest was sixteen and the youngest six. They were a happy family, living in the midst of charming scenery, secluded from the din and bustle of the world, and enjoying the privileges and blessings of a truly Christian society, such as the little village of Kirchheim was blessed with. The minister of the place—for there was only one church at Kirchheim—was a pious man, a good preacher, and a still better pastor. Peter Vormann, the schoolmaster, was his friend; and everybody knows that when in a small village the pastor and the teacher agree, the whole population is in their hands for good or for evil. Happily, in this case, it was for good, for Peter spoke to the children at school of no other way of salvation than his friend the minister recommended to their parents at church. The people having thus, from time immemorial, been accustomed to meet as children in one and the same school, and as adults in one and the same church, it could not be any matter of wonder that the whole population of Kirchheim looked like one family, of which the minister was the father and the schoolmaster the eldest brother. Kirchheim was one of those happy villages, of which the remote hilly districts of Rhenish Prussia have always possessed a considerable number. The various changes in theological systems have found as little access to them as the shifting caprices of fashion, and consequently the old faith of the Reformers is there maintained intact, as well as the simplicity of patriarchal life. In those villages the pattern of the first Christian church at Jerusalem, the members of which "were of one heart and of one soul, having all things in common," is preserved as far as it is possible in our day. The people go in and out of each other's houses with as much freedom as though they were their own; and no wonder, for they were wont to do so as children, and the time for dropping the good custom has not, in their opinion, come round. They call each other, and each other's wives, by their Christian names, as familiarly as if they were brothers and sisters. They are often seen in summer time sitting in rows of six or eight on the benches near the front doors of the cottages, cheerfully chatting till the setting sun, or the chiming of the evening bell, calls them to their homes. In winter they spend their evenings in small companies, assembling in the houses by rotation, when many a good book is read, and many an interesting subject discussed. At these gatherings either the minister or the schoolmaster is generally present, and he usually gives such a tone to the conversation as promotes the religious knowledge and edification of the people. Pauperism or destitution is impossible in those places, unless some general calamity, such as a failure of the crops or an inundation, throws the whole of the population into distress. The people know each other too well not to know each other's wants, and they love one another too well not to try to help where help is possible.

Now Hermann Stahl was a member of one of these happy communities. Nor was he an insignificant member. He was an elder of the church, and was held in high esteem on account of his piety and respectable conduct. It would have been difficult to point to a man, in his position in life, who found himself in happier circumstances. His farm, though not very large, was yet sufficient for the support of himself and his family. He had attained the highest honours within the reach of an inhabitant of Kirchheim. He was everywhere received with cordial affection; all houses were open to him, and many hearts likewise, and into them he knew how to pour the consolations of the Gospel. No wonder, then, that the population was smitten with surprise when it was rumoured that Hermann contemplated emigrating to America. Everybody was put about by the news, for Hermann was always thought to be the most unlikely to need to have recourse to such a measure. The minister, the schoolmaster, and the elders of the church took the highest interest in the matter, for nobody desired to miss such a good man from the Kirchheim society. And besides, people thought, if he set the example, it was likely that more would follow, and what would then become of good old Kirchheim? So the first few days after the report had gone forth, Hermann's house was besieged by people inquiring whether it was really true, and trying to dissuade him from such an "absurd plan." In fact, he could scarcely show himself in the village street, without being accosted by friends, some of whom besought him even with tears in their eyes to consider well before it was too late.

Now, the reasons which induced Hermann to think of such a plan as exchanging the dearly beloved "fatherland" for a new and unknown world, were perhaps not so urgent as he thought, but neither were they so absurd as his friends and neighbours tried to make them appear. His first and chief reason was that he had little or no prospect of seeing his children established in circumstances similar to his own. Had they all been girls he might have cherished the hope of seeing them one day married to respectable farmers or tradesmen. But they were boys, as I have said, with the exception of Hannah, the eldest, and there was no opportunity in the village of training them up for anything but farming. Now, it was as clear as day that only one of them could get his father's farm after his death, and it was equally clear that the other brothers would have to hire themselves out as servants, without any prospect of becoming masters and owners of farms of their own. In America, on the contrary, they would have the world, as it were, before them. His brother Dietrich, of Hildesheim, had emigrated to Wisconsin six years before, with his wife and nine children, and had not only found himself in the most prosperous circumstances, but four of his sons were already owners of farms as thriving and productive as his own. In every letter this brother urged him to follow his example and cross the Atlantic. He wrote that there were "hundreds and thousands of acres of the most splendid arable land in the neighbourhood to be had for a mere trifle." Hermann

would only have to come across and take possession, and within a few years he would see himself and his sons living like independent princes on their own estates.

On this Peter Vormann, the schoolmaster, would remark that it was all very plausible and alluring to read about in brother Dietrich's letter, but that it might turn out very different in reality. He remembered many who, with similar sanguine expectations, had emigrated to America only to die in poverty and destitution. He always repeated those beautiful words of the Psalmist in the 37th Psalm:—"Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." It was true that he (Peter) could not show Hermann how his four sons were to be provided with farms ten or fifteen years hence. But it appeared to him that Hermann might safely leave that matter in the hand of the Lord, who ten or fifteen years hence would prove the same faithful, wise, and mighty God and Helper that he had always proved before. If there were some urgent cause which imperatively necessitated his departure; if, for instance, it was shown that from year to year he was going backward in his domestic and monetary affairs, then Peter would be inclined to regard brother Dietrich's letters as so many voices from Heaven calling him from Germany to America, in the same way as Abraham had been called from Ur, or Israel out of Egypt, to emigrate to a land which the Lord had destined for them to dwell in. But since no such urgent cause existed, he thought it would be reckless imprudence and a presumptuous anticipation of God's dealings if he broke up his farm, and undertook such a long, perilous and uncertain voyage wholly of his own accord. He would be afraid lest the Lord might turn his antagonist, and withhold from him all those favours, without which even the most prosperous country becomes a desert, and the happiest home an abode of misery.

Hermann felt that there was much truth in this reasoning, although he could not quite share his friend's gloomy fears as to the possible consequences of his emigration. He could not see how the Lord could become an antagonist to a man who tried to improve his condition, since the desire for improvement was an instinct which had been implanted by God himself. It was true that as yet there was no urgent reason for removing, and he might quietly leave it to God to answer the question how to provide for his sons when they would come of age. But, thought he, Peter must admit that that sort of passive waiting upon the Lord might be dictated not only by pious humility, but also by easy-going selfishness, inasmuch as it was less trouble to him to leave matters as they were, and to tell his sons to care for themselves, than to travel to a distant country, and provide them with farms in time. He could not help remembering that text of Scripture, where the Apostle says that the children ought not to care for their parents, but the parents for their children. In his opinion, it was *now* the time to strike the iron. His sons were all of them young, and at the age when one easily learns a foreign language, and without much trouble adapts one's-self to the national character, the habits and customs of a foreign people. And as to the breaking-up of his farm, he believed that he would have to do that even apart from the emigration plan, owing to a railway which was to be made through the district. He saw no reason why, in that case, he should not go to America, where the largest farms were to be got at scarcely one-half the price of his own.

The next afternoon, the minister stepped into Hermann's room. He found Frau Stahl alone, and engaged in mending clothes. Hannah was in the dairy, and Hermann was away with the two eldest boys in the fields ploughing up a piece of land. The schoolmaster had taken the other boys out for a walk to the top of the Brunnenberg, which commanded a magnificent view of the surrounding district. The sun was now about setting, so that it was likely the father and the schoolmaster and the boys would be home shortly.

"Do you come to take your coffee with us to-night, Herr Pastor?" asked Frau Stahl, rising with a smile, and throwing the clothes on a chair in the corner. "Of course you do. Hermann will be back soon, and so will the master with the boys."

"Well, it was not exactly my intention to stay," answered the minister, in a cordial tone; "but since you are bent upon detaining me for a couple of hours, I suppose I must submit. But then, you know I must go and fetch my wife, for she would be sure to lecture me if I left her alone at home."

"Of course, of course, Herr Pastor; and I will send Hannah round to the Fallmings and the Müllers, that they also may come with their wives, and we'll have a nice evening together, with God's blessing."

An hour later a happy company of friends was gathered round Frau Stahl's white-scoured tea-table, which was bending under the weight of the bread and butter, and other dainties, which were all produced on Hermann's own farm, and made by the skill of his wife and daughter. While the guests enjoyed their neighbour's hospitality, the conversation chiefly concerned the missionary meeting of the preceding day. Portions of the speeches which had been delivered were recalled to memory, and incidents from the various missionary reports which had been read to the congregation were rehearsed with great sympathy. It was again observed that the difficulties and dangers which the faithful messengers of the Gospel had to encounter in the midst of uncivilised and often savage nations, and in unhealthy and inhospitable quarters of the globe, were very great; and at the close of the meal the minister gave out a missionary hymn, after which he and two or three other friends engaged in prayer, for the Divine protection to the gospel-preachers in heathen countries, and for the spread of the knowledge of Christ among those ignorant peoples.

Coffee over, the men took their pipes and the women their knitting-work, and opportunity was given for general conversation on interesting questions of the day. Usually, on such occasions, the host read a portion of the Bible or a page of some other religious book by way of suggesting a subject. This time Hermann, who was anxious to hear the opinions of his

friends about his plan of emigration, read the first chapter of the book of Ruth, which tells of the emigration of Elimelech with his wife and sons to the country of Moab. This story, he said, clearly showed that emigration, though often attended with many trials and difficulties, might yet be a good thing, inasmuch as it might proceed from a justifiable motive, and be productive of excellent effects, both spiritual and temporal. That Elimelech's motive in emigrating from a land of starvation to a land of abundance was quite justifiable, nobody could reasonably deny. And that great blessings had been the consequence of his emigration was equally clear, since in the hand of Jehovah it was instrumental in restoring Naomi to honour and peace, and in bringing Ruth to the service of the only true and living God.

To this Fallming, the shoemaker, replied that the blessings which his friend pointed to were certainly consequences of Elimelech's *emigration*, but he held it was equally true that those blessings were brought about by Naomi's *return*. In his opinion, a man who could find no bread in his own country was perfectly justified in stepping over into another country, where he might find bread, but as, by God's blessing, matters were not yet at that pass in Germany, he did not see how his dear friend and brother Hermann could, with any show of reason, point to his position as being a parallel to that of Elimelech. Thank God, famine was unknown in the good country of the Ruhr and the Wupper. There was plenty of bread, both wheat and rye, and carrots in summer, and sour-crout in winter, and therefore he could not see why people should go all the way to America to seek for provisions which they could find in their own country quite as well.

In this view of the matter Frau Fallming perfectly agreed with her husband. Besides, she would have her dear friend Hermann observe that whatever may have been the blessings which accrued to others from Elimelech's emigration, no blessings flowed from it to himself. He died, and so did his sons, and it might be that these fatal calamities were chastisements from God, showing his displeasure at the step the family had taken. It would be a fearful thing even to suppose that Hermann and his sons might die in America in the same way, and that dear Frau Stahl and Hannah should come back, like Naomi and Ruth, clad in mourning and bathed in tears.

Tears filled the eyes of the good Frau, and the other female portion of the company were likewise moved; handkerchiefs soon covered their faces, and there was a solemn pause for a minute or two. Human faces, however, are very changeable in their expressions, as are human passions. The tears soon gave way to smiles, and even to scarcely-suppressed laughter, when Johann, Hermann's eldest son, a boy of sixteen, observed, with much simplicity, that, as it was not told in the chapter that they died from God's displeasure, it was much more natural to suppose that Elimelech and his sons, having come from a famine-stricken land to a country abounding with provisions, might have over-eaten themselves, and died from want of due self-restraint. Therefore, to guard against such a temptation, he thought it would be wise not to delay emigration till famine came into the land, but to start in such circumstances as would enable one to enter the new country with a full stomach.

Müller, the grocer, hereupon observed that there was sense in what the lad said. If emigration was inevitable, it was far better to carry it out in affluent than in straitened circumstances. But it was not certain that affluence at the beginning always secured affluence in the end. Many a well-to-do family, who set out with a nice sum of money, lost the whole of it on the other side of the ocean. He could not help here referring to the case of Henry Prizel, who went to London a few years before, with five hundred gold English sovereigns in his pocket, and set up a turner's shop, which, however, proved a complete failure, so that he died in utter misery, leaving his son Daniel in the workhouse.

To this Hermann observed that he knew Henry's case very well, since he was a far-off cousin of his own; but Henry's history could not justly be quoted as a specimen of wise emigration. His case entirely differed from that. To settle down in a European town as a tradesman was one thing, and to emigrate to America to become a farmer there was another. The two things, in fact, admitted of no comparison. As to Daniel, he was happy to be able to tell tolerably satisfactory news, for he had recently received a letter from him. He was not in the workhouse, but employed in a sugar-house near the Thames, where he earned a sovereign a week. It was hard work, and he was afraid his health would not be able to stand it. But he hoped that his cousin Hermann might find some employment for him in Germany, since he had not yet altogether forgotten the German language.

"How old was he when he left this country?" asked the minister.

"Twelve or thirteen, I think," answered Müller. "He cannot have been older than that."

"So he must be about twenty now," said the minister. "Why, Hermann, if your mind is made up to travel to America, you could easily take him along with you."

"No, no. You *shall* not go—you *must* not go," cried several voices; and again the conversation as to whether it was according to God's Word to leave one's country without urgent necessity, took a fresh start. The minister now expressed his opinion, and so did the schoolmaster. Many texts were quoted, and many sayings of wise, godly men, who had expressed themselves against what they called the emigration-fever, were called to remembrance.

The winter passed on, and spring came into the land, and Hermann's resolution was unchanged.

The whole village was astir on the day of the departure of the family. To the good people it was like a dismal funeral day. Every one who could spare a couple of hours followed the carts which conveyed the emigrants and their luggage to the station. There were the minister, and the schoolmaster, and the shoemaker, and the grocer, with their wives, and a great many other friends and neighbours, who surrounded the carts, shook hands with the departing ones on the road, and walked along, some weeping and

some sobbing. And when they had seen them off with the train for Rotterdam, they returned home in deep silence, for their hearts were sad. It was to them as if they had carried a father and a brother to the grave.

According to an agreement made with a house at Cologne, the family proceeded to London to embark on board the "Borussia," a German emigrant-ship in which they had engaged berths as second-class passengers to New York. On their arrival they liked their accommodation well, and though they marvelled much at the innumerable multitude of big ships in the dock where theirs was lying, and were almost bewildered in the midst of the new and undreamt-of objects their eyes now beheld, they were yet glad to learn that they were to sail in two days, for they longed to reach their destination. Milwaukee, a Wisconsin town, on the western shore of Lake Michigan, was the point whither they had to travel, as Hermann's brother Dietrich was to meet them there with carts and horses to convey them to his house, which was about five days' journey further westward. Adjoining his farm were the acres he had bought for Hermann, who had sent him all the money he had realised from the sale of his farm stocking, save some forty pounds, which he had kept to pay travelling expenses from New York to Milwaukee. So everything being well arranged, as was thought, the good family had no other desire than to start as quickly as possible. This desire, however, was sadly frustrated. Owing to a defect which was discovered in the vessel, her departure was delayed for a week, in order that she might be repaired. Crowded with emigrants, and wedged in between numerous other vessels within the comparatively narrow space of a London dock, and with the vernal sun shining with unusual heat upon the deck, the cabins, and especially the second-class cabin, were actually turned into ovens. Our friends, who had been accustomed to breathe the pure, invigorating mountain-air of Germany, could not possibly stand this great and sudden change. Frau Stahl took ill, and so did three of the children. The doctor urgently advised Hermann to take lodgings during the days the ship was to be under repair, as he had no doubt change of air would soon put the invalids right again. Three rooms were accordingly taken for a week in the Commercial Road, but the doctor's expectation was not confirmed. The disease of Frau Stahl and the boys turned out to be scarlatina. When the ship was ready to sail, they could not possibly think of going with her, the less so that Hannah also took ill. Nothing was left for poor Hermann but to take his luggage out of the "Borussia," and allow her to sail without himself or family.

And now the position of the poor pilgrims became very trying indeed. Hitherto they had experienced no difficulty as to the language, since the captain, the doctor, the crew, and by far the greater portion of the passengers on board the "Borussia" were Germans. But the moment the ship was gone, poor Hermann found himself a stranger amongst people of whose language he did not understand one word The apartments which he had rented were good and well-furnished, but they cost a pound a week. The doctor, who came every day, sometimes twice a day, charged half-a-crown a visit. Provisions, too, were excessively dear in Hermann's opinion. Only think, sixteenpence, and even eighteenpence for a pound of butter (and such butter as he would have been ashamed to sell from his farm, and he used to sell his for eightpence or tenpence!) Beef, pork, and ham were double the price they were in his village! Rye bread—that dainty for a German palate—was not to be got in the whole of London! The dinner which his landlady cooked for him and the two boys who were not yet attacked by the disease, cost eighteenpence a day, and was scarcely eatable, as everything was cooked without salt, and the vegetables were like grass, and the potatoes like frozen turnips.

"My dear," he said one evening, after he had sat down by the bedside of his wife, who, as well as the other invalids, was progressing favourably, though every possible care had still to be taken to prevent relapses—"My dear," he said; "when it pleases the Lord to restore you and the children, we must leave these apartments and take cheaper ones."

"Dear husband, the Lord has indeed brought us into deep ways. I hope you don't lose your trust in Him."

"I do not, darling, but it is exceedingly difficult for me to get along with the people here, as I cannot understand them. I never felt so much alone in the world."

"Have you been to the hospital?"

This question of Frau Stahl's had reference to Daniel Prizel. On their arrival in London, Hermann had repaired to Daniel's address, as it was his intention to take him along with them to America. But the landlord told him that the young man had got the fever, and was lying in the hospital.

"I have not, dear," was the answer. "How could I have gone? I have not been away from you and the children since you took ill."

"Well, then, go now. Perhaps Daniel is sufficiently recovered to be able to help you through in this great Babel. He knows the ways and the language."

It was with great difficulty that Hermann found out Daniel's hospital, and it cost him not a little trouble to find Daniel after he had found the hospital. The young man was quite enraptured when the foreigner who approached his bed made himself known to him as his cousin Hermann Stahl from Kirchheim. He kissed him as a child kisses its father.

"So you have come at length!" exclaimed he. "And are you going to take me with you to America now? I am all but recovered, and if needs be I can go with you even as early as to-morrow."

Hermann told his story. An expression of deep grief clouded the beaming face of Daniel.

"But at any rate, the Cologne emigrant house will be bound to forward you to New York?" said he, in an interrogative tone.

"I think it will. I wrote to Cologne, but have got no answer as yet. It is their duty, of course; and surely they won't be so dishonest as to take advantage of our misfortunes."

Drawn by G. J. Pinwell. Engraved by Dalziels.

THE GERMAN FAMILY IN LONDON.

Daniel sighed. He had not much confidence in the honesty of continental emigrant houses. "Most of them are swindlers," he muttered between his teeth.

"Could you come and see us this week, Daniel?"

"Of course, dear cousin. I shall be with you to-morrow."

"But we have scarlatina in the house."

"Never mind; I have had it. But you ought to be very careful with that disease. It is much more dangerous in this country than with us in Germany. Complaints may result from it such as we never hear of on the Continent."

The next day Daniel was sitting with his cousin in their front room. The poor lad was much emaciated and very weak. He had got the fever in the sugar-house, where he had to work all day in a temperature of from 100 to 110 degrees. He could not return to the works, as it would kill him. What he was to do now he knew not, and he had not so much as a farthing in his pocket.

"Of course you will stay with us," said Hermann. "Henceforth you are a member of the family. We will share weal and woe with each other. You will be of great service to me, as you know this terrible place and its terrible language."

"You find a great difference between this and Kirchheim I suppose?" said Daniel.

"I do indeed. I never could have thought that there was such a place in the world as this. People do not live here in their houses, but in omnibuses and railway carriages. The whole of this place is one huge mill, in which one is like to lose one's hearing and understanding from the constant buzz and whir."

As the patients were progressing favourably, it was resolved to look out for cheaper lodgings, for Hermann calculated that, if he went on in this way, he would be penniless within six weeks. Fortunately he had among his luggage, which was stowed away in a shed at the back of the house, a sufficient number of beds and mattresses, a complete cooking apparatus, and many other pieces of furniture. Daniel accordingly rented four unfurnished rooms on the first floor in a back street off the Commercial Road at twelve shillings a week. Chairs, tables, and bedsteads were bought at a low price at an auction in the neighbourhood, and when the invalids had recovered so far as to be capable of being removed without danger, the family went to the new abode.

Sunday came, and as none of the family were able to understand an English sermon, and the German Chapel was too far off, Hermann officiated as priest in his house, and conducted a regular service after the German fashion, by reading a sermon out of one of the collections with which the literature of his country is so well provided. He had brought several volumes of this kind in the expectation of using them in Wisconsin, where, as his brother had written, no church or chapel was to be seen for a score of miles round about. Service over, Hannah opened the door to step into the back room, which had been appropriated for a kitchen, when she started back with an exclamation of fright, as the passage and the stairs were crowded with people —men, women, and children.

Hermann and Daniel rushed at once to the doorway.

"What is all this about?" asked Daniel. "Is there anything the matter?"

"The singing, sir," cried some of the intruders. "Please give us another tune."

Indeed the singing of the family was worth hearing. Frau Stahl and Hannah had beautiful treble voices, Daniel sang a good tenor, Hermann's voice was a deep bass, which made the floor of the room quiver, and the boys took the alto part with faultless accuracy. And there was little to wonder at in this, for Master Peter Vormann, who was an excellent musician, had made the Kirchheim school famous for its singing, so that whenever there was a festival in the neighbourhood, and a chorus to be got up, the Kirchheim boys were always engaged for the alto part.

The unanimous request of this unexpected audience was gladly complied with. Another German hymn was sung, which the people listened to with breathless attention, and when Daniel at the close shut the door, the crowd dispersed, tendering loud applause.

"I see those savages are at least human beings," said Hermann. "They have a taste for our *Deutschen Lieder*."

"Savages!" cried Daniel, "let them not hear you speak in that way. They would soon do for you."

"Why, but they *are* savages," said Hermann; "they spend their days in nothing but drinking and fighting."

"Even the women here go to the public-house," said Hannah, "and stand at the bar 'dramming,' as they call it, with the men till they are drunk."

"Don't the women do the same in our country?" asked Daniel.

"I never saw a drunk woman in our country," answered Frau Stahl, in an indignant tone, "except pehaps on the occasion of some fair or popular festival; for a woman to frequent a public-house is a thing altogether unknown among us; such a one would be looked upon as a disgusting outcast by the whole population."

"The women also smoke in this country," said Johann, the eldest of the boys. "I saw an old yellow-faced woman the other day who looked exactly like a witch, as she smoked away from a small stump of a pipe not longer than my thumb. Ach! it looked hideous!"

"Ah! that must have been an Irishwoman or a gipsy," replied Daniel. "Englishwomen don't smoke; they hate it."

"Oh dear!" sighed Frau Stahl, "among what a set of people have we fallen! We have become like Israel in Babylon."

In the afternoon the family united for Bible-reading. The 34th Psalm was taken up for discussion.

"Shall we sing?" asked Hannah. "I am afraid we'll have a crowd again."

"Not likely," said Daniel, "the people are in the public-house now, or out for a walk, or taking a nap to sleep off the drink."

"Never mind the crowd," said Hermann. "Let them come again. Perhaps the Lord may touch their hearts through our *lieder*."

The beautiful psalm was read. Hermann had selected it to console himself and his family in their present distressing circumstances. There was some similarity, he observed, between their position and that of David at the time when he composed the psalm, since he found himself in the land of the Philistines, to which he had emigrated.

"True," remarked Frau Stahl, "and there is also this similarity between him and us, that he, like us, got into his difficulties through his imprudence, and through his not waiting upon the Lord. For if he had fully committed his lot to the hands of God, he would not have sought refuge with the heathen. So the Lord drove him away from that place, and compelled him to return to the land he had recklessly deserted. And the same course, I am afraid, the Lord is going to take with us now, for we have met with nothing but adversity since we left our good Kirchheim and our lovely farm, on which the Lord had blessed us for so many years."

It was rather in a desponding tone that Frau Stahl uttered these words. Nor was her reasoning altogether groundless. The members of the family had already several times discussed what course they should take, supposing the Cologne house refused to provide them with passages in another ship. It was evident that the money which they had still in hand would not last them longer than two months. Hermann had written to his brother Dietrich, requesting him to send back the money he had deposited with him, but it was uncertain whether that sum would come in time to prevent starvation. So it became more and more a matter of earnest consideration with them whether the wisest course would not be to return to Kirchheim before their last shilling was spent and they were left penniless in this immense metropolis. But the thought of returning poor and helpless to Kirchheim, of asking bread and shelter from those same friends who had so urgently dissuaded them from taking this step, was almost bitterer than the prospect of begging for their livelihood in the streets of London. So, whichever way they looked, they saw before them a dark cloud, and there was thus reason for the sad tone in which Frau Stahl—who, to tell the truth, had never been very strongly in favour of the emigration plan—made her observation. Her husband, however, perceiving that if courage and hope were lost everything would be lost, and feeling his responsibility as the head and support of the family, encouraged himself in God, as David did when the town of Ziklag was burnt.

"Dear wife," he said, "I think you are right in pointing to the present as days of deep humiliation for us. Perhaps we did not earnestly seek the Lord's face before resolving to quit our land. Perhaps also we have sinned in some other way, so that the chastening hand of God is now heavy upon us. But we should remember that David, though he had brought difficulties upon himself by his imprudence, yet continued to trust in God, knowing that the Lord would not forsake him on account of his transgressions. 'Many are the afflictions of the righteous,' he says, 'but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.' Let us walk in that same faith now. If God chooses to deal with us according to our sins, we have nothing to hope. But Jesus died for us, and bore our sins in his precious body on the tree. We will plead on that ground, my dears, and firmly believe that, though we may have erred, yet our Heavenly Father, who bought us at a price, will not forsake us. He never said to us that He will only be our God provided we sin no more. We are living in the day of grace, and the fountain that was opened against every pollution on Calvary is flowing still as abundantly as ever."

While the poor pilgrims were in this way refreshing their souls at the waters of consolation that flow from the Word of God, a terrible shuffling, crying, and screaming were heard over their heads. Then there was a bounce on the floor, as if some heavy body were falling, followed by the cry "Murder!" Hermann and Daniel rushed up the stairs, and stepped into the room whence the noise issued. A strange sight was presented to their view. Their neighbour, who was a carman, was standing over his wife with an uplifted pewter-pot in his hand; he had knocked her down and was beating her unmercifully; a table had been upset in the struggle, and behind it two little children were cowering and crying piteously. Hermann threw himself between the two. To wrench the pewter-pot from the drunk man's hand, to drag him away from his victim, and raise up the poor woman who was bleeding profusely from the head, was the work of a moment. Frau Stahl, on her husband's calling out for her, came up with a basin of water and a sponge, and washed the poor woman's head, which, though badly cut, yet showed no dangerous wounds. Hannah took the two children, while Hermann and Daniel replaced the table on its legs. During these proceedings the perpetrator of all this mischief, whom Hermann had pushed down on a chair, fell asleep, and snored away like a Turk.

"Thank God, he sleeps," said the woman, "and he will sleep on now till to-morrow morning; and when he awakes he will remember nothing of all that has happened, and be as soft and meek as a lamb. Oh, that cursed drink! but for that he *would* be such a good husband!"

When the family was assembled in their own room again, Frau Stahl fell into a fit, and Hannah burst into tears. Such a scene was too much for the tender nerves of the good women of Kirchheim.

Meanwhile the circumstances of the family became more and more straitened. The answer from the Cologne house, which at length arrived, was altogether unfavourable. "The Company," the letter said, "had made no other contract with Mr. Stahl than to send him and his family to New York by the 'Borussia.' The Company were surprised at learning that Mr. Stahl and family had left that ship in London. Mr. Stahl, the Company admitted, was perfectly at liberty to do so, but he ought to have known that by this action he had forfeited any further claims upon the Company, since there were no stipulations made in the contract by which the Company were obliged to provide him and his family with another ship."

After the receipt of this letter, the question what

course to take was again discussed,—whether they should return to Kirchheim, or stay and wait for the letter from brother Dietrich? The family held a special prayer-meeting for the purpose of asking Divine guidance in this important matter. At length they resolved to remain, since their property was in America, and London was at any rate nearer to that than Kirchheim, where they had no business at all, and nothing but poverty could be their lot. But as the money which was in Hermann's possession was fast dwindling away, they quitted their lodgings and rented instead two large rooms in a court at eight shillings per week.

Fortunately the people who inhabited this court were not of the worst kind. With the exception of one disreputable house, nothing offensive to decency was to be seen in it. The houses were mostly occupied by working-men, costermongers, pedlars, &c. Frau Stahl kept the children as much in the house as she could; and Daniel spent a great portion of his time in teaching them English, writing, and the elements of arithmetic, &c. At these lessons Hermann was also often present, as he deemed it wise to learn as much as he could of the "terrible language."

One day Johann, who had been out on an errand, came home with a black eye, and all bespattered with mud. The whole family was in alarm. After having been cleaned and washed, and refreshed by a warm cup of coffee, Johann told his story. On returning from his errand, he found the entrance of the court blocked up by a crowd of people standing in a circle round two lads who were fighting. It was evident that the one, a boy of scarcely fifteen, was not at all a match for his antagonist, a big lad of seventeen; consequently the former was being beaten unmercifully, the blood running from his nose. As none of the bystanders seemed disposed to interfere, Johann stepped between the pugilists and tried to separate them. A stout lad of his own age and stature at once came forward, and in a provoking tone asked him what right he had to interfere. In his broken English he answered, "Because little boy too little for big boy." The stout lad then uttered a volley of words which Johann did not understand, and clenching his fists, placed himself in a fighting attitude.

"No, not fight," said Johann.

"Why not, you coward? fight!" cried the bystanders, who now formed a circle round them.

"No, not fight," said Johann. "Christians no fight."

"Take that, you Christian," cried the lad, and at the same moment Johann felt the lad's fist come down with great force on his eye. Now Johann was an extraordinarily strong lad, whose muscles were powerfully developed by the invigorating German mountain air, and who was reckoned an adept in the *Turn Uebungen*—*i.e.*, the gymnastical exercises, which in Prussia form a considerable part of the popular school training. Before his antagonist could launch a second blow he caught him by the waist, lifted him up from the ground and threw him down. Then throwing himself upon him, he kept him under till after some fruitless struggling he promised not to renew the affray. Johann then let him go, and stepped home amidst the loud applause of the crowd, some of whom tried to force him into a public-house to receive a glass of beer as a token of their admiration. It was with difficulty he escaped from them.

From that day Johann went in the court by the name of "the Christian."

"Well, those foreigners over there are better folks than the whole lot of us," said Mrs. Harding, the pedlar's wife, who was standing chatting with another woman in the doorway of her house.

"Ay, what you say is quite true," said Mrs. Field, the mason's wife, who lived in a room over Hermann's. "They are religious people. They sing and pray twice every Sunday, and every morning and evening in the week."

"What in all the world may those people's business be?" asked Mary Prescott, the cobbler's daughter. "They seem to have no trade. The old man is always at home, and I never see his wife and daughter in the street, except for a walk or an errand."

"Oh, I know," said Mrs. Harding. "One of them, a nice young man of twenty or so, told me the other day that they were on their way to America, but had been detained by fever and were waiting for a letter."

"Poor folks; they seem to be hard up," said Mary Prescott. "I saw that young man at the pawnbroker's a couple of days ago."

"Why, they haven't a stick of furniture left, scarcely," observed Mrs. Field. "Yesterday I happened to pass their room when the door was standing open. A blind horse couldn't do much harm there."

Indeed, the description was not exaggerated. The Germans were now reduced to a state of complete poverty. Hermann had tried every day to obtain some employment, but his total ignorance of the language had frustrated all his attempts. At length Daniel found some work with a turner, for which he got ten shillings a week. He paid his wages faithfully into the hands of Frau Stahl. It was upon his labour indeed that the family were living for the present. How eagerly did they look out for a letter from brother Dietrich every day! But in vain. Every day Hermann returned with empty hands from the Post Office. Poor fellow, he was often in low spirits.

"My dear," said his wife, who perceived that now it was *her* turn to lay hold of the anchor of faith—"My dear," said she, one evening after they had finished their scanty supper, "let us not lose sight of our blessed Lord. He is here with us now, though we cannot see Him. He knows all our wants."

"Oh, blessed Jesus! come and console us;" ejaculated Hannah. "Thou hast suffered so much for us; Thou knowest what suffering is."

"Father, let us sing that hymn of Paul Gerhardt's: 'Commit your ways to Jesus,'" said one of the boys.

"Are you not too hungry to sing, Bernhard?" asked Hermann, in a melancholy voice, stroking the boy's hair. "Oh, what a grief! And it is all my

fault. How *could* I be so foolish as to take you out of our lovely Kirchheim, to plunge you into this dark pit! The Lord knows I am willing to suffer ten times over for it, but to see *you* suffer for *my* sins—it will break my heart."

But Hannah raised the tune, and the others joined in with cheerful voices, and Hermann could not help seconding with his deep bass, sad as his heart was.

While they were singing, a knock was heard at the door, and in stepped Bob Harding, the pedlar. He had a large pie in his hand.

"Is this Christian's?" he asked.

"Yes, we Christians," answered Hermann. "And I hope you one, too, good friend."

"He means Johann," said Daniel in German to Hermann.

"Are you that fine fellow who took my son's part the other day?" said the pedlar to Daniel.

"No, I am not; it was him," said Daniel, pointing to Johann.

"I brought this mutton pie for you," said he, placing the pie before Johann. "And my wife's and Henry's compliments, sir. You did well. I was away in the country a-hawking, but on coming home yesterday I learnt what had happened last week. I hope you will not refuse to accept this small present, sir; it is not much, but we are poor people. I wish I could do more."

The simple-hearted candid tone in which the pedlar uttered these words, and his thoroughly honest though rough-looking face, made a very agreeable impression upon the company.

"This is an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile," said Hermann to his wife. Then turning to Harding, he tendered him his hand: "I tank you," said he; "sit yourself, sir."

The pedlar seated himself upon the chair which one of the boys offered him.

Hermann then, in broken English, endeavoured to speak to him on the subject ever uppermost in his mind—the love of God in Jesus Christ.

"Are you not Germans?" asked Harding, after a while.

"We are."

"I think you would like to make the acquaintance of Mr. Wasserman; or do you already know him?"

"I do not. Who is he?"

"Why, he is the German missionary to the sailors in the docks. He is a very nice man, Mr. Wasserman is. I will send him to you. Hoping you will like the pie, I must bid you good evening, sir."

The pedlar's hope was fully realized. He could scarcely have reached his house before each member of the family had a piece of the pie between thumb and fingers. Hermann pronounced a blessing, and when the welcome refreshment had disappeared, the beautiful hymn, "Now thank ye all the Lord," echoed through the room.

This was a sweet drop in the bitter cup of affliction. Hermann made the observation that the inhabitants of this "terrible place" with its "terrible language," were not *all* savages. Frau Stahl added that she had no doubt but the Lord had much people in this great city.

Next day the post brought a letter from Kirchheim enclosing one from brother Dietrich. He asked in a tone of alarm how it was that they had not come with the "Borussia." It was obvious from the date of his letter that he had never received theirs. This was a fresh blow to the hopes of the poor family. It was now certain that they need not expect any money from America; and the last article they could dispose of was pawned. What were they to do?

They spent the evening in prayer, without, however, forgetting the *Deutschen Lieder*.

"My dears," said Hermann, "as long as there is a Saviour in heaven there is reason for us to sing."

The next morning Hermann went out for a walk. About noon he came back.

"I have found work," he said. "A pound a week."

"Is it true?" cried Frau Stahl, joyfully. "And where?"

"At the sugar-house. I begin to-morrow morning."

Frau Stahl burst into tears, and so did the children. They knew from Daniel's description what it was to work in the sugar-house.

"You shall not go there!" cried she. "Will you add to our affliction by making me a widow and these poor children orphans?"

"Dear wife, the Lord will be my strength. He will sustain me, knowing what I shall be labouring for."

During that day there was a continuous struggle of love between the father and his family: the one arguing that it was his duty even to lay down his life for them if necessary; the others insisting that it was his duty to spare his life as much as he could.

The sun had just set, and Hannah had scarcely lit the thin candle which cast a gloomy light through the room, when a knock was heard at the door. The pedlar made his appearance, accompanied by a stranger, whom he introduced as Mr. Wasserman.

"Oh! *Ein Deutscher Bruder!*" cried the family, simultaneously.

"I go," whispered the pedlar into Johann's ear, "as I don't understand your gibberish." While uttering these words he slipped half-a-crown into the lad's hand.

A most agreeable conversation took place between the family and Mr. Wasserman, who proved to be a truly good man. Something for supper was bought with Bob's half-crown, of which Mr. Wasserman was kind enough to partake. Many a dear German hymn was sung, and Mr. Wasserman gladly stayed to have worship with his friends. He told them that he was employed as a missionary by a company of six wealthy shipowners, two of whom were Germans. He advised Hermann not to go to the sugar-house the next day, but to call upon him.

The next morning Hermann, accompanied by the missionary, found himself in the office of Messrs. Krübner, Bären & Co. Mr. Krübner received him very kindly, and listened attentively to his story.

"If what you say be true," he observed, "we certainly must try to help you. Meanwhile I will write to the clergyman of Kirchheim to obtain information." Then looking at Hermann, whose honest open countenance pleased him well, he added: "We have a meeting to-night in our school-room. If you like to attend with your wife and children I will give you tickets."

"Is it a German meeting?" asked Hermann.

"No, it is in an English Church; but you will be able to pick up enough to make you enjoy it."

The whole family was that evening in the large school-room of —— Church. There was tea first, during which the merry chat of the crowded assembly buzzed cheerfully through the room. Then there were addresses by several speakers, and hymns and prayers. Though Hermann and his wife understood but little of what was said, yet their hearts leaped for joy at the sight.

"What a pleasant evening!" he said when at home again. "It was just such a meeting as we used to have at Barmen, except for the open air."

"You see," said his wife, "it is just as I told you the other day. All the people of this place are not savages. The Lord has many children here, depend upon it, Hermann."

A fortnight later, on a bright Autumn morning, the "Atlantic," a large merchant ship belonging to the firm of Messrs. Krübner Bären & Co., weighed anchor for New York. The captain was a German, and for the first time in his life had passengers on board, as he had not been in the habit of conveying anything save goods. He was glad to receive our friends, however, for he was a good man, and he knew that they were looking out for even a better country than they were going to start for now.

"Good-bye, dear friends," said Mr. Krübner, shaking hands with Hermann when the signal for departure was given. "May the Lord carry you safely to your destination."

While uttering these words he handed an envelope to Hermann, and disappeared. It contained a fifty-pound note, and inside was written, "For the journey to Wisconsin."

The last intelligence received in London by way of Kirchheim was that the family were doing exceedingly well, that their house was all but built, and that they did not know how to thank and praise the Lord enough for his unspeakable goodness.

ANDREW WHITGIFT.

OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS; OR, METHODS TO DO GOOD.

BY THE EDITOR.

IX.—GOD'S ABILITY.

WERE we to judge of the matter by the conduct of many, we should conclude it to be by no means a difficult thing to be a Christian. They seem to think it almost as easy to wash one's heart as their hands; to change their habits as their dress; to admit the light of Divine truth into the soul as the morning into our chamber by opening the shutters;—in short, that it is not more difficult to turn the heart from evil to good, from the world to God, and from sin to Christ, than to turn a ship right round by help of her helm.

How else can we account for many, otherwise sensible people, putting off their salvation to a time confessedly unsuitable for any arduous task whatever—till, reduced to a state of mental and physical prostration, they lie languishing on a bed of sickness, or tossing on a bed of death? It ought to be an easy work that is deferred till then: yet what a sad mistake is this? An easy work to be a Christian!—as if the life required of those who go to heaven were in such harmony with our natural feelings that it was like being borne along on the surface of a placid stream. "Take now thy son, thy only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering on a mountain which I will tell thee of," was the command God laid on Abraham, the trial to which he put his servant's faith; and how did its every sentence quiver like an arrow, go like a knife into the old man's heart? Was it easy for a father to brace up his nerves to such a deed; to look on the beloved youth, the innocent and unsuspecting victim, for those three dreadful days they travelled together to the fatal spot; to lay the wood on Isaac that, kindled by a father's hand, was to consume his son to ashes; to meet that natural but terrible question, "My father, behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" And when the fell purpose could be concealed no longer, and the dreaded hour at length had come when Abraham must raise the veil, was it easy to look on Isaac's horror and resist his entreaties, and hear his agonizing cries? or even witness his resignation as, moved by his father's grief, and pitying him more than himself, he stretched his body on the altar, saying, Father, not my will, but thine be done? And when with trembling hands the old man wound the cords around his limbs, and felt them tremble, had it not been easier to be the child than the father, the victim than the priest at such a sacrifice? One stroke of the knife, and Isaac's woes are past; but if he does not rise like a phœnix from his ashes, what a return to his home awaits Abraham! what a meeting with the mother! what a future to the poor old man! His heart is broken, and his grey hairs go down with sorrow to the grave.

Never again may love to God be put to such a test, or faith in his promises have such a trial to endure. Still it is no easy thing to be a Christian; and, if words have any meaning, they are great and painful sacrifices which are required of those who are willing to take Christ on his own terms, "If any man will come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross

daily, and follow me"—"If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." God does not indeed put all his people to such a trial as Abraham's, saying "Take now thy son, and offer him for a burnt offering," nor does Christ lay on all his disciples an injunction so hard as this, "Go, sell all thou hast, and give it to the poor." Still the adage holds true as ever, No cross, no crown! To mortify the lusts of the flesh, to be crucified to the world, to overcome the devil, to die daily to sin and live daily to righteousness, to be meek and gentle and patient and generous and kind and good, in one word to be Christ-like, is a work beyond, far beyond our ability; one we should never venture on, or having ventured on, would soon abandon, but that God promises to perfect his strength in our weakness, and is "mighty to save."

Now the best evidence we have of what God can and will do is what he has already done. This was the source of Moses' confidence when he left the land of Midian to conquer the power of Egypt, and bring Israel out of the house of bondage. Behold, he said to God, when first called to undertake the task—behold the people will not believe that I am able to deliver them. "What is that in thine hand?" said the voice from amidst the burning bush. A rod, was his reply. "Cast it on the ground," said the voice. He did it; and springs back with sudden terror—surprise, fear, horror in his countenance, for there a serpent with head erect, and eyes of fire, and cleft quivering tongue, is hissing at him. Once more the voice sounds out from the bush, "Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail." Recovering from his panic, he boldly seizes the writhing reptile; and now its cold, scaly form is no sooner within his grasp than, like many things else which become harmless in the hand of faith, the venomed creature stiffens into a shepherd's rod. His confidence established on a firm foundation, Moses hesitates no longer. Entrusting his wife and children to her father's care, and leaving others to feed his flocks on the hills of Midian, he enters boldly on his mission. Repairing to his countrymen he tells them his errand. The rod is his credentials. It shall speak for him. Assured that what God has once done he can do again, he bids them look. His answer to such as question or doubt his authority is a shepherd's rod, which, flung from his hand, no sooner touches the ground, than it changes to a living serpent.

And though man has no inherent power to sanctify any more than to save himself, even, according to the words of the apostle, to think one good thought, let us, with Moses, David, and the saints of old, remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. See what, for such great and gracious purposes, God has done for others, and thus learn what he can and will do for us!

Take two instances. Look at the thief on the cross. It is from the very edge of the pit, just as he is going over, that the mighty hand of Jesus plucks him. Who that heard that robber with his fellow and the base crowd insult a dying Saviour, who that saw him nailed to his cross, a daring, despairing, hardened ruffian, could have believed it possible that a few hours thereafter he would be singing songs in Paradise? Yet the sun of that day had not set behind Judah's hills ere a blaspheming wretch ripe for hell was converted, saved, and sanctified; and had taken his flight to heaven to tell to listening angels what mercy had done for him—how Christ had saved him at the uttermost. Look also at Paul. The old bed of the sea laid bare for the foot of Israel, the dry rock changed into a gushing fountain, the rotting tenant of the tomb rising at Christ's word, to appear, once divested of the grave-clothes, with life sparkling in his eye and health blooming on his rosy cheek, did not attest God's power over dead matter more plainly than Paul's conversion attests his power over a depraved heart. What more incredible than that yonder man who, with a fierceness, a firmness of purpose, and an intensity of hatred uncommon to the ingenuous years of youth, stands glutting his eyes with Stephen's blood, would ere long be Christ's greatest and most devoted apostle; and would die, after a life of unparalleled sufferings, a martyr in the very cause for which he sheds the first martyr's blood? Yet so it was. Is anything too hard for me? saith the Lord; in other and fuller words—is any heart too hard for me to break; any sin too great for me to pardon; any passions too strong for me to bind; any habits too old for me to change; any prayer too great for me to answer; or any wants too many for me to supply? The blessed lesson such cases teach us is this, that however great the difficulties, or deep the sorrows, or strong the temptations, or arduous the duties of his people, his grace, as he promises, shall be sufficient for them. And so they may use the highest and yet the humblest, the bravest though by no means boastful saying that ever fell from mortal lips—"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Such is the help which his people have in their God; and this furnishes the key to the strange paradox of Paul, "When I am weak, then am I strong"—in other, and apparently self-contradictory words, when I am weak then I am not weak; when I am *not* strong, then I *am* strong. Peter's history, and that of many others besides, supplies a remarkable illustration of the reverse proposition, this namely, When I am strong, then am I weak. Let us look at it. So strong was Simon in his own vain judgment that in place of waiting till Christ invited him to walk on the water, he volunteered to make the bold attempt. Addressing his Master as, stepping with Godlike majesty from billow to billow, he approached their boat, Peter said, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." To drown not him but his vanity, and mortify the conceit and presumption which was his besetting sin, our Lord acceded to Peter's request, saying, Come. The permission is no sooner granted than, probably without a prayer for Divine help, and certainly with more rashness than genuine courage, he leaps from the boat. The water bears

him up: he walks the rolling billows—yet, ere he rejoins his companions, how effectually is he taught that when a man is strong, then he is weak? He began to build without counting the cost; and the only result is a house which, unfinished and unfurnished, remains the inglorious monument of his pride and poverty. Its terrors increased by the gloom of night, the storm raves and roars, and the waves rushing on with foaming crests threaten to engulf him, and avenge themselves on the puny mortal who has dared to defy their power. His situation is novel and alarming. A panic seizes him; his courage melts like a snowflake on the water; he feels the waves opening beneath his feet; he sinks, deeper and deeper sinks, till this rash adventurer, who would walk the sea, the rival of his Master and the envy of his fellows, raises his drowning head to throw out his arms and cry, Lord, save me! As has often happened where there was more than life at stake, and in scenes less picturesque, or public, Jesus hastes to the rescue—"a refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble;" and, upheld by the arm that upholds the universe, Peter is borne back to his companions, who receive him into the boat, pale, half-drowned, trembling with abject terror—a warning and very memorable illustration of the saying, "Pride goeth before a fall."

For a contrast look at Moses—the feelings with which he undertook, and the manner in which he executed his commission to deliver Israel from Pharaoh and the house of bondage. What a remarkable and happy contrast his case to Peter's! Strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, he forced his way into the palace, and bore himself before the king with undaunted courage—demanding the liberties of his countrymen. Single-handed and alone he stuck by his purpose, and carried it over what seemed insuperable difficulties. Without arms he undertook to conquer armies; to cross the sea without ships; and in a journey extending over many years, to carry a mighty host safely through a desert where there was neither water to quench their thirst, nor bread to satisfy their hunger. All this, and much more than this, Moses did; nor closed his eyes in death till he saw the longest, grandest march men ever made brought to a triumphant issue on the borders of the Promised Land. But Peter's enterprise and his were not more different in their conclusion than in their commencement. Self-confident, rash, vain, impulsive, the fisherman of Galilee rushed on the perils of the deep; while Moses, a man more highly endowed by nature and cultivated by education, shrunk from the task assigned him; declined the post of honour; and, overwhelmed by a sense of his own weakness and inadequacy, even remonstrated with God, saying, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh?" Nor till the Lord's anger was actually kindled against him, as he stood there starting one objection after another, did he venture to undertake the task. He went to it, not in his own strength, but in the might of God. To him he looked for counsel and courage, for faith, patience, and success. And He who did not fail Moses, will never fail any that put their trust in him. The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; He is their strength in the time of trouble; the Lord shall help them and deliver them, and save them because they trust in Him. Therefore with the courage they may lift up the battle song of Martin Luther, and in words which cheered the hearts and sustained the arms of Germany in the good fight of the Reformation, sing:—

A sure stronghold our God is he,
A trusty shield and weapon,
Our help he'll be, and set us free
From every ill can happen.
That old malicious foe
Intends us deadly woe;
Armed with the strength of hell,
And deepest craft as well,
On earth is not his fellow.

Through our own force we nothing can,
Straight were we lost for ever;
But for us fights the proper Man,
By God sent to deliver.
Ask ye who this may be?
Christ Jesus named is he,
Of Sabaoth the Lord;
Sole God to be adored;
'Tis he must win the battle.

And were the world with devils filled,
All eager to devour us,
Our souls to fear should little yield,
They cannot overpower us.
Their dreaded prince no more
Can harm us as of yore;
Look grim as e'er he may,
Doom'd is his ancient sway,
A word can overthrow him.

Our confidence in God's ability to save and help us, the bold prayer of faith, "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the ancient days, in the days of old," rests on this sure foundation, that God is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Moses, when he led Israel out of Egypt,—their house of bondage, had reached the fourscore years that David says prove to the few who attain such an age but labour and sorrow. For forty years thereafter he guides their wanderings through the desert, till, way-worn and weary, they reach the welcome borders of the Promised Land. They are to enter it; but not he, though ere his eyes close in death he is to see it. For this purpose he is directed to climb the heights of Pisgah—a lofty mountain in Moab, whose top affords the spectator a wide though distant view of Palestine. But should our imaginations picture Moses as an aged man, stooping under the weight of years as, with many a breathing pause, he slowly takes his way up the steep, till, arrived at the summit, he falls exhausted on the ground or leans panting on his staff, and, while the mountain-breeze plays with his thin grey locks, strains his old eyes on the valleys of Canaan that stretch away to the horizon beyond the silver line of Jordan and gloomy waters of the Dead Sea, should we imagine this, our fancy were wide of the mark. Moses was now one hundred and twenty years old; yet he climbed the heights and stood on the top of Pisgah, with an eye as bright, an arm as strong, a foot as fleet, a bearing as erect and manly as when, forty years before, he bearded the lion in his den—the tyrant in his palace, and, boldly stepping into Pharaoh's hall,

said, "Thus saith the Lord . . . Let my people go!" In the words of the wondrous story, "his eye was not dim, neither was his natural strength abated."

But in this Moses presented a singular exception to the common fate of men. A few years, and cares and sorrows write their wrinkles on man's brow; time sheds its snows on raven locks; the wheels of life get clogged with growing infirmities; manly strength turns into weakness, and wisdom perhaps into the drivelling of second childhood. And even where the power men possessed was, as it must necessarily have been in Moses' case, preternatural and miraculous, still the old adage holds true—"Times change, and we change with them."

Take these two examples in illustration of that remark. First, the case of Samson, whose great strength saved his country from oppression, and struck terror into the boldest of its enemies. A lion meets him, and taking it by the jaws, he rends it, like a young kid, asunder: sure of their prey, they shut him up in Gaza, and he wrenches off its ponderous gates, and, bearing them to a neighbouring hill top, laughs his enemies to scorn: catching him at a disadvantage, the Philistines beset him, and, for lack of sword or battle-axe, seizing a jaw-bone that lies to his hand, he throws himself on their serried ranks, and, cutting down a man at every blow, leaves a thousand dead on the field. Yet see—his long locks lying on Delilah's floor, and the harlot that betrayed him counting her ill-earned gains—Samson is led away bound, the laughing-stock of women and children. Now a poor, blinded prisoner making sport to the Philistines, how are the mighty fallen!—his hand is shortened that it cannot save. Then, for a second example, look at the disciples. On descending from the Mount of Transfiguration, our Lord finds them surrounded by an agitated crowd, who regard them with conflicting feelings; some with wonder, some with pity, some with sneering contempt. Endowed by their Master with miraculous powers, they had aforetime put them forth with success, and triumphed on many fields—they had opened the eyes of the blind; at their bidding dumb lips had spoken, the deaf had heard, wan, withered limbs had been restored to use; and without David's harp, or other charm than their great Master's name, they had dispossessed men of demons, and driven the foul fiends away. But now Jesus finds them humbled, mortified, put to shame before a crowd of on-lookers. A father, whose ears their fame had reached and whose heart it had inspired with hope, brings to them his son—sore vexed with a devil. But it is to be bitterly disappointed. One after another, they try each holy art; but in vain. They name the name of Jesus. It avails not; and hope sinks in the father's heart as his son sinks yelling, foaming, convulsed and contorted at his feet. Like Samson when his hair was shorn, the disciples are as other men; their hand has lost its cunning—it is shortened that it cannot save. But, blessed be his name, it is never so with our God. What He has done, he can do again. So they that trust in the Lord shall never be put to shame—their security for that standing in the very nature of God. He is unchanging and unchangeable. "I am the Lord," he says, "I am the Lord. I change not."

With what confidence, therefore, may we cast our burdens on him whose mercy endureth for ever, whose grace faileth never. It is not with him as it may be with other monarchs, other pastors, and other parents. There are monarchs whose dominions are more extensive than they can govern with advantage either to their subjects or to themselves—the influence of authority and of justice diminishing with distance, like that of the heart which, in persons of giant stature, as the slow circulation indicates, is always feeble at the extremities. There are ministers also in charge of flocks much more numerous than they can properly attend to; who, however conscientiously and diligently they labour to leave none neglected, find it as impossible to overtake all their duties as a man, let him run as he may, to overtake the horizon, which flies before him. Then there are many fathers who have more children than in hard times and circumstances they find it easy, or almost possible to support. Uncared for by thousands who fare sumptuously, and millions who fare comfortably, every day, there are sad homes in this world, where abject poverty curdles up the natural affections; and, leaving one mouth less to fill, the death of a child is regarded rather as the removal of a burden than the loss of a blessing. The ability of the wretched parents to support their offspring falls so far short at any rate of their wishes, it needs such a struggle to keep body and soul together, that the poor infant is not always welcomed into the world; and I have stood in bare, cold, unfurnished houses where no passage of Scripture could sound stranger in mortal ears than these beautiful words in theirs: "Thy children shall be like olive plants round about thy table. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man, so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them."

Such melancholy spectacles, when saddest and most painful, have their uses. By way of contrast they set forth to the comfort of his believing people the ability that is in their God, even as the dull foil sets off the gem, and a murky storm-cloud the bow that spans it. For just as one day is with God as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, it is the same to his infinite love, and power, and wisdom, and mercy, whether the objects of his care be one, or one thousand; or, as is actually the case with the redeemed of God, a great company which no man can number. This is a lesson, for there are

> Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in everything

which we may read on the page of nature. Myriads of leaves clothe the forest, myriads of flowers bespangle the meadow, myriads of insects dance in the sunbeams, myriads of birds sing in the woodlands, myriads of fish swim in stream and ocean, myriads of stars glitter in the nightly sky, and every leaf is as perfect in form, every flower as beautiful in colours, every living creature fashioned with such skill, and every burning star guided through space with as much care, as if it engrossed the entire attention of God, and there was not another but itself

within the bounds of his universe. The number of objects our hearts can hold, or our arms embrace, or our eyes watch, or our fortunes enrich, or our bounty pension, is limited ; confined within a narrow range, is small at the largest and few at the most. It is not so with Him who is mighty to save, abundant in goodness and truth. The supplies of his grace and mercy are unexhausted and exhaustless. Their type shines in that sun which for six thousand years has shed its light on seas and continents, on crowded cities and lonely solitudes, on burning deserts and fields of ice, on palaces and cottages, on ragged beggars and sceptred kings, on all countries and classes of men, and with fires fed we know not how, shines to-day as bright as ever—his eye not dim, nor his natural strength abated. And as this is but an image, and a faint image, of God, well may his servant assure us, there shall be no want to them that fear him. None —neither for the body nor the soul : neither for time nor eternity. Let us come boldly to the throne of grace. We cannot go to Him too often, nor ask of him too much. We have no sin but he has a pardon for it ; no sore, but he has salve for it ; no weakness, but he has strength for it; no cankering care, but he has relief for it ; no grievous sorrow, but he has comfort for it ; no bleeding heart-wound, but he has balm to soothe and a bandage to bind it up. It is impossible for us to expect too much from his generosity, or trust too implicitly to the bounties of his providence and the aids of his Spirit. It is equally easy for God to supply our greatest as our smallest wants, to carry our heaviest as our lightest burden—just as it is as easy for the great ocean to bear on her bosom a ship of war with all its guns and crew aboard, as a fisherman's boat or the tiniest craft that floats, falling and rising on her swell. In the most desperate cases of sinners and in the darkest circumstances of saints, "when all power is gone" and there seems no outget or deliverance, God is mighty to save. Confident in his resources, he says, Is anything too hard for me?—Prove me herewith, if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing till there is no room to contain—Who is he that feareth the Lord and obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay himself on his God.

THE ROSE OF CHERITON: A BALLAD.

BY MRS. SEWELL.

The autumn day was closing, cool and dry ;
The sun was setting in a cloudless sky,
Flinging around him, as he sunk to rest,
A crimson glory, flushing east and west.
The quiet landscape caught his bright farewell,
Ere the deep shadows of the evening fell.
The gliding river, and the broken sedge,
The pollard willows by the water's edge,
Smiled for a moment in the passing gleam ;
Then sighed the sedge, and darker flowed the stream.
While cottage windows flashed into a blaze,
And meadow pathways lay in purple haze ;
A sudden glory touched the whirling mill ;
More crimson glowed the heather on the hill,
And starting up beneath the pinewood shade,
A moment, stood a golden colonnade ;
Then dropt the sun, the vision died away,
And twilight followed in her sober grey.

I wandered on, the paths were dry and fair,
A mellow freshness breathed upon the air ;
And from the busy harbour, far away,
Came sounds unheeded in the light of day ;
Then intervals of silence—calm, profound—
Mysterious harmony, unlinked to sound,
Which all my thoughts in tranquil musing bound.

How many men, in ages long gone by,
Had walked at eve across these uplands dry--
Had sowed their seed, and left it on the plain,
Perchance to bear a crop of precious grain,
Or, planted carelessly the noxious weed,
To scatter, year by year, its baleful seed—
To seed, and grow, and seed, and still grow on,
Till the last sowing time has come and gone—
Till the great harvest, gathered in complete,
Shall stand in light before the judgment seat,
With every item in its full amount
All duly noted to the right account ;
When every startled labourer shall own
The abundant crop his little seed has sown—
His work, emblazoned through eternal days ;
Remorse eternal, or eternal praise.

While musing thus, the narrow pathway crept
From field to field, then dropped into the cleft
Of a deep lane, o'erhung with old ash-trees,
That trembled slightly in the evening breeze.
Well pleased I followed, careless where it led ;
Still lingered in the west a streak of red ;
The moon would rise, and by her friendly ray
A stranger's foot could hardly miss the way.

But what was this ? for now a sudden turn
Revealed a dwelling-house—so cold and stern,
So dull and desolate, so grim and bare,
A curious fascination held me there.
Farm-house it seemed, slow wearing to decay,
Bearing the impress of a better day.
The door moved slightly with a creaking sound,
That woke no echo in the silence round.
The casement flapped anon, then stood ajar ;
No hand came forth to draw the sliding bar,
Nor turn aside the rambling rose that strayed
Across the window, deepening the shade.
The mossy road that swept round to the door,
No trace of wheel upon its surface bore ;
No dint of hoof or footprint might declare
That guest or master ever entered there.

Deserted ant-hills, and the heaving mound
That marked the mole's dark passage in the ground,
Deformed the grass-plot, now, as coarse and rank
As ragged turf upon a wayside bank;
The border where the flowers had grown was bare,
Saving a hardy straggler here and there,
Or enterprising bud, resolved to peep
Through matted leaves that rotted rich and deep.

As thus I gazed, the air was gently stirred
By the light flutter of a wakeful bird;
And on the casement, where the roses hung,
A robin perched itself and sweetly sung.
Clear rose the little songster's trilling strain,
But no sweet voice sent answer back again.
A lonely bat kept wheeling round and round,
Making its circuit of the garden ground.
What could they tell? What were the ancient ties
That bound them here by faithful memories?
What had they seen? Did little footsteps pass
Along this road, or run across this grass?
Did happy mother plant these lingering flowers,
With children round her, in the sweet spring hours?
Had they been driven forth, or passed away?
What hand had sown this harvest of decay?
There was the roofless barn; its silent floor
Resounded to the thresher's flail no more;
And there the stable—rack and manger gone;
And time-worn sheds with thick moss overgrown.
I stood and pondered, till my watchful ear
Caught the long stride of footsteps drawing near.

"Good evening, sir! You're looking at the place;
All that is left of that unhappy race."
"What race?" I said. "Perhaps you can relate
What brought the dwelling to its present state."
"Aye, sure I can; if not, it can't be told:
I've known it, sir, since I was ten years old;
Have witnessed all the changes as they passed,
Till into Chancery the thing was cast;
Where it may stay till every beam shall fall,
And every brick shall crumble from the wall.
I lived here, boy and man, near thirty years,
'Twas a long time, sir, though it now appears
'Most like a dream, so fast the days have flown,
But I'm an old man now, just eighty-one."

"Fain would I hear this history," I said,
"And what events to such disaster led."

The old man laid his hand upon the gate.
"The story's long, sir, and it's growing late—
The daylight in the west is on the wane;
But, if you're going down the Ash-tree Lane,
And can have patience with an aged man,
I'll tell it you as shortly as I can.
But take another look before you go.
That was *her* window just above the bow,
And there's the church-spire, by that crooked tree,
Just where the moon is rising up, you see—
You'll hear about them in the history.

"Ay! I remember—'twas the fifth of May;
I was a youngster, but I mind the day,
When young Frank Masterman brought home his bride;
No sweeter lass, sir, in the country-side.
If I had been a real poet born,
I would have sung this Rose without a thorn,
For, sir, her name was Rose, and she was known
Just by that name—'the Rose of Cheriton.'
I can recal her very look and dress,
The day she came in her young loveliness.
She was a Damask Rose, not pale and faint,
As one about to die and be a saint.
She had a fine rich bloom, that still would rise
When love or anger sparkled in her eyes.
Yes, sir, she could be angry; well she knew
A housewife's duties, and a servant's too.
She did her own, and always let us see
In her a pattern of what we should be.
A farmer's wife had then enough to bear,
Enough of labour and enough of care.
A large farmhouse was not a place of ease,
But like a beehive with a swarm of bees.
But she had sense and spirit for the thing,
And she could rule us, and without a sting;
She was a mistress of the days gone by,—
They're out of fashion in this century.
Up with the lark she was, as bright and fair
As morning flowers, and fresh as morning air.
No lagging milkmaid ever kept her place,
Unless she learnt the mistress' ways and pace.
Handy at everything, she took the lead,
And gave her help wherever there was need.
Quick as a needle, piercing wrong and right,
She always looked straight forward to the light.
I've heard the servants sometimes tell her lies,
And seen the power of her two steady eyes:
No one could stand it if they were to blame;
They might deny, but could not hide their shame.
I tried it once, and, as she looked me through,
Her two large eyes were full of melting dew:
She laid her hand upon my guilty head,
'So very young, and yet a liar!' she said.
'My poor boy Roger! Roger, speak the truth,
And grow up good, child, from your early youth.'
Now, sir, these words sound simple, I dare say,
But I cried over them a night and day;
And sooner than have told a lie again,
I would have borne a martyrdom of pain.
She held our hearts bound firmly in her hand—
She could not help it, she made no demand;
We gave them to her with respect and love.
We liked to call her 'Mistress,' and we strove
To do the very things she liked the best;
To please her, sir, and feel her interest,
Why, sir, I would have marched up to the stake,
If she had said, 'Do, Roger, for my sake.'
So they would all. She kept us in our place
Just by the love and spirit of her face.

"Aye, those old days! the farmer's kitchen then
Was just the place you'll never see again.
The long deal table in the middle stood,
Three times a day well filled with wholesome food;
There were the pewter platters, bright and clean,
A sight, may be, sir, you have never seen.

We used them then, for crockery was dear,
And pewter plates would last for many a year.
There on that mossy stone, the girl would stand,—
And, with the horn high lifted in her hand,
Sounded a summons for the men to come,
And all the hired servants hastened home,
Washed at the pump, and with a ruddy face,
And well-scraped shoes, came in, and took their place.
Just at this point the mistress' foot was heard;
Her quick eye glanced at once along the board,
And then as quickly passed from face to face,
And seemed to leave a blessing with the grace.
But woe to any laggard, rogue, or sot!
Her eye passed on as though she saw him not;
If e'er on me that blank displeasure fell,
It was as heavy as a funeral bell.
That was the way to rear up faithful bands—
The generous master had his trusty hands;
We felt an interest about the place,
Our crops, *our* stock, *our* pride, or *our* disgrace.

"Ours was as good a farm and fruitful ground
As you would find for many miles around;
And young Frank Masterman stood very high
For character, and skill in husbandry.
He was a husband worthy such a wife,
And, sir, he loved her as he loved his life;
For years I noticed that it was his way
To call her out to walk at close of day.
He'd tap the window, when his work was done,
And in a moment she'd her bonnet on;
And drew her gown up through the pocket-holes,
And nothing touched the earth except her soles.
You'd never find her walking down a street
With dusty skirts a-trailing round her feet.
It did one good to see her step along,
She looked so happy, and so light and strong!
And they would walk together round the farm;
And in the summer evenings, when 'twas warm,
They strolled about the meads and through the corn,
Till Bet, the girl, had blown the supper-horn.
Six little ones sprang round them like the flowers
That come in spring to gladden summer hours:
Just like a flight of steps, we used to say,
As gay as lambs, and innocent as gay.
She kept them all in hand, close under rule,—
Love was the law and order was the school.

"I've told you, sir, that I was then a boy,
Proud of my service, fond of my employ;
But as the years slipped by, and I began
To have the sense and feelings of a man,
I could but mark a difference and a loss—
The master grew more quarrelsome and cross;
And on that face of hers, so bright and fair,
There often hung a heavy cloud of care.
What cankerworm had come I could not guess,
To eat the core out of her happiness.
It was an inward trouble, you might tell:
As to the farm, it prospered very well;
As to the children, never was a flock
That did more credit to the parent stock;
And as to health, the doctor's horse, I've said,
Would pass the gate and never turn his head.
But still the trouble grew, he did not come
On market-nights so early to his home;
And as the time wore on, I've sometimes known
Him on the road as late as twelve or one.
I was the stable-man, and had to wait
To take his horse and fasten up the gate;
And I found out that deadly cankerworm—
Worse than the blight, or sleety winter storm.
However late the hour, sir, she was there,
To take him silently beneath her care.
Gentle and steady, not a word she said;
I often thought it might be from a dread
Lest he should answer—and then, I might think
That her dear husband was the worse for drink.
I never looked at her to see her face,
I could not do it, sir, to save my place.
She was a woman far beyond her time,
And always held that drinking was a crime;
And I may thank her—aye, I do, this hour,
That I was never crushed beneath its power.
Poor lady! my poor mistress! I could see
How patiently she bore her misery.
She never blamed him, sir, to any one;
Deep in her heart she bore her grief alone,
And things grew worse.
How was it, do you say?
I'll give the answer in my own poor way.

"You've heard about the wars of Buonaparte,
That roused a fire in every British heart?
Our men and money o'er the sea we sent
To fight the Frenchmen with our free consent.
We gave our blood and treasure, sir, like dust,
Because we *would*, sir, not because we *must*.
We helped our rulers to defeat the foe
Who laid in bloody war the nations low.
'Twas often rumoured that he meant to come
And see how Englishmen could fight at home.
Pity he didn't! we'd a welcome then
To give him that he would not court again.

"No doubt you've heard how war-time raised the corn,
Though I should guess 'twas long ere you were born.
Eight pounds a quarter I have known it sold;
Why, eating bread was then like eating gold!
Those were the times for farmers, sir, to rise—
The war to them was like a lottery prize;
And many a farmer got his pockets full
Without an equal balance in the skull.
They got their hunters, and their hounds, and wine,
Raved about politics and drank like swine;
But many saw the time, and bought up land
To make a fortune through the great demand.
And small landowners, tempted by the price,
Gave land for gold, and turned from men to mice;
As my poor father did, and now I am
A labourer on the land that bore his name.
The little farms were swallowed, one by one,
And soon the poor man's common-right was gone;
Where he could keep a donkey or a cow;
But that's a tale almost forgotten now.

'Twas a hard blow for many a labouring man,
But all our betters seemed to like the plan.

My master's ruin was prosperity :
A more industrious man you would not see,
Until this wondrous rise and price of grain
Fell on the farmers like a golden rain.
Then, like too many, my poor master fell
Into the trap that has a door to hell.
On market-days the farmers always met
To sell their corn, and some to drink and bet ;
And he was full of life and easy led,
And when the liquor mounted to his head,
Why, any rogue could use him for his tool,—
Cheat him at cards, and make him play the fool.
When sense returned to his distracted brain,
He vowed he'd win his losings back again.
And so there was no end—his self-respect
Was lost, as I should judge, and his neglect
Of home and business was a galling weight
That kept his temper always on the fret,
And drove him back to company and wine,
To run the fullest tether of his line.
And things all changed from what they used to be—
The farm was going back, 'twas plain to see :
She did her best to fill her husband's place,
But little could be done in such a case.

" Ay ! 'Tis a sight a good man's eyes might fill,
To see a brave heart breaking, slow and still.
I saw it then ; her cheek told me the tale—
November roses not more faint and pale.
And her clear eyes, that sparkled like a rill
In summer sunshine, now would film and fill,
If a stray word, or even a look, should start
The thoughts that always smouldered round her heart.
But, more than all, her voice—aye, that was sad !
The cheerful voice that made the household glad,
Was now as mournful as a hidden brook,
Or widowed turtle in a lonely nook ;
Or like that pitifullest sound we have—
A robin's song beside an orphan's grave.
I am no poet, sir, but there are times
When these old memories almost run in rhymes.
I've often thought that poesy was given
To comfort mourners on their way to heaven :
To let them find, all plain and fairly writ,
The feelings that no common words can fit.

" But to go back, sir. It was plain to see
Her heart was breaking slow and silently.
The children, pretty dears ! what could they know ?
And he, my master, cared for nothing now.
His mind was clouded by his drinking—yes,
He'd no heart left to feel for her distress.
Sometimes he was as fond as ever—then,
I think, she hoped he would come round again.
A broken cable, sir,—a broken oar !
A boat adrift that never reached the shore !
But she would smile, and tenderly would speak ;
And the old colour fluttered on her cheek,
Soon to depart, in darker, deeper gloom,
Till every bit of sunshine left the home.

I knew, sir, by her looks that she could tell
I guessed the whole, and pitied her as well.
And once or twice I thought she meant to speak ;
But ere the word, the tear ran down her cheek,
And she said nothing, but she turned away ;
And I, of course, could not make bold to stay.
I often wish I had ; it might have been
Some ease to speak, though but to one so mean.
When summer grass is withering on the plain,
The dew is welcome in default of rain.
I think she never spoke to any one,
Until the day she laid her burden down.
Her heart, sir, was too big—a woman's pride
Could not expose the husband at her side.

" The boys might notice their dear mother's brow
Had lost its light, and that her voice was low ;
But as to cause, or consequence, or fear,
They only thought of what did then appear.
Boys arn't like girls : the little lads could play,
And find enough diversion in the day.
But Lucy saw it all, and, though denied
To share the grief, scarce left her mother's side ;
Striving, with ready help and winning wiles,
To bring again the long-forgotten smiles.
And if the old glad laugh rang through the room,
The girl's pale cheek caught up her mother's bloom.
She was the age to feel—about *fifteen*—
Her mother's picture in her face and mien,
Except that she was pale and very shy.
The slightest word would make her colour fly ;
Her lips would tremble, and her speech would fail,
As if she'd heard some grim old witch's tale.
She had a sense of sorrow in her home ;
Untold, she knew that misery had come.
She feared the worst, and feared the most to speak,
And gained her knowledge from her mother's cheek.
A constant weight upon her spirit pressed,
And checked the warm life in her youthful breast.

" So matters stood. The heather on the moor
Was turning black, and all the summer store
Of honey had been taken, and the corn
Was safe within the rickyard and the barn ;
And some of us were ploughing for the wheat,
And some upon the moor were cutting peat
For winter firing ; and the sportsman's gun
Oft told that pheasant-shooting had begun ;
When mistress took a cold, I heard them say,
And grew a little weaker every day.
She was not ill—they thought she'd soon come round ;
But grief had gone before and mined the ground.
The pitcher at the fountain, sir, was broke ;
The shoulder failed beneath the heavy yoke ;
The oil was spent, the flame was flickering low ;
And any moment suddenly might go.
She told her husband that her end was near,
Begged him to stay, but he could see no fear ;
'Twas market-day, and he must sell his grain ;
He would not stop—he'd soon be back again.

" And so he went, and so the day slipped by,—
The last she spent beneath a cloudy sky.

Nine, — ten o'clock, had struck, and then she said,
'Open the window, I can hear his tread
Upon the gravel; he will soon be here.
Put on more wood, and make the fire burn clear.'
They flung it open, just to please her, sir;
They knew her hungry hope deluded her.
She listened heedfully, and then she said,
'Shut it again, and turn me in the bed,'
And they do think she slept a little while.
And when she woke, they say she had a smile
Upon her face, as though she might have been
Over the river where the fields are green.

"He did not come: I waited hour by hour,
As I had done a hundred times before;
And fearing I might sleep, walked down this lane.
The moon was sliding far into the wane,
'Twas wondrous still, and there was little light;
I don't remember such another night.
The yellow ash-leaves fell upon the ground;
Before my face without the slightest sound;
The oat-grass shivered like a human sigh,
As to and fro my steps kept pacing by.
And how it was I never yet could tell,
But all the while I heard a tolling bell.
I did not like it, sir,—a tingling chill
Crept through my blood, it was so lone and still;
And I went back into the stable-yard,
And heard the house-door quietly unbarred.
The nurse looked out and beckoned, I could see,
And called me to her, speaking mournfully.
'Your mistress wants to see you, lad,' she said;
'You follow me.' I did, sir, to the bed;
And then she snuffed the light, and set a chair,
And signed me to sit down, and left me there.

"And there my mistress lay, as meek and low
As a white lily on the drifted snow.
She smiled the faintest smile, and then she said,
'You'll not forget me, Roger, when I'm dead.
My time is short, and things are on my mind
To say to you, who will be left behind.
I cannot speak to many. You are young,
But you are good, and have a truthful tongue,
And you have served us since our wedding-day.
Don't leave your master when I'm gone away;
Keep things together; there may come a time
To warn him of his danger and his crime.
And oh! good Roger! if he should relent;
Tell him my last words charged him to repent,
That we may meet together at the last,
And never once remember what has passed.
And pray for him, good lad! I've prayed in vain,
But when I'm gone he may turn round again.
You, faithful Roger! you have known my grief;
And what you could you did for my relief.
It was too deep for human hand to stay;
A broken heart within my grave you'll lay.
'Twill soon be over, winding-sheet and pall,
A little dust and sod will cover all.
Not *all*, good lad. I've found a peaceful rest
For my poor soul upon my Saviour's breast.
Go to Him, Roger! He will be your friend;
And you will want Him ere the journey's end.
Good-bye, God bless you! I had thought to say
More of your master,—but another day.'—

"That day came not, sir. On the stroke of one
That very night she laid her burden down.
Just as her husband stumbled to the door,
Her soul flew forth, to light his home no more,—
Flew to her rest, before the golden throne,
And left us in the wilderness alone."*

IN THE LIFE OF OUR LORD.

THE RAISING FROM THE DEAD OF THE WIDOW'S SON AND THE RULER'S DAUGHTER.

Luke vii., 11—17; viii., 41—56; Matt. ix., 18—26; Mark v., 22—43.

The multitude that listened to the Sermon on the Mount followed Jesus from the hill-side into Capernaum, thronging round the house into which he entered, and pressing their sick so urgently on his notice that He "could not so much as eat bread." A mode of life like this,—out all night upon the mountain top, teaching, walking, working all day long without food or rest,—so affected the minds of his immediate relatives when they heard of it that they "went out to lay hold of him, for they said, he is beside himself." Failing in their endeavours, they left Him to pursue his eccentric course.

It was in the course of the busy day which followed the delivery of the Sermon on the Mount that the centurion's servant was healed, and the opportunity was thereby given to Jesus to hold up to the eyes of the people an example of such faith as He had not found—no, not in Israel. On the following day He left Capernaum. "Many of his disciples and much people" went with him. They had a long day's walk over the hills of Galilee, skirting the base of Tabor, and descending into the valley of Esdraelon. The sun was sinking in the west, away behind the ridge of Carmel, and was gilding with his evening beams the slopes of little Hermon, as Jesus and the band which followed Him approached the little village of Nain. This village is now a confused heap of the rudest Syrian huts, unenclosed, with no ruins of ancient buildings, nor any antiquities around, save the tombs in the rock upon the hill-side, where for ages they have buried the dead. And yet it stands next to Nazareth and Bethlehem and Bethany in the sacred

* The Poem of which the above is a part will shortly be issued in a complete form by the Author's Publishers.—Ed.

interest attached to it. We are so sure of its identity, it is so small, so isolated, having nothing but the one wonderful incident to mark its history, that the Saviour's living presence was almost as vividly realised by us when entering it as when we sat by the side of Jacob's well. We stood at the end of the village which looks northward towards Galilee, and tried to recall the scene. Jesus and his train of followers have crossed the plain, and are drawing near to the village. Another company moves slowly and sadly out of its gate and meets them. It is a funeral procession; a large one, for all the villagers have come forth, but there is no mark or token that it is the funeral of one who had been rich or in any way distinguished. The bier is one of the plainest, and there follows it as chief mourner, a solitary woman, clad in humblest guise. Jesus has none beside Him, as He stops and looks, to tell Him who this woman is—who the dead for whom she mourns. He does not need the information; He knows her history; He knows her grief better than any inhabitant of Nain. To his eye it is a becoming and beautiful thing that grief like hers should have such homage paid to it, should have drawn the whole village out after her by the pure force of sympathy. Her claim, indeed, upon that sympathy is strong. This is not the first bier she has followed. She had wept for another before she wept for him whom they are now carrying to the grave. She is a widow—weeping now behind the bier of her only son. Bereft of every earthly stay she walks, a perfect picture of desolation.

"And when the Lord saw her he had compassion on her." As soon as his eye rests on her his heart fills full of pity. Was this the first funeral He had ever met in the way-side along with his disciples? Was this the first mourner He had ever noticed go weeping thus behind the dead? It might not have been so: yet never perhaps before had He seen a poor lone widowed mother shed such bitter tears over the death of an only son. The sight moves Him at least to do what He had never done before. He goes up to the woman, and says to her, "*Weep not.*" Wrapped up in her consuming grief, how surprised she must have been at being accosted in such a way at such a time. Does this stranger mean to mock her, to deal rudely with her in her grief? In any other she might have been ready to repel and resent the unseasonable intrusion—the strange unreasonable speech; but there is something in the loving pitying eye that looks at her as she glances at Him timidly through her tears—something of hope, of promise, of assurance in the gentle yet authoritative tones of his voice that quenches all disposition to repel or resent. But why does Christ first say to her—weep not? Does He not know what He is about to do? Does He not know that within a few minutes that will be done by Him which, without any bidding on his part, will dry up all her tears? He does; but He cannot go forward to his great act without yielding to the impulse of pity; dropping into the ear of the mourner—not as a cold word of command, fitted only to give needless pain, but as a spontaneous expression of his warm personal compassion—the words, "Weep not." Such a preface to the miracle speaks to us as plainly of the tenderness of Christ's sympathy as the miracle itself proclaims the infinitude of his power.

"And he came and touched the bier, and they that bore him stood still." And all stand as still as the bearers; the two groups, the one from Capernaum and the other from Nain, lost in wonder as to what is to happen next. All eyes turn upon Jesus. His turn upon the bier. The silence is broken by the simple majestic words, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise." The young man rises, looks about with wonder, begins to speak. Jesus takes him by the hand, lifts him from the bier, delivers him to his mother. The deed of mercy is done, and nothing more is told, but that a great fear came upon all. "And they glorified God, saying that a great prophet is risen up among us, and that God hath visited his people, and this rumour of him went throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about."

It was a few days or weeks before or after this incident (for the date is uncertain) that one of the rulers of the synagogue at Capernaum, Jairus by name, came to Jesus as He sat at meat in the house of Levi, and "cast himself at his feet, and worshipped him, and besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death, come and lay thy hands upon her that she may be healed, and she shall live." Jesus arose at once and went with Jairus; so did his disciples, and so did much people; the very promptness of Christ's compliance with the ruler's request stimulating their curiosity. The distance could not have been great from the house of Levi to that of Jairus, and might speedily have been traversed, but the crowd that thronged around Jesus by the way somewhat impeded the movement. It gave, however, to one poor woman the opportunity she had long been seeking. Twelve long years she had been a sufferer, her illness one that made her touch pollution. All she had she had spent upon physicians. It seemed rather to have aggravated her complaint. Seeing or hearing about Jesus, a wonderful idea of the healing virtue that lay in Him had taken possession of her mind. Her timidity, her sense of shame, kept her from going openly to Him, telling Him of her malady, and asking Him to exert his power on her behalf. But if she could in any way unseen get at Him, if she could but touch his clothes, she felt that she should be made whole. And now He goes through this great crowd. It is the very occasion she has been seeking for, and she seizes it: gets behind Him, presses through the people, and touches the hem of his outer garment. She is instantly healed, but as instantly arrested. The touch has scarce been given, the healing scarce effected, when Jesus turns round and says, "Who touched my clothes?" They all deny the deed. Peter expostulates with his Master. "The multitude," he says, "throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?" Jesus knows as well as Peter that many had been near enough for their and his garments to have come into contact; but He knows, too, as Peter knew not, that there had been a touch with a distinct, deliberate purpose, altogether different from that of a mere random contact, a touch that had drawn virtue

out of Him. Who gave it? His eye looked round to see, is already resting on the woman, who, seeing that she is not hid, fearing and trembling, yet glad and grateful, throws herself on her knees before Him, and getting the better of all her womanly feelings, declares unto Him "before all the people for what cause she had touched Him, and how she was healed immediately."

Had Jesus been displeased at being touched? Had He grudged in any way that the virtue had in such a way been extracted? Was it to detect and rebuke a culprit that He had challenged the multitude? No: it was because He knew how very strong was this woman's faith,—a faith sufficient to draw out at once in fullest measure the healing efficacy, and yet a faith that had in it a superstitious element, the fancy that in some magical mysterious way contact of any kind established between her and Christ would cure her. If He allowed her to go away undetected, the healing filched, as it were, unconsciously from the healer, this fancy might be confirmed, the superstitious element in her faith enhanced. Therefore it was that He would not suffer the secrecy. He would meet and answer the faith which under the heavy pressure and in despair of all other help had thrown itself somewhat blindly yet confidingly upon his aid. But He will not allow her to depart without letting her know how wrong and how needless it had been in her to attempt concealment, without letting her and all around her know what was the kind of touch that she had given which had established the right connection between her and Him, and opened the way for the remedy reaching the disease. "And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole, go in peace."

There is not one of all our Saviour's many miracles of healing fuller of comfort and encouragement. For if his mode of dealing with our spiritual diseases be shadowed out in the modes of the bodily cures that He effected, whenever we grow sad or despondent as we think of what fear, or shame, or error, or weakness, or superstition mingles with the faith we cherish, then let us remember that if only the depth and inveteracy of the spiritual disease be felt, if with or without a long trial of them we have been led to despair of all other physicians of the soul, and to look alone to Jesus Christ, He who accepted this woman's faith with all its weakening and defiling ingredients will not cast us off. A timid trembling touch of Him, be it only the touch of humility and trust, will still bring forth that healing virtue which wraps itself up in no guarded seclusion, but delights to pour itself freely out into every open and empty receptacle that is brought to it.

The stoppage by the way, however brief, must have been somewhat trying to Jairus, but he showed no impatience. There was a short delay, but with it a new proof of Christ's power well fitted to fortify his faith. But just as the healed woman is sent away, the messenger arrives, who says, "Thy daughter is dead, why troublest thou the master any further?" The words were not meant perhaps for the ear of Christ, yet it caught them up, and the moment it did so, knowing and feeling to what a strain the faith of Jairus was exposed, and how much he needed to be assured and comforted, "as soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith to the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe." Jairus hears the reassuring words, and heedless of the suggestion made, follows Jesus as before.

At last the house of the dead is reached. Jesus suffers none of his followers to enter with Him but Peter, James, and John, the three privileged Apostles who were with Him on the mount of his transfiguration and in the garden of his agony, the three chosen witnesses of the highest exercise of his power, the fullest display of his glory, the greatest depth of his sorrow. The first apartment of the ruler's house is occupied with those who fill it with a perfect tumult of bemoaning sounds. It was the custom to hire such mourners on such occasions,—the more numerous, the more vehement, the higher the station of the family. The outward demonstration of grief that they here make is excessive, but there is no heart in all the sound and show, no true utterance of any real sorrow. As at discord at once with his own feeling and with his formed purpose, Jesus rebukes the wailers, and says to them, "Give peace; why make ye this ado? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth." Not dead? Can they, the hired officials, not tell the difference between sleep and death? Who is he that speaks to them so slightingly, so authoritatively taking it on him, stranger though he be, to stop their lamentations? They "laugh him to scorn:" this real laughter still more incongruous with his presence and his purpose than the feigned grief. With Jairus to second Him Jesus puts all the people out, takes "the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying." He takes the dead child by the hand, simply says, Tabitha cumi—damsel, arise! and she rises, weak as from a bed of illness, yet with all the seeds of the mortal malady which had laid her low banished from her frame. Having directed that some food should be given her, Jesus straitly charged the parents that they should tell no man; an injunction, let us believe, that they did their best to keep, and yet St. Matthew tells us "the fame thereof went abroad into all that land."

It is difficult to understand why it was that Jesus laid such a stringent injunction of secrecy upon the parents in this instance. Had the widow's son not been raised from the dead about the same time, and in circumstances of the utmost publicity, we might have imagined that there was a desire on the part of Christ to throw, for a time at least, a veil over this particular form of the manifestation of his power. But though that other miracle had not been wrought, though this one stood alone, how could it be hidden? There were too many who had seen the damsel die, or mourned over her when dead, to allow of any concealment. As we think of the difficulty, we might almost say impossibility of such concealment, the thought occurs (and other instances in which the same command was given by Christ may in the same way be explained) that it was not so much with any desire or intention to secure secrecy that the order was issued, as to prevent those who had the closest personal in-

terest in the miracle being the first or the loudest in noising it abroad.

There does not seem to have been any previous acquaintance between Christ and the widow of Nain. It may be doubted whether she had ever seen Jesus till she met Him as she was going out to bury her son. We do not read of Jesus ever being in Nain but on that one occasion. It lay beyond the line of those circuits of Galilee which He was in the habit of making. We are not surprised, therefore, at noticing that his interference there was voluntary, without any solicitation or hope entertained beforehand on the part of the mourner. It was different with Jairus at Capernaum. He was a well-known man, living in the town which Jesus had chosen as his head-quarters in Galilee. In all likelihood he was one of the rulers of the Jews who formed the deputation that a short time before had waited on Jesus to ask his aid on behalf of the Roman centurion. It was quite natural that, when his "one only daughter" lay a-dying, he should apply on her account to Christ. But there may have been something of which we are ignorant in his character and connections, which made it undesirable that he should be forward in proclaiming what had happened in his house.

It was a case of recovery from the dead, about which there might be some cavilling. The child could have been but a short time dead; long enough, indeed, to establish the certainty of the event, yet not so long as to hinder any one from saying that it was literally and not figuratively true, "She is not dead, but sleepeth." In this respect we notice a difference, a progression in the three instances of raising from the dead recorded by the Evangelists—that of Jairus' daughter, of the widow's son, and of Lazarus. It is not distinctly said to be so; but we presume that these were the only three cases in which the dead were restored to life by Christ. The one was soon after death, the other immediately before burial, the third after the dead man had lain four days in the grave—the variety of the period after death at which the restoration was in each case effected not, perhaps, without a purpose. For these three great miracles stand, in one respect, at the head of all our Lord's works of wonder. They were the highest instances of the forth-putting of his divine almighty power. With respect to many of his other works, questions might be raised as to the nature or extent of the power required for their performance, but none as to these. Life in all its forms, from the highest to the lowest, is that mysterious thing which, when once destroyed, none but the Creator—the great life-giver—can restore. Were a dead man actually revivified before our eyes, we could not doubt that the power of the Omnipotent had gone forth to do it. In no case did Jesus Christ so conspicuously and undoubtedly show Himself to be clothed with that power as when He raised the dead. The power, indeed, by which He wrought such miracles might not have been naturally his own. It might have been a delegated power, given Him for the time, not permanently belonging to Him. He might have raised the dead as Elijah raised the son of the widow at Zarephath, as Elisha did the son of the Shunamite. Had it been so, we should have had some evidence thereof—some appeal on the part of the mere human agent to the great Being whose power was for the moment lent and exercised. It was with trouble and with pain, after much and earnest prayer, that Elijah and Elisha, the only raisers of the dead in all the preceding ages, had succeeded. No one who saw or heard them could have imagined that they claimed any natural or inherent power of their own over the dead to call them back to life. They would themselves have counted it as the greatest insult to Jehovah to do so. How is it in this respect with Jesus Christ? Stand beside Him as He calls the dead to life. Look at the manner of his acting, listen to the words that He employs. Is it as a servant, the delegate of another, that He speaks and acts? Is it with any consciousness on his part, felt or exhibited, that He was rising above the level at which He ordinarily stood, that He was then doing something which He had been specially commissioned and supernaturally qualified to accomplish? Surely there is nothing more remarkable about these raisings from the dead by Jesus Christ than the simple, easy, unostentatious way in which they were effected. "Young man, I say unto thee arise"—"Maid, arise"—"Lazarus, come forth." He speaks thus to the dead, and they hear and live. It is in the style of Him who said, Let there be light, and there was light. It is the Lord of the living and of the dead whose voice penetrates the unseen world, and summons the departed spirit to resume its mortal tenement.

But if, as to the power He wields, Jesus never presents Himself to our eye in a diviner, never does He show Himself in a more human aspect than in these raisings from the dead. Can we overlook the fact that they were those of the only son of a widowed mother, the only daughter, if not the only child, of two fond parents, the only brother of two affectionate sisters—of those whose loss in their respective homesteads would be so deeply felt, of those whose restoration quickened so acute a grief into such an extatic joy? And in each case there was something quite singular in the tenderness of our Lord's conduct towards the mourners. He knew beforehand how speedily the anxiety that He witnessed would be relieved, all the sorrow be chased away; but the "weep not" to the mother before He touched the bier, the "fear not, only believe," to the agitated father, the tears that fell before the grave of Lazarus, what a testimony do they bear to the expuisite susceptibility of the Saviour's spirit—to the quickness, the fulness, the liveliness of his sympathy with human grief. It is even then, when He is most divine, that He is most human—when He lifts Himself the highest above our level that He links Himself the closest to us as a true brother of our humanity. Such power to help, such readiness and capacity to sympathise, meet but in one Being.

Many passages of the New Testament might be quoted which assign it as one of the reasons of the Incarnation that there might be such a Being, one compassed about with infirmities, one touched with a fellow-feeling with our infirmities, one tempted in all things like as we are, a merciful as well as a faithful, a compassionate as well as an all-powerful, all-preva-

lent High Priest over the House of God. The great Son of God, when He stooped to become a man, did not become thereby more merciful, more kind, more compassionate than He had been ; yet are we not warranted to believe that a human element was introduced and infused into them which otherwise the mercy, kindness, compassion should not have possessed. If the Manhood was a gainer by bringing it into close, mysterious union with the Divinity, was there no gain to the Divinity by the Incarnation ?—not, of course, a gain absolutely, not a gain as to the increment of any original, essential faculty or attribute of the Supreme, but a gain as to the bringing of the Divine Being into closer and more sympathetic fellowship with man ? We all know how difficult it is, whatever be the natural capacity and largeness of our pity, to sympathise fully and tenderly with a kind of trial we have never felt. Those who have never wept over any dead they loved, can they enter into the grief of the bereaved ? And how could we, but by the Incarnation, have had one who could enter as Jesus can into all our sorrows ?

Why was such a sympathy as his provided for us, but that as sinners as well as sufferers we might cast ourselves upon it for support ? Jesus is the great raiser of human souls as well as of human bodies. He quickeneth whom He will. The hour has come when all that are in the grave of sin, of spiritual death, may hear his voice. That voice is sounding all around us as in the ears of the dead. Awake, it says to each of us—awake thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life. Let us awake, and with life new-given turn to the life-giver ; rejoicing to know that as tenderly as He handed her new-raised son to the widow of Nain, as tenderly as He ordered the food to be given to the little daughter of Jairus, as tenderly will He watch over the first stages of our spiritual being ; and that as fully as the griefs of widowed mother and weeping parents were shared in of old by Him in Galilee, as fully will He share in all the griefs of our earthly history, till He take us to that land where his own gracious hand shall wipe off the tears from every eye, and we shall need no more another to weep with us in our sorrows.

William Hanna.

WORK FOR SUNBEAMS.

One day, when Stephenson, the celebrated engineer, was in company with Dr. Buckland, the geologist, their attention was arrested by a railway train flashing along, tossing behind its long white plume of steam. "Can you tell me," said Stephenson to his companion, "what is the power that is driving that train ?"—"Well," said the other, "I suppose it is one of your big engines."—"But what drives the engine ?"—"Oh, very likely, a canny Newcastle driver."—"What do you say to the light of the sun ?"—"How can that be ?" asked the doctor.—"It is nothing else," said the engineer ; "it is light bottled up in the earth for tens of thousands of years,—light absorbed by plants and vegetables, being necessary for the condensation of carbon during the process of their growth, if it be not carbon in another form,—and now, after being buried in the earth for long ages in fields of coal, that latent light is again brought forth and liberated, and made to work as in that locomotive for great human purposes." *

The explanation of the process thus briefly referred to we take to be this. Plants, as is well known, and especially those of great size, require a large measure of light and heat. In the process of growing, they absorb carbon from the atmosphere, where it exists in the form of carbonic acid gas. It is to enable them to do this that the heat and light of the sun seem to be requisite ; by an interesting physical law, the heat and light thus received generate the energy which enables the plant to absorb the carbon. But when the plant, reduced to the form of wood or coal, undergoes combustion, the opposite process takes place. It restores its carbon to the atmosphere in the form of carbonic acid gas ; and in doing so, it gives back the solar beams which it had borrowed and laid up in the process of its growth. Thus the engineer might say that it was the light of the sun that drove the steam-engine ; and what looks so like a dream becomes a simple fact ; that beams of the sun, or at least beams of the same quality, stored up ages ago in the bowels of the earth, are the great moving power in our British machinery at the present day ; our workshops with all their rattle of wheels and belts, steam-hammers, rolling mills, and other gigantic contrivances, our locomotives by land, our steam-ships by sea—our power-looms, our spinning-jennies—in fact, nearly all the mechanism that makes our industry so remarkable, are driven by means of bottled sunbeams—essences that have lain in a latent form in Nature's coal-cellar since the carboniferous formations were deposited, but are now turned by combustion into a force so active and so powerful as to be the wonder of the world.

Is there not something corresponding to this in the spiritual world ? At the anniversary meetings of the religious societies we see the train of Christian philanthropy flashing along, with its various compartments of home and foreign missions, Bible and tract circulation, schools, refuges, reformatories, and other schemes, whose name is legion. What is the power that is driving that train ? We hope that in the main the engineer's answer may be given—sunbeams. Sunbeams of divine love and grace that have first fallen on hearts at home, and are now constraining these hearts to do what in them lies for those that sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death. But we need not confine the application of the symbol to the operations of benevolent societies. It is by a similar process that all the movements and operations of the new life are mainly provided for. First of all, the heart of man becomes the recipient of sunbeams ; the rays of the Sun of Righteousness fall upon it with

* Smiles' "Lives of the Engineers," iii. 452.

a richness and profusion that can hardly be conceived; but these rays are not designed to remain in it in a latent form for ever; they are to be given back, to be turned into a great power, and made to work for the welfare of the world and the glory of God. Many persons are willing enough to take in, but far from ready to give out. They are willing to be absorbents, but not dispensers of the sunbeams. But nothing could be more selfish or unfair. In such a case, the grand purpose of the Divine arrangement is defeated; and the power which God has gendered for the welfare of the world, like the talent of the unprofitable servant, is folded in a napkin, and buried in the ground. I would fain say a few words to stimulate to the exercise of the dispensing faculty; many beams of sunshine, I am sure, have fallen on every one of us, though more on some than on others; would to God that every one was jealous over himself with godly jealousy,—alarmed lest in the end of the day it should be found that there was a vast disproportion between what he had absorbed, and what he had given back—between the love that God had poured on him, and the love that in God's name and for Christ's sake, he had sought to pour on the world around him.

There are various sorts of moral or spiritual sunbeams; it may be enough on this occasion to notice four:—1. Human love; 2. Providential love; 3. Redeeming love; 4. Glorifying love.

I.

In the form of Human love we begin to absorb the sunbeams very early. They fall in showers on the new-born infant in loving looks and gentle words, and caresses innumerable imprinted on the downy cheek. Under ordinary circumstances, the sunbeams are continued more or less through the early years, in the innumerable acts of a mother's tenderness, and in the constancy and cheerfulness with which the fruits of a father's toil are applied to supply the wants of his children. In after years, cases are more liable to differ; but there are some on whom a great profusion and variety of human love constantly comes down, sisterly love, brotherly love, conjugal love, filial love, making life's atmosphere very balmy, and showing in what pleasant places their lines have been made to fall. It is a sad and miserable thing when children grow up without any of this sunshine; when the daily influences of life are all harsh and stern, fitted to freeze the spirit of confidence and affection, and develop nothing but cunning and fear. We don't wonder in such circumstances to find a stunted and miserable growth of character; for what can we look for in the child of drunken and savage parents, or in one who has never heard from a master or an employer any words but those of stern command, or harsh rebuke? If it has been otherwise with us, let us thank God with all our heart; and then let us consider how largely the fact of our having received so much of human love constitutes us debtors to our fellow men. For surely we cannot fancy that all these human sunbeams that God has directed on us from the first hour of our life are designed to be locked up in our own bosom for ever. Surely we have got them that we may give them back. We have had our use of them, and very pleasant it has been, but let others have the benefit as well. There are those, it may be, that stand in the same relation to us that we have stood in to our benefactors. Let us make sure that what we reflect down on them is not less than what was reflected down on ourselves. There is something very unjust, as well as otherwise scandalous, when one who has had kind and careful parents becomes a harsh mother or a careless father, and gives back to his children none of the sunshine that fell on himself in his early home. Does that parent not rob his children of what he got for them—rob them of what is more valuable and more vital for their highest welfare than if he squandered the gold or wasted the acres which may have been entrusted to his care for their benefit? It is the well-known property of fluids that they can rise to their own level: and surely it were but reasonable that in families love should rise to its level, that there should be no falling off from the attainments of preceding generations, that the force of the domestic sunshine should sustain no diminution, when "instead of the fathers there shall be the children."

But there is a wider sphere for the diffusion or reflection of that sunshine which comes to many in the form of human love. Looking round you on the world, how many poor creatures are there who are pining and languishing for want of those sunbeams that may have fallen so richly on you. How many orphan children are there, and children worse than orphans, on whom hardly anyone ever smiled, and whose hearts no one tries to gladden? What tales of loneliness and frigidity might not our poor-houses unfold, and those obscure and repulsive dwellings where the poorest of our people drag out uncheered and sunless lives? You, whose cup God has made to run over, you whom goodness and mercy have followed all the days of your life, is there no way by which your abundance of sunshine may minister to their want? Can you not turn your hearts into mirrors, so as to throw upon the dingy dwellings and straw pallets of age, and poverty, and disease, a few of the sunbeams that meet so profusely upon you? Think you, were you made to absorb all the love of humanity? Were you not made to diffuse it as well? And do you not feel that it is a far higher and nobler thing to diffuse than merely to absorb—more blessed, as our Lord said, in this as in other senses, to give than to receive?

II.

Sunbeams may fall on us in the form of Providential love. The circumstances of men vary much in this respect, but probably few among us have not some cause to acknowledge that a great amount of providential sunshine has fallen to our lot. Few thoughtful people in this country, surveying the nations of the world groaning under despotisms, and looking probably to the sword as their only hope, can fail to acknowledge the goodness that makes us to differ. But let us never fancy that these providential sunbeams have fallen on us to inflate us with pride and self-sufficiency. Freely we have received, freely let us give. If we have absorbed the sunbeam of

freedom, let us give it back in compassion for the enslaved, and in prayers and efforts for their emancipation. If we have drunk in the beams of peace and plenty, God forbid that we should use them for mere luxury and show and self-indulgence; let us reflect them in compassion for the distressed, and in help to the needy. If our health be good, and our employment steady and agreeable; if our house be happy, and our lot be cast among kind-hearted friends and neighbours; if we have received the benefits of education, and live under influences favourable to all healthful exercise of mind and body, let us not turn our hearts into a cellar where these sunbeams may be locked up, but shed them out freely in the form of similar blessings on all whose lot is darker and poorer. And if we feel that such precious things of the earth and the fulness thereof have not come to us on an independent footing, but are due to the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush, and that they are inseparably combined with the Bible and the Gospel, let us be all the more zealous in circulating the Bible, and propagating the Gospel, that the like blessings may come upon the head of every banished and imprisoned Joseph—upon the top of the head of him that in Providential blessings is separated from his brethren.

III.

To the sunbeams of Redeeming love we give a peculiar welcome. "Hail, holy light, offspring of heaven first born!" Beyond all doubt they constitute the most wonderful phenomenon our world presents. The wonder lies in this, that while they are the richest of heaven's beams, they are directed towards objects most unworthy and repulsive; the Son of God, manifesting the undivided love of the Godhead, clasps to his heart filthy creatures that He might have been rather expected to drive from his presence. Redeeming love is a feeling of wonderful elevation and purity; it gives us a conception of the beauty of God's nature above anything that our own thoughts would ever have reached. But redeeming love is not a mere feeling. It is love that exemplifies itself in act and in sacrifice; love that became incarnate in the person of Jesus; love that sustained his life of labour and self-denial, love that bore the curse, till the curse was exhausted, till its reign was rung out with the word "It is finished."

I fear that many good people never come, as they might come, under the direct influence of redeeming love, and do not therefore realise its marvellous power. Its beams seem to fall on them obliquely or slantwise, as the rays of the sun fall on the earth in winter; or rather, perhaps we should say, there is a cloud or curtain of unbelief that stretches between them and the Sun of Righteousness, and intercepts the balmy influences that would otherwise descend on their hearts.

But take a case in which there was not even a film to intercept the Sun of Righteousness. St. Paul knew redeeming love, not as a theory or an abstraction, but as a blessed personal fact. He could describe the Son of God, not in general terms merely as the author of salvation, but in closest personal relation to himself. "The Son of God who loved me, and gave himself for me." And the blessed sense St. Paul had of this great truth was the key to his life, the secret of his power. He felt that when utterly unworthy, he had received into his heart the richest beams of redeeming love, and all his anxiety was, to give back the love that had been poured upon him,—to give it back to Christ in the form of adoring gratitude, and to spread it over the world in the way of missionary activity and zeal. He felt himself, as the recipient of redeeming love, a debtor to Christ, and a debtor to the world, infinitely beyond what his utmost exertions could ever repay. To him it would have been simply incomprehensible how any one could be the recipient of these sunbeams, and not burn with the desire to reflect them on others. The love of Christ constraineth us, he said; it was in him like God's word in Jeremiah, a burning fire in his bosom; it constrained him not merely to tell about it, but to practise it; to forgive, and to bless, and to love, and to comfort, as God for Christ's sake had forgiven, and blessed, and loved, and comforted him.

Have you been forgiven, and yet can you not forgive? Have you absorbed this glorious sunbeam, and yet can you not give it out again? It is amazing how some people professing to be Christians stagger at this most fitting and natural return. Alas! it was no solitary case of refusal to give out what had been taken in, that our Lord described in the parable of the unmerciful servant. The debt which redeeming love cancels to every believer, bears no less a proportion to the debt which an offending brother owes to us, than the ten thousand talents bore to the one hundred pence. Yet are there not many professing Christians who after thanking their Lord for having freely forgiven them the ten thousand talents, go forth to seize some fellow-servant by the throat, and load him with reproaches for his evil conduct. Is it too much for you, my brother, to forgive your greatest enemy? Is it more than your nature can achieve to banish every bitter and contemptuous feeling, to take him to your heart, and to pray God to bless him with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus? If it be,—if you have no power to give back the sunbeam of forgiving love,—what is that sunbeam doing in you? Have you received it? Have you received it to lock it up in your heart, that it may never go forth on further errands of mercy,—that it may never serve to make known or convey an impression of the love there is in heaven? Men of science are telling us that in nature energy is never lost. It may pass into new forms, it may become latent for a time, but it comes forth again, showing that once launched into existence, it goes on and on for ever. Oh, surely in the spiritual world, energy should not be lost! The love that falls on the sinner's heart when he looks up to the cross and sees the dying Lamb of God, and hears the word of forgiveness, should not be buried in the heart it has warmed and quickened and blessed. Don't let its blessed career stop with you. Go and let it radiate from you on some other heart, and who can tell but it may radiate from it again to another and another, latent, perhaps, for a time, but never lost, and never completing its cycle of blessing, till the great day connects the end with the beginning.

The idea of redeeming love is not that of a single act. At the beginning, indeed, there is one act of surpassing grace,—the act of free forgiveness; but all along the believer's life, fresh sunbeams are ever falling on him from the Sun of Righteousness. In the Epistle to the Ephesians, one of the believer's privileges is described as that of sitting with Christ in heavenly places. Such heavenly places are all a-glow with sunbeams. The Lord's Supper, for example, when the Lord himself is present, and his servant feels that He is near—what happy thoughts it brings! How the Lord rejoices as it were in Jerusalem, and joys in his people, and seems to feel as if He could not utter words sweet enough, or do acts kind enough to show his love. How manifold are the delights of a communion-exercise, when your heart is thoroughly in the spirit of it! How gentle and winning the voice of the beloved, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk; eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." How blessed it is to behold the memorials of a sacrifice that has made an end of sin, and in eating and drinking these memorials, find a symbol of the indissoluble nature of the union between the believing sinner and his Saviour! How glorious to think we have a Saviour who can and will provide for our every want,—one, too, who is as tender in his human sympathies as He is glorious in his divine majesty, who knows and loves us as well as if we were an only child, and who says with a truth and tenderness that cannot be equalled, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Recipients of such sunbeams, is there no way of giving out what it is thus your privilege to take in? Are you not laid under a great debt by the reception of all these heavenly blessings? Enriched so greatly, can you make no use of them in the way of enriching others? You may feel deeply that anything you can do in this way is so inferior to what Christ has done for you, as not to be worthy to be named in the same breath. Any loving words or deeds of yours to your fellows seem so cold compared with Christ's that you are ashamed of them. But remember what was said of the woman that anointed Christ, "She hath done what she could." The moonbeam is cold compared with the sunbeam, but the one is the reflection of the other; and, inferior though it be, it serves important purposes to our world. The men at the king's right hand could not think what they had ever done to draw out the praises of the judge, until he solved the riddle by identifying himself with the poorest and meanest of his people, "Inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

Still further, let us think of redeeming love in some of its more ordinary manifestations, and consider in such cases the duty of giving back what we have received. If in the trials and anxieties of the Christian life, we have heard from Christ many words that have been soothing and cheering to us, ought we not to give back these sunbeams, by trying to speak soothing and cheering words to those in trouble? If many a cry of ours has been heard, and many a petition granted, ought we not in return to hear with patience the petition of the downcast, and do what we can, if there be wrong or suffering, to relieve and remedy? If tenderness has been shown to us by our Lord when we were in error, should we not show tenderness to others? If we have been kept from falling, should we not try to strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees? In short, may we not find in connexion with all the blessings of the Christian life opportunities for exemplifying the great duty of giving out what we have taken in, and thus averting the reproach that we have not rendered according to the benefit received?

IV.

If redeeming love be the most wonderful phenomenon in this world, GLORIFYING LOVE is surely the most wonderful in that which is to come. Already the fulness of the divine love is very amazing, and yet, compared with what remains, it is but as the cluster of Eshcol to the land flowing with milk and honey. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God! . . . Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." We shall be like Him; "for whom He did foreknow them also did He predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren." "Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word: that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing." When the Church is thus washed, her marriage-day shall have arrived, and the era of her brightest glory. Then shall be the time of richest sunbeams! Then shall come the fulfilment of the prayer, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am." Then shall come the closest fellowship with the Saviour, when each disciple shall feel as near as if he leant on his bosom, as if his left hand was under his head, and his right hand embraced him. And no night shall break in on this glorious day. "Thy sun shall no more go down by day, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thy everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended!"

But how shall the redeemed ever give back such sunbeams as these? We cannot answer the question fully, for "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." But to this extent we can answer it: they will give them back in glowing tributes to the Lamb, of adoration, love, and confidence, and in the constant radiation of loving feelings to one another. The atmosphere will be full of sunbeams. From the great central Sun they will be ever falling on every heart, and from every heart they will be going back to Him from whom they came, as well as reflected on this side and on that, wherever members of the family may be. It is this sunshine of love that constitutes heaven. How different from what is often found even in the fellowship of Christians on earth, with its atmosphere of suspicion, and bitterness, and contempt for those who cross their path! Alas, that when men, dis-

gusted with the bitterness and selfishness of the world, turn to the professedly Christian Church in the hope of finding a purer and nobler fellowship, saying to themselves—"Surely in this, the family of God, we shall find hearts generous and true, incapable of meanness or greed, kind and sympathising to those in trouble, forbearing and patient to the erring, purged from all malice and envy, not seeking their own, but, like their Master, delighting to spread sunshine on every side"—alas, that they should at any time find, that under a religious covering the old bitterness and bigotry are as strong as ever! Would that Christian men and women, without exception, were animated by a holy desire to make earth as like heaven as possible—and, for this end, would try to give back the sunbeams they have received, and trust more than they often do to the great power by which Christ achieves such victories—"the mighty working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself!"

W. G. Blaikie.

NEHEMIAH.

O TRUE light heart!
Light as the dancing bubbles of red wine
That crown the cup for him, almost divine,
Whose cup-bearer thou art.

Why art thou sad?
Kings with great cares like not sour looks, and thou
Wast chosen for thy ever-sparkling brow,
And smile aye sunny-glad.

Thou art not sick;*
Sullen thou never wert; as free thy song,
Though captive, as a bird's the meads among
And copses thick.

Light heart, but true!
True to thy God 'mid Shushan's golden dream,
True to those hearts that wept by Babel's stream,
Thou'rt still a Jew.

To-day thine eye
Sees not the sparkling wine, the gilded hall;
But, far beside a city's broken wall,
A tomb dishonoured, lie.†

True heart, again be light!
Thy God hath heard thee, and the king hath said,
"Go, build the wall that guards the sacred dead—
Go, in my might."

Go, guileless Nehemiah,
Serpent Sanballat lurks beside the wall,
And, low among the stones, with scorpion crawl,
The slave Tobiah.‡

But fear them not!
Nor yet the craven crew within, their prey,
False prophets, mongrel priests, cheats, usurers grey.
How changed thy lot!

True heart, but light no more!
The world's rude breath hath blown the froth away
That hid the clear dark wine; O Tirshatha,
Thy happiest days are o'er!

So from the heavenly throne
Good angels sent to comfort them that mourn
Are never seen to smile till they return,
And hear their Lord's "Well done."

Stout heart, clear head, clean hand,
An upward eye that sees the guiding light;
These shall direct thy way through darkest night
Unto the far bright land.

All slept beneath the moon*
That night, when thou didst thread thy lonely way
Along the hallowed boundary, where lay
In heaps the wall o'erthrown.

But lo! the rubbish stirs!
The heaps revive† beneath the busy hands
Of soldier-masons, wielding tools, or brands,
As sound the trumpeters.

Stone treads on stone,
With solemn march moves on the wall divine,
'Mid taunting foes, along the broken line
That once was Sion's zone.

And soon the ends shall meet!
And clasp again a virgin undefiled,
And thou shalt bring her, cleansed and reconciled,
To her Redeemer's feet.

The Lord remember thee?‡
Yes; nought thou ever didst for Him give up,
Heart's lightness, peace, or pleasure's sparkling cup,
But shall remembered be.

To thee it shall be given,
To shine among the saints at Christ's right hand,
With Moses and Elias there to stand,§
And crown the cup of heaven.

E. Horton.

* Neh. ii. 2. † Neh. ii. 3. ‡ Neh. ii. 10.

* Neh. ii. 12. † Neh. iv. 2. ‡ Neh v. 19, &c.
§ As one of the great Reformers.

SOME THOUGHTS ON PRAYER.

It is surely a mistake to treat of prayer merely as a duty. The essential idea of prayer is that it is one of the highest Christian privileges. Not that they are right who say that it is never enjoined on us as a duty; and more especially that our blessed Lord never commands us to pray. He commands us to pray for labourers in the harvest; He has told us to besiege God with importunities as one that would wake up a sleeping friend to give him bread; and in the writings of His apostles we have similar injunctions and commands. But the general teaching of the New Testament does not so much command us to pray—enjoin the duty of prayer—as tell us how great a privilege it is. The possession of any privilege does, indeed, involve an obligation to use it, and of this obligation we need to keep ourselves in mind; but the best way of doing so is to bethink us of what we miss when we neglect it.

Let us look, for example, at one of the most familiar exhortations in the epistles: "Be careful for nothing: but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. iv. 6, 7.) Though the 7th verse is often used—and may be rightly used—without reference to what precedes; it is in reality an assurance of the blessed result of believing prayer, as if it were: Be careful for nothing; but in everything let your requests be made known unto God—*and so* the peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds. If we distinguish between "prayer" and "supplication," so as to regard the one as descriptive of the attitude in which we appear before God; the other of the specific requests which we lay before His mercy-seat; we have the text as a whole teaching that if we go to God humbly, and ask of Him each thing that we need, we shall be possessed by the peace that passeth understanding. In short, this text teaches the privilege of believing prayer.

Let us take it up as such, and attending to its terms for a little, ask how such prayer as is described secures such peace. We answer—

1st. *We put ourselves in unison with the will of God when we so pray.*—The man who commits himself soul and body unto God in prayer, is beyond the reach of further disturbance. He dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, and abideth under the shadow of the Almighty. Everything will work together for his good, and he knows it. This is peace. This is oneness with God's will. He dwelleth in God and God in him. This attitude of prayer is what God desires of us. He does not wish to shower down blessings on inanimate or unregarding creatures: his wish is to hear the cry of those that fear Him, and to save them. His will is that our blessings should come in answer to prayer.

2nd. *Thus praying, we can wait for a delayed answer to our prayers;* if need be, can even bear a refusal. We have attained to unison with God. We have told our Father all we need. We have merged our will in His. We have told Him all our care, and have asked Him to relieve it; but we are well aware that his knowledge is greater than ours, and we can trust the future to Him. Many a child asks of his father what it would not be good for himself to get; and every wise parent will early impress on his child that in very love he must refuse to give such things; that he knows best; so as to have no pettish pouting when every little wish is not granted, so that even though disappointed, the child shall go away fully persuaded that his parent's will is wiser and better than his own. Thus our heavenly Father would have us earnestly pray, and then rest in a conviction like this:—"I have asked God my Father, and He knows all things: He will give me my desire if it is good for me, and if it is not good, He will give me something better." This secures the peace of God; and if we have ever known any measure of that peace, do not our hearts tell us that its fulness must be the "peace that passeth understanding?"

But we observe further, that this "*peace will keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*" (or more literally, *in* Christ Jesus.)

We have spoken of our securing the peace of God. But let us not forget *how*. It keeps us. God keepeth his people. They do not keep Him, but they give themselves up to Him, and He keeps them as the apple of his eye.

But we are taught that this peace of God will keep us "in Christ Jesus." Without attempting to exhaust the meaning of these words, we may so far explain them by saying, that in using our privilege of prayer, we *follow the Saviour's example.* He prayed in his need: before some of his great miracles; before his great sufferings. After the prayer in the garden, He went forth in the peace of God, knowing what was to come and feeling ready for it; saying, "Arise, let us go hence."

Moreover, *it is in Christ's spirit* we pray when we make all our requests known unto his Father and our Father, unto his God and our God. He was heard in that He feared. He feared to desire anything apart from his Father's will; and his prayer renewed and strengthened that holy communion with his Father by which He lived. He committed Himself unto Him that judgeth righteously. He feared to fail in doing his Father's will. So we need to fear; to fear lest we set up our desires as a standard, lest we seek anything before communion with God and unison with his holy will. For we have to learn what Christ showed us, that the great aim of prayer is not to obtain this or that present blessing, but to do the will of the Father who hath sent us; and we cease to be "careful" when we can put ourselves into His hands who ruleth all, and who findeth our spirits the hardest of all to rule.

When Christ prayed at the grave of Lazarus, He

referred to a previous prayer, thanking God that it had been heard. His prayer in the garden was also heard, for it closed with "Thy will be done;" and God's will was done,—not the desire of His shrinking human heart,—but He was enabled to do it and to bear it. So, when we make our requests known unto God with thanksgiving and hope, we have the mind in us which was also in Christ Jesus; and thus the peace which keepeth us keepeth us "in Him." Not only do we draw near to God through Him as our intercessor and advocate, not only do we plead with God in his name, but our communion is such that He dwelleth in us and we in Him.

And now, when all this is so, mark the privilege of prayer. It is the means of attaining to this state of union with God. It is wonderful; it passeth wonder, that when I "lift up my voice" to God, even in the half-spoken whisper or in the unuttered longings of the heart, I have used the mightiest power which a human being can ever wield. I have sent forth my will unto the Infinite and Eternal; and it will be felt through the universe—felt when time and all things temporal have ceased to be. Think of this, ye men of prayer. Your whisper sounded in the ear of the Almighty; and He has already acted on your cry; you have moved Him who moveth all. This is your privilege as the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. The power which you command is stronger than sin and death and hell; stronger than men and devils. Let no difficulty perplex you, but take your God and Father at his word, and cry aloud; spare not; do not let Him go until He bless you.

What would the poor human creature be without this privilege and power! What of his wants, his fears, his temptations! Try to conceive of him even inactively waiting for something which he needed, but which he had no right to ask. Could human nature bear it? Nay, verily. If man had not faith in God as the hearer of prayer, even submission to his will would be impossible, for the will of a personal God would in that case soon cease to be thought of. We should be like the philosophic heathens, who believed in a stern eternal *fate* long after they had ceased to put any trust in their gods. If men are to bear life well, they must do so in unison with the will of a personal God and Heavenly Father whose will, not hard law, rules the universe. "And Jesus spake a parable unto them to this end that men ought always to pray and not to faint." (See Luke xviii. 1.) Man's instincts and necessities would make him seek a devil to be lord over him, or anything rather than have hopeless, listless waiting.

Who that has known trial and difficulty, but knows the blessing of prayer? Who has habitually waited on God, and yet has never had the evidence of a granted prayer? "I love the Lord because He hath heard my voice and my supplication. I will call upon the Lord as long as I live." "This poor man cried, the Lord heard and delivered him out of all his distresses." "We would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia; that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life. But we had the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raiseth the dead; who delivered us from so great a death and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us, *ye also helping together by prayer for us*, that for the gift bestowed on us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf." Believers in our own day have found that the best reply to theoretical objections is the blessed fact that God hears and answers their own prayers.

There are, undoubtedly, difficulties besetting this view of prayer. One difficulty in particular—a very old one, but on that account all the more noteworthy—cannot be overlooked. It is usually stated as a question: If the world is governed according to fixed laws how can prayer be effectual? Does it alter those laws? If all is fixed, what is the good of praying? It is impossible to solve the difficulty completely; but it seems to me that it is but one of the many forms of mystery presented to us by the relationship between the Creator's fore-ordination and the creature's freedom. It is not more difficult to understand how prayer can be powerful in a universe governed by fixed laws, than to understand how man is free to choose his path and free to follow it out in that same universe. It is not a difficulty of Christian theology; it is a difficulty of philosophy; pressing (so far as it is understood) upon the heathen thinker as heavily as on the Christian. The world is governed by fixed laws, and yet man, in accordance with these laws, can bring about this result or that; and I cannot see why it should be counted a thing incredible that God can do the same. For the case is this: Here are the fixed laws; there a living being—God or man; is that living being able to act, or is he swept on by these laws like a straw in the stream? Everything is fixed, but man is free; man can act; man has that consciousness of power which proves his freedom; and why then should it be thought impossible for God to work on his servant's side? If it be possible: if God is free—the God of love—will He not answer his children's cry? Is His promise to hear and help us but a lie? Is the history of His fatherly care but a fabrication? We dare not continue such questions, even to disown them. Prayer is an appointed cause in the government of God; the will of God has linked it with results as firmly as any other cause in his universe; and we can believe, both on grounds of Scripture and of experience, that prayer is power. It was said to a man of prayer, "As a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." He was a man of "power and of love and of a sound mind" who wrote to his Christian friends in the prospect of bodily dangers, "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye *strive together with me in your prayers to God for me*; that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea, and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed."

To say, as some do, that God does not—cannot—answer prayer for temporal mercy, but may answer prayer for spiritual good things, is so obviously self-

[illegible] thy words . . . . O man, greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea be strong."

But we are sometimes told that prayer is useful, not because God answers it at all, but because of its reflex action on the mind of him who prays. This seems to mean, that when a man asks a favour of God he does not get it, but that it does his mind good to ask. For example: a man does not get daily bread though he asks for it, but it does him good to ask for it, as he thus learns to depend on God. Now without further argument, I would merely say, that it does not seem to be possible to pray unless in the expectation of an answer: that to pray merely for the sake of the reflex action is beyond the power of any human being. Let him who doubts this, try. No doubt, in this fallacy, as in most fallacies, there is a half truth; for, as we have said already, the chief object of prayer is not to secure this mercy or that, but to attain to unison with the will of God. But it is only a half truth after all, and it does not make it possible for a confiding child to ask a Father's mercy. It would make all intercessory prayer—all petitions for a blessing on those we love—an idle form. It would teach us that when "Epaphras laboured fervently for the Colossians in prayers, that they might stand perfect and complete in all the will of God," he was but an unenlightened devotee! Shall not we put aside all such vain jangling as this view would make us adopt, and bow our knees, for our friends' sakes,—as St. Paul did,—to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He would "grant them according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with all might by his Spirit in the inner man?"

The foregoing suggests another difficulty: "Why do we pray to God to do things, which He already wills to do?" Our best answer is the fact that Christ taught us to pray "after this manner." It is the Father's will that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth: and yet the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer are entreaties that this may be done. And Christ himself prayed for the fulfilment of the most obvious Divine purposes. "Fear not, little flock," He had said, "it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom;" and yet at the very last we find Him praying, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom Thou hast given me." In the very same way though it is God's will to bless his children, He loves that his children should ask that blessing. Does not every good father like to have his children asking him to help them? Would he have them motionless, lifeless, as pieces of furniture? Is he not glad when they run to him, saying with the child's trust, "Dear father, do this for me?"

But then, if we pray for things which are according to God's revealed will, shall we expect an answer, always an answer? This is a pressing difficulty, often put in these days. God has declared it to be his will that every sinner should turn to Him and live: and if I, as a friend, pray for the conversion of a friend—as a minister, for the conversion of many of my hearers' souls, shall I be sure of an answer? The true reply is Yes. There may be exceptions, there may be cases in which our prayer is a prescribing

of time and ways and means to God, who in this, as in all, knoweth best; and therefore the answer may be withheld: there may be other cases in which the special prayer, though rightly laid before God, is such that—for reasons far beyond our ken—God cannot grant it; but yet, how many more souls would be converted if friends prayed for friends, ministers and people for this result from preaching; all of us to the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers unto his harvest! "Ye have not, because ye ask not." I think it would startle us if we really took ourselves to task about our prayers. I prayed for my brother's soul this morning. Do I expect an answer, or have I merely tried to shift a little uneasiness off me? Do I expect that the blessing will come? It is God's will—it is my wish—do I believe in the efficacy of my prayer to obtain it?

There is just one caution needed here. Let us not despair if God seem to delay long. "Thy will be done." If Thou seest that greater good would be done by delay, "Thy will be done." Suppose Stephen had prayed for the salvation of Paul's soul, was he to die unbelieving, because with his last look on earth he saw the infatuated young man holding the clothes of those who were throwing the stones? When Monica prayed for Augustine, would she have done right to despair, because he was not at once rescued from sin? Was not a better purpose served by the humility which was deepened in both mother and son through the long delay in his conversion? Had Stephen lived, he might have "glorified God in Paul" when he heard him saying, "For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe in Him to life everlasting." However certain we are of our purpose being good; however hard it may be to bear the agony of hope deferred; still let us ever leave our case in God's hands, nor impiously presume to dictate times and ways and means to Him. Sometimes we are impatient, and mistake our impatience for the eagerness of faith; sometimes presumptuous, and mistake our presumption for childlike confidence. We need oftentimes the lesson of the prophet's prayer, and the "Go again seven times;" the lesson of the Psalmist's injunction, "Wait on the Lord, and he will strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord."

There is such a thing as the misfortune of a granted prayer, of a successful wish; for prayer may become its own punishment. You remember Rachel's presumptuous cry, "Give me children, *or* I die," and the issue when God gave her children, *and* she died in giving one birth. So many a man has prayed for success in his ambition, and found in the success the ruin of his peace, or of his soul. I have known a mother, who prayed, as though her heart would break, for longer life to her sick child, and her prayer was granted; but long years afterwards, when the reprobate youth was literally breaking her heart, she wished he had died in his cradle when he was pure and good. We know so little, we can foresee so little, that it is never safe for us to make our prayer merely a cry for the fulfilment of our own shortsighted desires.

Once more: There is a promise, "If two of you shall agree as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." I have had it put to me as a difficulty that there is an absolute promise to the prayer of one, and that therefore there seems to be no possibility of more power belonging to the united prayer of two. I do not think it is enough to say that if the prayer of one is heard and answered, there must be still greater power in the petitions of two or three—of a Christian assembly. The emphatic word is "*agree*," and the promise is given to remind us that we are apt to pray without due submission to the will of God, to put our momentary cares more pressingly before God than our abiding needs, and that there is a check on this tendency in the agreement of two disciples. Each feels his personal selfishness displaced by higher cravings when he seeks to pray for those things which they both need; and thus they unite in seeking those holy things and good which it is God's will to give. Let us not forget also how blessed is the comfort this gives to those who in their trouble have found a sympathising friend ready to pray with and for them in their house of mourning, or by the bed of sickness. The pressure of the great need makes a heartfelt agreement, and that prayer will be heard.

Think, then, what is missed by the prayerless man. No need to suppose him more afflicted than the prayerful, suppose the same trials to come upon them; but one bears them in God's strength, the other is either broken down or hardened into insensibility by them. Terrible is the lot of the man who bears the burden of mortality—and of immortality—unlightened, unshared. What a privilege, on the other hand, has the man of prayer! We shall not speak of it as our duty—God's right; but as our privilege—God's boon.

You who read this paper, do you pray? Do you feel that it is a high, a priceless privilege to be warranted to pray? If not, if you pray without finding it a privilege, see what is the cause. You may find prayer irksome because you go to God with a certain round of petitions, irrespective of your feelings and desires. You might as well put slips of prayer in a box, and turn the handle as the Buddhist does, and fancy it is prayer. Do not express wants which you do not feel; do not ask for all the Christian graces when you do not wish to have them. Ask things needful; milk if you be a babe, strong meat if you be of mature strength in Christ. Think what you want before you begin to pray; ask for it, and then stop. You kill your spirit of prayer when you do anything else. If you shall find upon examination that in reality you do not wish piety, purity, or present salvation from the power of sin, is it not better to know this than to mock God and hurt your own soul by asking what you have no desire to get?

A. H. Charteris.

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

BY THE REV. J. H. RIGG, D.D.

In my two former papers, one on "God's Day," the other on "The Old Testament Sabbath in Theory and Practice," * I hope that the following important points have been settled.

1. There is no alternative between upholding the Sabbath of the Decalogue, as still virtually binding on Christians, and regarding the Lord's Day as merely a Church festival. This latter alternative will not warrant any legislative defence of the day from desecration; and it may well be doubted whether, on merely economical grounds, the nation would consent to a legislative consecration of the day to rest.

2. The principle of the Sabbath-law was a part of primitive and patriarchal morality; and, as an integral portion of the Decalogue, the Fourth Commandment is to be distinguished altogether from the merely ceremonial and temporary enactments of the Mosaic code. The Decalogue, *quâ* Decalogue, according to our Lord and St. Paul, is a part of Christianity; and therefore the Fourth Commandment is binding upon Christians. Moreover, our Saviour has separately and explicitly vindicated the permanency and universal obligation of the Sabbath by his own ever-memorable word, "The Sabbath was made for man."

3. From all which (1 and 2) it follows that so long as this world of toil and care remains what it is, the law of the Sabbath must still abide as an essential part of Christianity.

4. At the same time it is the spirit of the commandment which is to be kept in view, and which must govern the letter. So it was even under the law, as in the case of the priests in the temple. So our Lord explained that it ought to be throughout all the claims and relations of life. So it must be in the Christian dispensation, with yet larger allowance for difficulties in the way of its literal fulfilment, arising from a state of social life, and from ecclesiastical conditions and necessities, altogether in contrast with those which existed among the Jewish people. But the spirit of the commandment will never become obsolete. One day in seven, for rest, for family intercourse and union, and for Divine worship;—that is the meaning of the commandment. *Rest for the body.* No such amount of work can be allowed, except in an extraordinary case of imperative necessity, as really destroys the character of the day as one of rest; nothing which makes it a weary day, or a day of task-work. All such work, however, is to be allowed as is needful to make the day one of true happiness, all, the prohibition of which would involve such inconvenience, or privation, or irksomeness, as to render the enforced abstinence from active exertion much more wearying and unpleasant, more disturbing to the spirit, than would be the performance of the work prohibited: this further guard, at the same time, being ever kept in mind, that no such work may, as a rule, or except in some case of pressing emergency and imperative necessity, be allowed, as prevents the due consecration of the day, taken as a whole, to spiritual culture and Divine worship as its highest employment. The direct demand of the law, however, is not only that bodily rest, but also that *mental repose* should be religiously observed. "Thou shalt do no manner of work," prohibits care as well as toil, the task-work of the mind as well as of the body. In truth, the toil and task-work of the mind must ever be also the toil and task-work of the body. But, further, the law demands rest of body and of mind, only for the sake of body, soul, and spirit. The rest is to be *for the body's sake*, and, therefore, must be such rest as is consistent with a good measure of sober bodily refreshment and enjoyment. The rest is *for the sake of family intercourse and union*, and must therefore be so defined and measured as to be in consistency with the conditions of family union, and, in a right sense, of family festivity, including in the scope of the word *family*, servants as well as children. Above all, the rest is to be *for the sake of*, that which is the highest and happiest privilege and enjoyment of the day, *spiritual meditation and fellowship and Divine worship.* If, for the sake of this, some active exertion be needful, activity to that extent must become a duty; such activity being, in truth, necessary in order to the best, the deepest, the truest rest. Thus understanding the Sabbath law, all is brought into harmony; bodily and mental rest, family union and intercourse, Divine worship. The rest is in order to the family fellowship and the holy worship. The family fellowship is sanctified by worship; the family union is crowned by united worship in the "great congregation," and around the family altar.

Such is the ideal of the Sabbath Institute, in its general principles, which should, as I venture to think, be kept in view by the Christian. As thus presented, that ideal seems to be equally in harmony with the Old Testament and with the New. Thus understood, it may surely be maintained that the Fourth Commandment is still in force.

The one difficulty, of any importance, which seems to stand in the way of the universal acceptance by Christian people of the Sabbath law, as it has now been expounded, is the fact that the day has been changed; that the Lord's Day is the first day of the week, whereas the Sabbath was the seventh day.

As to the history of this change, as we allege, of the day only,—as those from whom we differ maintain, of the day and the principle of its observance, of the day and the day's authority, both at once; as to the history of the change by which, as all agree, the Lord's Day has come to be observed by Christians, in a Christian spirit and manner, instead of the Jewish Sabbath, as celebrated on the seventh day after the Jewish manner;—I shall not waste time and space by dwelling upon points which both parties are well agreed,—Scotch Free Churchmen, and English High Churchmen; Dr. Candlish and Dr. Hessey. I shall assume it as settled beyond

* See pp. 369, 519.

the need of argument, that the anniversary of the Lord's Resurrection was, from the very first, kept as a Christian festival, a special day of worship and thanksgiving. The last Sabbath before the Resurrection had been a sad day for the disciples—the saddest they ever knew; it was the day on which our Saviour lay in the tomb, a dark, hopeless day. The first day of the week saw the sunrise of the Christian dispensation; and could not but be commemorated ever afterwards as the anniversary of the "new creation," the beginning of a new and brighter world, of the reign of redemption and grace, under the headship of the risen Lord. The believers, on the day of the Lord's Resurrection, could not but say, "This is the day that the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."

There is no need of evidence to prove that the first day of the week, the day of our Lord's resurrection, was from the first *the* festival of the disciples, and so became *the* festival of Christianity. This was of necessity. He who cannot see this has eyes for no living truth. If our hearts have taken truly in the life and truth of that Christian "hour of prime," the time of the first life-burst of Christianity, we shall not expect to find, either in the Gospels or the Acts, an announcement of this as a fact, or the register of a decree by which the acceptance of the Christian festival was enacted. But we shall expect to find such instances and allusions as imply the fact. And herein we are not disappointed. On the first day of the week our Lord once and again met his disciples, when they were assembled together for fellowship and worship. On the first day of the week the primitive Christians came together to hold their brotherly feasts (*agapæ*) and to celebrate the Lord's Supper (to "break bread"). On the first day of the week they were trained to "lay by in store" as God had prospered them, and the first day came to be called, as in the first chapter of the Apocalypse, "the Lord's Day," and was the season on which, above all, the Lord's saints had spiritual communion with Him.

In the age immediately following that of the Apostles we have decisive evidence that the Lord's Day had come into the place of the Sabbath, so far, at least, that the Sabbath had ceased to be observed, while the Lord's Day was kept as a holy day; that on this day the solemn and stated assemblies of Christians were held; that the Lord's Day had come to be spoken of by preachers and teachers as the Sabbath, and its celebration as the Sabbath-keeping.*

"But," it is objected "the Christian Jews, at least at first, observed the Jewish Sabbath, after the Jewish manner; they also kept the Lord's Day; it is not easy to believe that they abstained from labour on both days: therefore their celebration of the Lord's Day, at any rate, cannot have been of the same sort as their observance of the Sabbath." So much as this we must concede; but the point is of no essential importance in the argument. Doubtless with the Christian Jews the Sabbath itself must have been changed into a Christian holy day. They would remember the sacrifice, and could not but remember also its acceptance; they would remember the burial during the Sabbath; they could not choose but also remember the Resurrection. In a word, the Jewish Sabbath, as they could not now but keep that Sabbath, was changed into a Christian festival, and would prepare them for keeping the Christian Lord's Day. All through its hours they must have been longing for the glad holy day which was to follow; and thus, when the eve of the Sabbath closed, and sunset ushered in the beginning of the first day of the week, they would be prepared to hail with joy its memories and its services, and look forward with longing for the earliest day-break of the Resurrection-morning. On that day, so long as their Jewish commonwealth remained, and as respects the believing Jews of Palestine at least, they would not abstain from work. But yet it would be a high and holy day, from the first, for the services of which they had been prepared by the Sabbath-rest. They could not but feel that it was destined to increase, while their Sabbath must decrease; that the rightful inheritance of sanctity and celebration belonged to it, and must come to it. They could not but be led by their spiritual instincts to anticipate that substitution of the Lord's Day for the Jewish Sabbath, with the full rights of inheritance, which could not but follow.

In the nature of things, however, this was a matter not to be settled by a decree, but to be determined by a law of inward life and sympathy.

In this, as in other things, the Jewish Christian occupied of necessity a territory of transition. The dilemma which I have been endeavouring to resolve does not apply to the case of the Sabbath only; the sacrifices, the temple services, the passover, circumcision, all are instances of a similar difficulty. The Jewish Christian kept the Passover, and yet he celebrated continually the Eucharist, which was destined and intended to supersede it. His children were circumcised, and also baptised. He took part in the temple sacrifices, and yet he knew that the sacrificial institute had found its fulfilment in the death of Christ, and he soon learnt that it was in a few years to pass away. All these rites, the Sabbath included, *i.e.*, as a seventh-day Sabbath, were among the number of those which were "decaying and waxing old," and which, as we are taught in the epistle to the Hebrews, were accordingly "ready to vanish away." All, notwithstanding, were observed by the Jews, at least of Palestine, so long as the temple stood. But, as the light and life of Christianity filled them more and more, they learnt and felt that these were but parts of an obsolete economy; they interpreted and used them in a Christian sense; they had given them up in spirit while they still observed their letter; and they were prepared to welcome with all their hearts the clear and full Christian dispensation, when these shadows should have passed away, and only the spiritual substance should remain. As, therefore, the Eucharist was to supersede the Paschal celebration and the temple sacrifices; as baptism was to take the place of circumcision; so the Lord's Day was to come into the place of the Jewish Sabbath.

* Neander's "Church History," vol. i. pp. 402-3.

In the meantime, there were doubtless Jewish Christians out of Palestine, who, before the destruction of the Jewish commonwealth, learnt, in the spirit of St. Paul, to understand that the glory had passed from the Jewish seventh day, and had settled on the Christian first day ;* as, on the contrary, there were Gentile converts, and converted Jewish proselytes, who, out of respect for the Jewish law, and the letter of the Old Testament, not only celebrated the Lord's Day after a Christian sort, but strictly kept the Jewish Sabbath. In regard to all such, the great apostle of liberty and of tolerance taught, in his large-hearted way, that "he that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord ; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it." (Rom. xiv. 6.)

"But," it may be rejoined by an objector, "granting all that has now been advanced, it is yet admitted that the Lord's Day was not at first, by the Jews at least, kept strictly after the Sabbatical fashion. It must also be admitted that of the early Christians a large number were slaves, and that they *could not* strictly keep the Lord's Day as a Sabbath. On the whole, therefore, so far as can be judged from these two circumstances, conjointly, it appears certain that the truly primitive Christians did not sabbatically observe the Lord's Day. In fact, Jewish Christians, converted Jewish proselytes, and Gentile slaves, taken together, must have constituted so large a proportion of the early Church that their rule of observance may fairly be taken as the general rule."

As respects the Jews, what I have already said has gone to show that they kept their own Sabbath in a Christian spirit, as well as according to the Jewish letter, and carried its celebration over and on to the crowning grace and gladness of the first day. They, therefore, observed the Fourth Commandment, and had all the benefit of a full Christian Sabbath ; while they were preparing the way for the succession of the Lord's Day into the place of their seventh-day Sabbath. And, as respects the Christian slaves, the fact that they *could not*, and consequently did not, keep the Sabbath strictly, is little to the purpose of those who advance it. That their desire was for a holy rest-day may be taken for granted. The example of the Jewish Decalogue must have suggested the thought to them. The practice of the Jews around must have given it emphasis. Their sense of the superiority of the Lord's Day, in glory and privilege, must have led them to desire to show at least as much reverence for that day as the Jews showed for their Sabbath, and to do it at least as much honour. Their own necessities, the cravings of their hearts, must have taught them how precious and desirable a Christian day of rest would be to them. It cannot be doubted that they longed for such a day. As little can it be doubted how they would have employed such a day. They would have consecrated it, would have celebrated and employed it "unto the Lord." It would have been for them eminently a day of holy gladness and of Church privilege. All that remains of Christian antiquity agrees in teaching us with what solemn gladness Christian festivals were observed by the primitive Christians. No masques, or mummeries, or games, we may be sure, would they have set forth, no Lord's Day revels. We know that within some eighty years of the Resurrection, the Christians "were accustomed to assemble before daylight on an appointed day, and alternately among themselves to chant a hymn to Christ as God ;"* that they bound themselves solemnly to each other to walk in the ways of godliness ; and that in the evening they assembled again to partake of their Church feast, and of the Lord's Supper. Such is the information given by Pliny the younger respecting the Lord's Day keeping of the primitive Christians. And the tendency which, from the beginning, ruled in the heart of the Christians is manifested by the result, by the universal sacred observance of the day, which grew up within the early Church, and of which Constantine's celebrated edict, although it bears the marks of a degeneracy which had already set in, was yet the evidence and the result. In truth, we have the distinct testimony of Tertullian that the Christians of his day observed the Lord's Day sacredly as a Sabbath, uniting with their Christian festivity a religious abstinence from their ordinary business.†

It is not generally known that the case of the Christian slaves during the first ages of the Church's history has its precise parallel in the case of the Christian slaves in our own West India colonies, previous to the passing of the Emancipation Act. For very many years these slaves, the most pious as well as the heathen, were *compelled* to go to market on the Lord's Day morning. That was the only time when their *owners* permitted them to go ; the only time when there was any market for them to go to. But then they went to and fro, keeping the Sabbath in their souls, "singing and making melody in their hearts unto the Lord." And as soon as ever they could, as soon as liberty came to them, most gladly and thankfully did they escape from this odious part of their bondage ; they went to market on other days, and they gave the whole Sabbath to religious rest and to worship. Here was the *principle* of the Fourth Commandment ; and they who have religion seated in their hearts will not need to be told to abstain, and to provide that their dependents may abstain, as far as possible, from all bodily labour on the Christian Holy Day, that so their whole energies may be devoted on that day to His service.

Those from whom we differ on this subject seem to forget that the Old Testament Scriptures were from the first reverenced as divine and authoritative in the primitive Christian Church. St. Paul, whether in the Epistle to the Hebrews, or elsewhere, teaches that the law has been superseded only where and to what extent it has been fulfilled by Christianity in its highest and ultimate meaning. Wherever, as in the case of the ceremonial ordinances, its meaning and intent

* "In the 'Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians,'" says Neander, "it is pre-supposed that even the Jews who had come over to Christianity, substituted Sunday in place of the Sabbath."

* Pliny's "Letter to Trajan."

† "Die dominico resurrectionis," says Tertullian, "omni anxietatis habitu et officio cavere debemus, differentes etiam negotia." The quotation may be found in Neander, as already cited.

have been realised in Christianity in a far higher sense, the spiritual taking the place of the typical, there it becomes out of date and is done away; but only there. All else abides. In this "all else" is included, as I showed fully in my last paper, the moral law, the Decalogue. In the grand abiding substance of Old Testament truth were also included the volumes of prophecy. Such being the case, the Christian Church cannot be supposed to have regarded the Sabbath Law as repealed. The early Churches had not learnt to regard as without force or obligation for them, all that is so earnestly and impressively said by Isaiah and Ezekiel respecting the sanctity of God's Sabbaths. The Old Testament was their Bible, before they had a New Testament, at least complete in form. As inevitably as the blazoning of the Ten Commandments at the east end of our English churches has begotten, and could not but beget, in the minds of English people, a reverence for the Sabbath and the Sabbath Law, so, in the case of the primitive Christian Churches, the veneration with which they regarded the Scriptures of the Old Testament, making them, as the Apostles and our Lord had done, the fountain of evidence and authority, and the ground of obligation, must have produced a reverence for the Divine authority of the Sabbath Law. At the same time, their deepest sympathies as Christian believers would teach the Christians of the first ages that most fitly and rightfully had the Apostles, under the inspiration of the Lord, transferred the glory and authority of the seventh-day Sabbath to the first day, the Lord's Day. As in baptism they saw circumcision, and in the Eucharist "the feast" of the Christian Passover, so in the Lord's Day they at once hailed the Christian Sabbath. And surely every feeling of their hearts would prompt them to say, "Our Lord's Day Sabbath shall not be counted worthy of less observance or less honour than the Jewish Sabbath." How completely the ideas of the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Lord's Day had come to be amalgamated, to coalesce, even so early as the time of Justin Martyr, is evident from the fact that that father says that the Lord's Day was celebrated, not only as the remembrancer of our Lord's Resurrection, but also in commemoration of the creation. So also, much earlier than Justin, as I have already had occasion to note, so eminent a representative of the most ancient post-apostolic Christianity as Ignatius, teaches us that the Jewish Sabbath had given place to the Christian Lord's Day; while, in perfect agreement with Ignatius and Justin, and only a little later than Justin, Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, describes the Sabbath-keeping of the Christians in these words:—"On the Lord's Day, every one of us Christians keeps the Sabbath, meditating in the law, and rejoicing in the works of God."* If to these evidences of the very early identification of the Sabbath Law with the rule of the Lord's Day, there be added the witness of Tertullian, already quoted, respecting the strict sanctity with which the Lord's Day was kept free from work and care, the proof would seem to be complete that, in the grave and solemn times of the martyr-age of Christianity, the Lord's Day was by devout Christians observed according to the principle of the Fourth Commandment. I have already, indeed, shown some reasons why it may be admitted that, *at the very first*, in all likelihood the Lord's Day was but loosely observed. The Jewish believers, who kept the seventh day holy, and the slaves, who were not at liberty on any day to rest from their labour, together formed a large proportion of many of the earliest Churches. Besides which, newly converted heathens, who had had no previous acquaintance with the Jewish Scriptures, although they might have received the true quickening leaven and life of Christianity into their souls, might not for some time be made so familiar with the teaching and spirit of "the law and the prophets" as to apprehend the force and obligation of the Fourth Commandment, as in its spirit applying to the Lord's Day. It must be borne in mind, also, that among these there would at first be no adequate body of resident and thoroughly instructed Christian teachers. Moreover, the whole life of the world was at that time against the strictly literal observance of the Fourth Commandment. The Jews, indeed, kept their Sabbath in Gentile lands; but, in order to do this, they were compelled to separate and seclude themselves in all their domestic life and economy from the world in which they lived. This was not inconsistent with the exclusive character of the Jewish dispensation. But it was altogether inconsistent with the character of Christianity. Christians were not to "go out of the world." They were to be a leaven in the midst of it. Hence it was not possible for a few Christian converts here and there, themselves poor and without influence, so to alter the whole course of the life in the midst of which they were called to the knowledge of Jesus, as to secure for themselves an absolute rest on one day in seven. All these considerations taken together serve to show why, at the very first, the Fourth Commandment could not be perfectly observed by Christian converts.

The Sabbath Law, in its Mosaic form, was given emphatically as a *national law;* and never can it be perfectly carried out, even for the blessing of individuals, except where a nation, as such, has accepted it, and is agreed to live according to it.

But all this argues nothing against the obligation or the blessing of the Sabbath. It remains still the duty of each individual to keep it, as far as is in his power. We cannot argue from the ill-informedness of raw and recent Gentile converts, that those who have been brought up in the full light of the whole Bible are to be released from the obligations of the Holy Commandments. On the contrary, the circumstances by which those from whom we differ prove that the Sabbath *could not* be kept at first, are our justification in this part of our argument. It *was not* strictly kept, we admit, because it *could not be*, and only because it could not be. That it was, so far as it could be, and so far as a true spiritual illumination prevailed, is shown by the strictness with which, notwithstanding all the difficulties in the way, all the earnest Christians of the second

* See for all the passages and very much valuable matter, "The Lord's Day," by the Rev. J. W. Thomas.

century—whether in the East, as represented by Ignatius and Justin, or in the West, as represented by Irenæus, or in Africa, as represented by Tertullian—were agreed to observe it. Doubtless, indeed, the allegorising and lax school of Alexandria imported some elements of laxity into the interpretation of the Sabbath Law, although Origen's ideal of a perfect Lord's Day Sabbath-keeping would appear to have been very high and spiritual. It is likely, also, that as the Christian Church became wealthier and more infected with the worldliness of a corrupt and degenerate empire, all its observances, and its observance of the Sabbath in particular, would become increasingly lax and formal. Still, on the whole, as Christianity grew in sway and extent, a progressive outward sanctity distinguished the Lord's Day from the other days of the seven; and if the decree of Constantine betrays some points of growing laxity, it nevertheless is manifestly grounded, in good part, on the idea, the principle, of Sabbath sanctity, as embodied in the Decalogue.

But, after all, we refuse to be bound by the precedent of the early ages as to the observance of the day. If it be shown that the observance of the Patristic Church was lax, that will not affect us. Their interpretation, their exegesis, was lax. In some things even their morals were lax. They admitted pious frauds. Their sensibility was not keenly alive to the guilt of sensual sins. They could not lose all at once all the slime of heathenish sensuality and falsehood. Are we to go back to their exegesis or their morals? Nay, we have the Scriptures, and we interpret the sacred text and expound its morality for ourselves. In many respects our interpretation is truer than that of the early Church. The Apostles held the truth; but they could only launch it into the world in the form of general principles or statements; and they launched it into the midst of heathenish contamination. By the Apostles we abide in our interpretation. By the practice of the early Church, even of the Apostolic or sub-Apostolic Church, we are not bound to abide.

We hold that the observance of the Sabbath was intended to grow more spiritually strict as the ages advanced; and that, even as to literal strictness, we have many advantages and inducements which never existed at any period or in any part of the world during the patristic or the mediæval ages. We hold, moreover, that the law was meant not only for the private guidance of individuals, but for the legislative direction of the nation. Never was the Sabbath Law so necessary for nations and individuals as at this day. Never could it be, never ought it to have been, so spiritually and worthily observed. In literal strictness, we cannot keep it as the Jews did; but we may hallow it in a higher sense and with a more perfect and blessed rest of heart and soul than they did or could. The mere letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. If its law is interpreted and applied as has been already explained in these papers, the truth of our Lord's words will shine out with ever-increasing glory, and it will be more and more acknowledged that "the Sabbath was made for man."

On such grounds as have now been indicated, I trust we may still hold by the harmony of the Old and the New Testaments, of the moral law and the gospel of Christ. It will not be necessary, as I hope, to expunge the Decalogue from our catechisms, or to erase the emblazoned Commandments from the walls of our churches; which, however, would evidently be necessary—necessary as a dictate equally of morals and of policy, if the Decalogue, *quâ* Decalogue, were indeed obsolete and repealed. I trust we may still hold that the Fourth Commandment embodies the fundamental law of the Sabbath, the Christian Sabbath no less than the Jewish. The mere change of the day, it is admitted by the candid among our opponents, is not an essential element of the question. If we keep the first day as the seventh, we are still keeping the seventh day holy; each seventh day in succession and one seventh of our days. That the same day, literally, should be kept holy by all the nations of the earth, we know to be a physical impossibility. For reasons which I have endeavoured to make plain in this paper, a decree at a given time changing the holy day from the seventh to the first was not to be expected. The law of sympathy and life, under the continual influence of "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation," was to effect the transfer to the festival of our Lord's Resurrection of all the honour, homage, and sanctity which had belonged to the ancient Sabbath. The transfer was, as we have seen, thus effected. With this transfer has come for us a change in the centre to which we gravitate. Jehovah the Creator has become for us Jehovah the Redeemer.

> "'Twas great to speak a world from nought,
> 'Twas greater to redeem."

Accordingly, as without the record of a decree, we (at least most of us) believe in the apostolic authority of Infant Baptism, and the universal obligation upon Christians of the Holy Eucharist; so, though there be no record of any decree on the subject, we believe in the divine authority of the Lord's Day, and its obligation on Christians, as virtually identical with the Sabbath of the old covenant.

Dr. Hessey thinks that the authority by which Christians are bound to observe the Lord's Day is equivalent to that by which the rite of Confirmation is sanctioned! To this level, as I believe, must our ideas of the sanctity of the Lord's Day descend when once we cease to regard it as identical with the Old Testament Sabbath. It must come down to the style and title of a mere Church festival, a festival of merely ecclesiastical authority. And then, how much longer can any shadow of Sabbath sanctity or any pretence of a Sabbath Law be kept up in this land? How soon, after that conclusion has been adopted, will the glory, the defence, the consolation, of the British Sabbath be departed; and all that is included in the thought of a Sabbath at Paris or Berlin come in instead?

It has been many times and most impressively shown, especially in the Prize Essays on the Sabbath by Working Men, published some fourteen years ago, and in Mr. Arthur's Letter to Lord Stanley, that on the Sabbaths of Great Britain, most of all, depends all that is most stable in our national character, all

that is most precious in our domestic habits and feelings, the peculiar vein of sweetness which tempers the ruggedness of our insular temper, the thoughtfulness and the moral superiority which distinguish the better classes of Britons beyond any people in the world. A Sabbathless nation, in the midst of an age of fierce competition, must be a nation without leisure for love or for thought—a nation without rest and without homes. The people of a Sabbathless land, at all events in such an age, must live in a condition of perilous alternation between the driving drudgery of business and the driving dissipation of pleasure. A people and a land in such a case must be open to the accesses of revolutionary excitement; a Sabbathless people must be incompetent for that noble responsibility of self-government, which has been so long one of the great distinctions of the English nation. Calm and strong religious conviction and feeling can never be enthroned in the heart of a Sabbathless people. I may not dwell on this subject, as my space is already exhausted, and as the special object of these papers is substantially accomplished. But it would have been inexcusable not to glance at that practical and popular argument for the sanctity of the Sabbath which many feel to be, of itself, a solid and satisfactory ground on which to rest our faith in the Sabbath Law.

The one thing which, perhaps most of all, needs to be eliminated from our idea of the object of the Sabbath Institute, is that which so many desire to put into it—that, namely, of pleasure. If mere pleasure be admitted as one part of the end of the Sabbath, work cannot be excluded from the day. Work must always be a better thing, and a better thing on any day, than very much which men deem pleasure. No day can be held sacred for the ends of pleasure. If pleasure, merely as such, be recognised as lawful on the Sabbath, labour cannot be proscribed as unlawful. Labour, indeed, may be lawful on the Sabbath, as we have so plainly seen, for certain objects and to a certain extent. I may work, or demand work, for reasons of necessity or of mercy; but I may not exact work for my mere pleasure. Mere pleasure, for mere pleasure's sake, can be no part of Sabbath duty, and ought to be no part of a Christian's Sabbath.

There can be no greater fallacy than to confound pleasure with rest. Pleasure is not necessarily rest; though rest may be pleasure. Pleasure is often the most severe labour. Nothing fatigues like the dissipation of pleasure. Labour and travelling, for necessary purposes, may be defended; but not for the mere pleasure of any class or of any man. Pleasure traffic on the Lord's Day is, on every ground of Christian principle and of good policy, indefensible. Labour on the large or the small scale is only to be justified on the grounds already so often indicated. It must be in order to rest, in order to family union and intercourse, in order to worship. If limited to this, it will never press heavily on any class of *employés*, but all may, in a fair measure and Christian sense, enjoy their Sabbaths. To apply these principles to the leading questions of modern times, in regard to the employment of labour on the Sabbath, would be a profitable task, but cannot now be entered upon. There are few, if any, questions, however, which, by a clear, unprejudiced, resolute mind, might not, with these principles as a key, be resolved. The conclusions might probably offend in more directions than one; but upon their being distinctly seen and honestly acted out, will depend more for Christianity and for Britain than many think.

ON KING SAUL: A STUDY.

I.

THERE is no more tragic story in the Bible than that of Saul. We follow the rapid scenes of his life with breathless interest from the time when the son of Kish stood before the shouting multitude, "higher than any of the people from his shoulder and upwards," to the time when the Lord's anointed, tottering on the brink of ruin, and forsaken by his prophetic counsellor, disguised himself, and said to his servants, "Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her and inquire of her."

Saul mounted the throne of Israel under the brightest auspices; for although the people had shown want of faith in demanding a king, seeing that the Lord God was their king, it does not appear that any blame was attached to Saul when he accepted the crown. On the contrary, he was solemnly chosen by the prophet Samuel, and again re-elected by the nation at large; so that he ruled with a double sanction,—by Divine right and by the will of the people. Oh! that we might dwell upon this bright opening "ere the sun comes with years."

How the old prophet Samuel, when he beheld the humility of the young man Saul, who "had hid himself"—when he beheld the obedience of the young man Saul, who nevertheless "came forth" at the bidding of the people—how the old prophet must have rejoiced in his heart over the Lord's anointed!

"See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king!"

An incident soon happened which brought out the warlike character of the new king. As he was returning home he heard one of those lamentations in the city of Gibeah such as mark in Eastern towns the arrival of a great calamity.* It was the threat issued by Nahash, king of Ammon, to put out the right eyes of all the inhabitants if they did not consent to be his slaves. This fell like a spark on the dormant spirit of Saul. "The Spirit of the Lord came upon him," as on the judges of old. The shy retiring nature vanished, never to return; a summons went forth to assemble the people; three hundred thousand men of war followed, and Jabesh Gilead was rescued.

* Dean Stanley—"Dictionary of the Bible," Art. Saul; to which the reader is referred generally.

II.

The king now turned his victorious arms against the Philistines, who infested the land. The whole Philistine nation rose against him. The old terror came back upon the Israelites: they did not dare to face their enemies: many concealed themselves in the caverns, many crossed the Jordan: all were disarmed, except Saul and his son Jonathan with their immediate retainers. The first panic over, the people reassembled themselves. Ashamed of their cowardice, they felt that the destinies of Israel and the safety of their king were at stake. They were on the eve of a great battle. The prophet Samuel was expected daily, almost hourly, to arrive. Nothing must be done without God's sanction. The words of Samuel had been "Seven days shalt thou tarry till I come to thee, and show thee what thou shalt do." The seven days were nearly passed, but Samuel came not: at last, on the seventh day, the king could wait no longer. He offered the sacrifices himself, and was preparing to go to battle, when Samuel arrived, and pronounced the first curse on his impetuous zeal.

Up to that time his life had run smoothly: he had not fallen, for he had not been tempted; but there came a time in his life, as there comes a time in the life of each one of us, when God sent to prove him,—and at the first trial he broke down. You may think his fault a light one; you may say, better go to battle with prayer than without any prayer; but you will observe his crime was the spirit which makes all prayer worthless—the spirit of impatience and irritability, which wants to twist the will of God into accordance with our own, instead of bending ours to it. God asked for faith and patience. Saul had no faith, no patience. He could not tarry the Lord's leisure—he could not do God's will; he wanted to do his own. But still he could not divest himself suddenly of his conscience. Was not a compromise possible? Could he not serve God and mammon too? The attempt was at least worth making; and so he took the matter into his own hands, and did sacrifice for himself. The moment after, doubtless, his heart smote him—smote him although he went forth with a smile to meet Samuel—smote him, although one excuse after another rose glibly to his lips—smote him when the prophet's voice rang forth with the ominous inquiry, "What hast thou done?"

III.

From this moment we may date the downward progress of the unhappy king. We may notice, too, the first appearance of his madness in the rash vow which almost cost him the life of Jonathan.

Outwardly, everything continued to prosper. The Philistines were driven from the land, the king's popularity increased daily, the splendour of his court surpassed all that had been seen up to that time in Israel. Nothing was there to show that the new heart which God had given to the king was changing, and that the glory was even then departing from Israel! It was so with Saul,—it may be so with us. The work of death may go on silently within us for years, and outwardly all may be calm.

You may gaze upon the shining levels of the summer sea, and nothing there will betray the slimy creatures which revel and crawl beneath.

But the spirit of a life cannot always be hid; that "blot upon the brain will show itself without;" the faithless heart, the palsied feelings, the soul dying to God, and love, and purity—think you such a process can go on within, and leave no traces, for ever? Believe it not. There may be a coat of many colours spread without, but the poison will eat through in time. Would you know the plague spots of that inner death? They are the harsh words spoken yesterday, the impure converse, the cruel bitter sneer which stung, and was meant to sting, the great listlessness and fatigue which is stealing over your life, the want of interest in your work, of interest in your brethren, of interest in your God, the open blasphemy, the covert shame! Where these are there is death, and there is hell. Noisome things creep about the chambers of the heart, devils' voices whisper in the ear, glittering lies dazzle and seduce:—blind eyes! deaf ears! stony heart! open to sin!—blind, deaf, passionless to God!

We might expect to find something of all this in the life of Saul. We do find it. A straw will show which way the stream is flowing; the current of Saul's life had been setting downwards. His actions appear like straws upon the surface. Again the occasion rises for obedience; again the king fails. The command was, "Destroy Amalek, root and branch!" Saul saved the king and some of the spoil. Again the prophet meets him with a rebuke:—"Wherefore didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord?" Again the bold and glib rejoinder; but this time reiterated with an air of injured innocence, which marks the increasing deterioration of the king's character: "Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites."

The curse follows, and the struggle between Samuel and Saul in their final parting is indicated by the rent of Samuel's robe as he tears himself away from the grasp of Saul. "Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house to Gibeah of Saul. And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless, Samuel mourned for Saul: and the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel."

IV.

The rest of Saul's life is one long tragedy. The frenzy which had appeared before at intervals, now seemed to take entire possession of him. "The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." The darkness grows apace. Cares of state and perils of the sword increase upon him, but he can go no more to God; doubts and terrors gather over his mind. By night he is haunted with evil dreams. The ring and clash of war is in his slumbers, the fear of treachery is about his pillow, he sleeps with a long spear by his side.

Morning breaks on the weary and restless monarch; he rises in gloom and despondency to toil through another day. He is growing unfit for war, the prey

Drawn by M. Bayes. Engraved by Dalziels.

KING SAUL AND DAVID.

of every fitful passion, his nerves seem hopelessly shaken. In this crisis David is recommended to him, and when the dark mood comes upon him, he tries to drive it away with the strains of sweetest music; for a time he seems to succeed, but nothing can really fill the soul which God has left. When David is gone the fit comes back with redoubled violence, and at last even David cannot stay the frenzy of the king.

Know you aught of this madness? Is your religion going or gone? Is your house empty, swept, and garnished? Are you, who have seen a gleam of better things—you, who have longed for a better life, who have felt within you the stirrings of immortality—are you slipping back into the outer darkness? The chill breath of the grave is on your cheek, the cold apathy of death reigns in the lone palaces of your soul; you fly to the world, you whip the jaded senses to their work; but your laughter is hollow, and your joy comes not with the morning; you try to light up your dreary prison-house with the fires of earth and the phantasmagoria of sin, but the torches fade beneath your touch and the visions vanish away: you fill your halls with music and your life with noise, you cast your javelin like Saul at every object that offends you, but the Spirit of the Lord is departed from you!

V.

But the lingering love of good never wholly dies. Saul had fallen low, but the silken threads of human affection still bound him to the better life. He never wholly lost his love for David. We read "He loved him greatly;" "Saul would let him go no more home to his father's house." It is thus God holds us back to the uttermost—it is thus he places our fellow-creatures between us and ruin! Have you never felt this, too?—have you never been deterred from sin by the entreaty of a wife, a sister, a mother?—have you never owned the influence of a friend when the love of God could not bind you? It is well so; but if that is all, it is not enough, for human affection alone cannot stay the ruin of a human spirit! The love soon turns to indifference, the indifference to hate. Where God is not, all is unstable. Our feelings change like gusts of wind upon the ocean. And thus it happened with Saul. He was no longer fit to govern, and the monarchy which he had raised up "broke down under the weakness of its head."

And then comes the last act in this mournful tragedy. The Philistines re-entered the country, and occupied the plain of Esdraelon; on Mount Gilboa was the Israelite army, clinging as usual to the heights and precipitous passes. It was near the spring of Gideon's encampment, called the spring of Harod, or "trembling"; "and now the name assumed an evil omen, and the heart of the king trembled exceedingly." His ancient nerve seemed utterly to forsake him. He knew the curse had fallen, and felt that he was no longer master of his own destinies.

In his trouble and despair he remembers his old counsellor; but Samuel was in his grave. With that mixture of superstition and religion which marked his whole career—the feeling which makes a godless man send for a priest on his death-bed—Saul determined to consult the witch of Endor. Towards midnight they met. Saul had disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and as he approached the woman he said, "I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me up whom I shall name unto thee. . . . Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel." She retires to an inner recess, and when the woman saw Samuel, she cried, with a loud voice, "Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up, and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself."

But what comfort has Samuel got for Saul? Comes there a voice from the depths of the grave to restore peace and confidence to the ruined king? "And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?" And once more from the godlike form of the "old man covered with a mantle" comes the prophetic woe! It is too much for the shaken mind of the king, and at the close of the denunciation he swoons away in despair and terror!

We, too, have had our counsellors in the past. The gulph of years may lie between us and them—the saintlike, the venerable, the loved ones! One by one they have gone on their way, and we have seen them no more. We may have treated their words lightly; we may have closed the door of memory on their forms; or we may have yielded ourselves to their guidance, and obeyed their warnings. God grant that when they rise up before us it may be with "angel faces," full of pity and love; with voices calling us to "come up higher," and not with averted looks and the reproachful utterance, "Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?"

* * * * *

Forsaken alike by God and man, the unhappy king prepares to fight his last battle. Once the greatest captain of his age, he is now scarcely able to collect his scattered troops. His own demoralisation cannot long be concealed. His soldiers lose their confidence, a panic spreads through the ranks. "The men of Israel fled before the Philistines, and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa." But the martial spirit of Saul, though hopeless of victory, cannot brook defeat; he rushes into the thickest of the fray, and immediately falls, pierced with the arrows of the Philistines.

"So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same day together."

Words can add nothing to such a life and death. History contains no more splendid rise and progress,—no more rapid decline,—no more strange and solemn catastrophe!

H. R. Haweis.

WHEAT-EARS.

Look at these green young ears of wheat—
How haughtily they stand,
With heads uplifted in the air,
Like lords of all the land.

And listen, while before the breeze
Their pride a moment yields,
Their little sighs of discontent
Are heard all down the fields.

But when their green has changed to gold,
And their chaff is filled with wheat,
Their heads will be as humbly bowed
As the hare-bells at their feet.

And so, dear, in my life's wheat-field,
How often do I see
That certain of the young ears stand
By far too haughtily.

But still in patient love I bear
Their pride day after day,
For well I know the time draws near
When it will pass away.

In God's good time, his gentle grace,
Like sun, and dew, and rain,
Will make his green wheat-ears all ripe,
And full of golden grain.—

Full of his Spirit's fruits of love,
And truth and righteousness;
And then each proud young head will bow
In perfect lowliness.

Yes, dear; it surely must be so,
In that blessed harvest-tide:
'Tis only in half empty souls,
There can be room for pride.

S. Rugeley-Powers.

A GLIMPSE INTO AN EARNEST SOUL.

FROM SOME NEWLY-DISCOVERED LETTERS.

The hand was bold and free; but the spelling was uncertain, and the grammar was not always reliable. Occasionally the faultiness of expression was from the fulness of thought that could find no adequate outlet, and got confused and entangled on its way to expression. Occasionally it was from evident want of training. The writer was only a weaver of ribbons in a country town. His father had been a pious tradesman of the Reformed faith, but had died when the boy was six; and the widow had charge of the family, who were early apprenticed to various trades, yet not without much effort for their education. Young Gerhardt went to the High School, and learned the classics, and even Hebrew, as it was thought he might enter the Church; though the German seems to have been poorly taught, as is still the too common fate of the homely tongue in Latin schools. The university was barred to him by poverty; but his gift for languages was educated, and he became a fair proficient in the Bible tongues, in French, and Dutch—not without difficulty. His brother-in-law, to whom he was apprenticed at fifteen, had no sympathy with anything but business, denied him even an hour for meditation and study, and, when there fell to be no regular duty, set him irregularly to roll empty casks over the floor of an empty room: so that the apprentice was driven to sitting up stealthily in the cold nights, and snatch such learning as he could. Under this discipline he grew to be an industrious and patient worker, was loyal and obedient to his calling, and with his gay spirit, cheerfulness, and handsome face, was a favourite with his companions. Business never prospered with him, and after trying it for nearly ten years he gave it up, and learned linen-weaving, till it, in turn, threatened to break down his health, and drove him at last to ribbons. But before this happened a change had taken place in his inner life which enabled him to bear, and even pleasantly use, the changes and disappointments in his circumstances. He had lived decorously, and apparently religiously, without much inward strife and as little deep peace. He had found the Law to his hand, and thought he was keeping it as a Christian, holding off the sense of the breadth and awfulness of its requirements; till, by some trivial circumstance, it is not certain what, he was made to feel that the Law was no union between him and God; and God, he says, as his Friend, called him out of the world to follow Him in the Gospel. He had scarcely obtained this firm hold on truth when it was threatened to be taken from him. For five years he suffered from the most painful doubts, doubting even if there was a God at all. All truth became uncertain to him; his own salvation; the issue of this life in eternal good. He clung to what he had known and proved, though it brought him no peace and no gain. Without sunlight or even starlight, he wandered on, hoping that the end would come; and at the last the cloud did clear away, and he saw truth again clearly in Christ. The first letter must have been written about this time. He wrote it with his blood. The red is faded out almost now, and blackened with age; the purpose, the warmth, and solemnity of the writer are as legible as ever. It is addressed quaintly

"To my Jesus.

"I dedicate myself to Thee, Christ Jesus, my only Saviour and my Bridegroom, to be thine entire and everlasting possession. From this evening I reject with all my heart whatever right and power Satan, without right, gave me over myself, as one whom Thou, my Bridegroom by blood and my God, hast purchased through thy fight with death, through thy wrestling and bloody sweat in the garden of Gethsemane, to be thy possession and Bride; for whom Thou hast burst the gates of hell and revealed to me the loving heart of thy Father. From this evening, may my heart and all my love be offered up to Thee eternally in merited thanksgiving! From this day till eternity may thy will and not mine be done!

Command, rule, and govern me! I give Thee full power over me, and promise, with thy help and grace, that this my blood shall flow out to the last drop, sooner than, with will and knowledge, inwardly or outwardly, I be unfaithful or disobedient to Thee. Lo, Thou hast me altogether, O sweet Friend of Souls! in modest virgin love I cling to Thee. Take not away thy Spirit from me. May thy Spirit not turn from me: may thy death-fight strengthen me! Yea, Amen. May thy Spirit seal what in simplicity hath written "Thine unworthy possession,

"GERH. TERSTEEGEN.

"*On Green Thursday Evening*, 1724."

The dedication of himself was real. He lived henceforth with entire simplicity for Christ. He lived poor; he had often scarcely bread, nor had he at first friends who knew his need. He worked from five in the morning till nine at night at an ungrateful trade. But he knew there must be poorer than himself; and after work he would start out on errands of charity. He spent whatever he had, living quietly for many years in a modest lodging, and cooking his own meals; and when even ribbon-making deserted him, he continued dependent on such supplies as God sent for his daily need. He was repeatedly offered large sums, which he as steadily refused. They would have furnished him with an ample yearly income, but he dreaded the effect upon his faith and independence. So long as the little sum that fell to his inheritance lasted, and so long as he could work at his trade, he would take nothing; and when these sources of income were exhausted, some friends, to whom it was a pleasure, sent him what was necessary for bare want. He was a good son and brother: when his brothers died, it was to him that their children came. He taught his nephews and nieces, sheltered them in his house, and never lost sight of them. They may have thought him odd. Piety was not a recommendation at the time; and he was known as a pietist—severe in his morals, absolute and honest in his unworldliness. But there was no pretence about him: no shallow religious life, but the life of an earnest soul absorbed by the one view of Christ and his love. Impressions were left on his kindred of an unmistakably Christian character—impressions which outlived the feelings of dislike to what seemed narrow-mindedness. Correspondence passed between him and the young people, to one of whom the next letter must have been written.

"From your pleasant letter of November 2nd, I am glad to learn of your welfare and health, which is a special benefit and grace of God; for since you left home many a man, and even many a young man, has been called into Eternity, as might easily have happened to you. Now, who knows but that this great transition to Eternity is near, at our very door? Yet we know, also, out of God's Word, which cannot lie, that without regeneration and sanctification we cannot see the kingdom of God. I hope, therefore, that you will take this to heart, and not slight precious grace and the time thereof. I am glad that you know your sins a little, and that you will lend a willing ear to the call of grace. But, for all that, you are not yet a converted man, although such feeling and your desire is indeed a grace of God, and a source from which something better may spring if you give place to this convincing grace. Of ourselves we have not a single good thought; and if we have but one good thought in sorrow for our state, or longing for God, we need not imagine that it came to us by chance; but we should think, The merciful God and Saviour cometh to thy heart and calleth thee, that He may save thee as a brand from the burning of everlasting destruction. And by the love we have for our immortal soul we should not let such precious emotions be stifled through vanity and careless behaviour; nor should we listen to Satan when he would make us wise, saying that one is still young, that one cannot live so strictly, that one would be foolish to think of it, that many a one has thought to be saved without being so very precise, that God is gracious and merciful, and other such cunning suggestions, whereby men are secretly deceived until their time of grace is past, and on their death-bed their eyes are opened and they are filled with fear and dread. Well; we shall not act thus, but to-day, because we hear the voice of God, we shall abide still and say:

> 'The night is past: the time to slumber o'er;
> This day salvation cometh to thy door.'

And, with the Prodigal Son, 'I will arise and will go to my Father, and will say unto Him, *Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight.*' Read once more, and with prayer, the story of the Prodigal Son, in the fifteenth chapter of Luke, and you will see how a penitent sinner must come to God, and how ready the eternal, loving, Fatherheart of God is to receive the poor, returning, penitent sinner.

"What you write is quite true, that when we fear we are overburthened with many sins, we cannot draw near to God with free confidence. But what are we to do? We cannot make good our past transgressions: we cannot make ourselves pious; we need not fancy we would come if we were only once pious. That, indeed, by no means: but we must come just as we are, with all our sins and corruption, and must cry to God for the pardon of our many sins, for the sake of that dear Saviour Jesus, who for our sins poured out his precious blood, and endured all the pains of hell, that He might obtain pardon and grace for penitent sinners. You must not leave off this continuous prayer for God's grace, for the sake of Jesus Christ; and the more your sins press upon you, so much the more humbly and heartily call upon the blessed Saviour, and hold before Him his bitter pains. God will then, at his own time, certainly have mercy, and send you forgiveness of sins, free confidence, and a new heart, so that it will be your pleasure to serve Him, to love Him, and to deny everything for his sake. O, how blessed the man is who chooses this way, and does not leave it till he has found this great good! Nothing can give me more joy than to see and hear this of you, and I shall not fail to pray God for it through his grace. Pray, also, yourself diligently, and avoid all hurtful society. The blessed God hath given grace to your brother Gerret, from whom I had a letter last Sunday, and I hope that every day

he will be strengthened and advanced. Your brothers Henry and William also feel that things must be changed. May God help you all to break through, so that God and his children may through you rejoice, and, after short time of this woful life, we may find each other eternally before God's face. Wishing this, I greet you heartily, my beloved nephew, and, commending you to God, I remain,

"Your affectionate uncle, at your service,

"GERH. TERSTEEGEN.

"*Mühlheim on the Ruhr, 9 Nov.*, 1745."

This letter presents one aspect of the good man's faith. He was ceaselessly earnest in pressing men to Christ. His theology was simple and full of broad contrasts: on the one side the devil beguiling men by selfishness to ruin, on the other Christ drawing them to heaven: on the one side a nature utterly corrupt, on the other a nature infinitely pure. But everywhere he discerned God's Spirit in the good. Be the good what it might, ever so transitory, the flashing of a single thought, the one purpose crossing an evil life, he held it to have come from Him. There could be no doubt, no accident in it; there was no source for it in the human heart; it was the proof of a continued seeking out of men by God, of his nearness to them, of the suggestions that his love was always throwing out in the world. The love and presence of God were very dear to him. He set them over against sin, guilt, and hell. He turned to them for their own sakes. Union with Christ was the thought that ruled his life, his dream and passion. "If I only think God is," he would say, "my whole soul is bowed in the deepest reverence and prayer." "He of Himself can make any place and any thing pleasant," he said again; "without Him it can have no pleasure." "Let thyself sink," he would say, "gently and like a child in the bosom of eternal Love." I have often heard my grandfather talk of him, and I remember how these and other sayings, which would draw the tears to my grandfather's eyes, vaguely and deeply impressed me. He liked to be alone, that he might share the fullest fellowship with God. When his friend Sommer lived with him, he insisted that they should each withdraw from their work-room for an hour in the day. Christ was everything to him; and in quiet hours and by quiet ways he sought Him: not so much in active life as out of it. Here and there he found some that thought with him. It was probably to one of them that he wrote what follows:—

"TO MY DEARLY BELOVED SISTER IN JESUS.

"THE peace of God anoint thy spirit! I received your first delightful letter of the 25th of June, by post, in good time, and read it with the truest pleasure. The second also reached me safely through friend B.; but was delayed. Praised and beloved be our dear Immanuel for the acquaintance and fellowship He has given us in Him. I know that He has given it, and that He has established it for a blessing, and will perfect it in us unto his eternal glory. If I did not know that our fellowship in the Lord was such as it is, I could not have been so easy during my long silence. I make no apology for this silence, and indeed I did not remain silent, but as often as the Lord allowed me to approach Him, I remembered you, sister S., and by one look in spirit and truth, have said and wished more than I could have done by pen and through the grosser senses. The Lord truly is in our midst, but his very nearness draws our whole memory, love, and all the powers of our soul up to Him. The least look aside is to be condemned; it hurts our simplicity, it disturbs our peace. Love demands for its object what is noble, direct, and entire; we feel also that we are not contented with anything less. You, I know, will agree with me. This highest good will be all and only what we strive for, the very central point on which our whole being turns, wherein is true felicity,—it will still abide when all mediums shall have passed away, and Love itself shall receive us. Would that it were so this day! Yet self-will obtains nothing for us, or if it has obtained anything, it mars it. Selfish impulse and hard forceful will stand most visibly in the way of inner fellowship with God. The soul would gladly have this or that, would gladly be found somehow or other before God: but it wishes for it by its own eagerness: and the soul will not reach its desires until its own will and seeking have died out and it is tranquil. We often think such a thing is far off, and we only make it further by our eager and mere desire to have it; so that I many a time say, We must not seek God but only find Him. Oh, if we were only child-like enough! The soul often longs profoundly for annihilation, to find itself complete in God, as we do: but our natural wisdom pursues such an object sometimes by ways that are inconsistent with the soul's, so that it cannot find its end, God's free mercy alone can help us; and that there is nothing better than, without self-will, to abide sunk in the bosom of Love, like children who are passive to a sign from their father, and trust everything to his goodness. It is not our work, but the Lord's: Jesus has opened the gates for us by his blood; He will save his people from their sins: we must not think to do it. It is well, therefore, that we should not too much regard sin, misery, weakness, &c., but give ourselves over to Jesus and choose Him alone and in every way: for He is all, and He should be always growing more all to us. Amen! Jesus! Thou art near. Thou knowest what our inmost soul saith to Thee, for Thou hast put it into our soul to say it. We are offered up to Thee for ever. Complete the sacrifice after thy good pleasure, through Thyself! Amen!"

This was the last letter I took up out of the pile of yellow, old-fashioned papers. The rest were not in the same hand; but were accounts, invoices, family-correspondence, and odds and ends of the waste-basket, swept together by accident of some careless hand. Yet other letters may lie elsewhere in this empty house, worth careful search if they yield anything like the dry withered heap at my feet. He said once that if the name of Jesus were only impressed on men, he had rather the name of Gerhardt Tersteegen might perish. It would almost seem as if his wish were true.

JOHN KEYSER.

NOTES FOR READERS OUT OF THE WAY.*

The strangers for whom Edinburgh puts on her fresh summer dress, whom she greets with the pale green of beech and poplar, and the glory of lilac and laburnum, are not tourists from distant lands, but country ministers and elders whose homes lie scattered from the Tweed and the Solway to the Hebrides and the Shetlands. Long before Exeter Hall was even in embryo, or May Meetings began to muster in London, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland met in Edinburgh, usually occupying for the ten or twelve days of its sitting the last days of May and the first days of June. Unhappily, in place of the one Assembly which in earlier times represented the Church and nation of Scotland, there are now (besides smaller gatherings) three great meetings, representing, in addition to the Established Church, the earlier and later separations that have taken place from its pale. The former of these—the United Presbyterian Church—held its meetings this year a few days earlier than the other two. The Free Church, which makes a point of adhering as closely as possible to old rules and forms, runs alongside of the Established during the whole period of its sittings. The United Presbyterian Synod embraces all the ministers of the body, with one lay-elder for every minister. The Assemblies of the Established and Free Churches are more strictly representative; so that while a few members, clerical and lay, are returned year after year, the greater proportion of the clergy have seats only at an interval of three or four years, and can seldom obtain that familiarity with the business, or that home-feeling, which belong to those that are constantly in the field.

The public interest attached to these meetings was this year unusually great. Much anxiety was shown as to the course which the two Nonconformist bodies would take on the union now under consideration, and an equal interest was felt in the manner in which the Assembly of the Established Church would deal with certain changes, actual or supposed to be contemplated, on the part of some members of that Church. In regard to the latter subject, the policy of the Assembly has been conservative. The use of a Prayer-book in the Old Greyfriars' Church, Edinburgh, has been disallowed; the details of worship in the several congregations have been more emphatically placed under the charge of Presbyteries; and any tendency to laxity in regard to the doctrinal standards of the Church has been discouraged. A somewhat remarkable position has been taken up, in the appointment of a committee to consider the propriety of taking steps for obtaining the removal of lay-patronage, and the recognition of the voice of the people in the election of their ministers. Those who are moving in this direction feel that, as lay-patronage has been the occasion of all the separations that have rent and weakened the Church, so the removal of this grievance might pave the way for the return of some of those who have left it, and bring about a reconstruction of Scottish Presbyterianism. There were some emphatic protests, by Lord Selkirk and others, against even the appointment of a committee for this purpose, and earnest asseverations that the movement could not succeed.

The question of union between the United Presbyterian and Free Churches is yet only in its preliminary stages. Three years have been spent by committees in private negotiations, with the view of ascertaining whether it is possible to construct a scheme of union. This preliminary inquiry is not yet quite concluded; but it is so far advanced that it was proposed on both sides to send down the interim report of the several Union Committees to Presbyteries, in order that they might offer suggestions, if they should see cause, as to the propriety of making further inquiries. This proposal was all but unanimously agreed to, both in the United Presbyterian Synod and in the Free Church Assembly. The great question of union has not yet been brought to a direct issue, and anything in the shape of discussion amounted to little more than indications of feeling, which the progress of the question may either remove, modify, or confirm. In the Free Church Assembly no quarter was shown to those who, while friendly to the union now proposed, ventured to hope that a day might come when the three great Presbyterian bodies should again become one.

It is pleasant to see the prominence given by the various bodies to missionary undertakings at home and abroad. The United Presbyterian Synod reported an income for home and foreign missionary purposes of £34,524, being £5285 more than the previous year. The Established Church and the Free Church had also to report a very considerable increase of revenue. The Established Church continues to make great and successful efforts on behalf of its endowment scheme, for providing endowments by voluntary contributions for additional charges. Both the Established and the United Presbyterian Churches have been devoting much attention to the building-up and improving of their Sabbath-schools, and with considerable success. In the Free Church one of the most interesting features is the success and prosperity of some of the territorial charges, organised on the model of Dr. Chalmers.

In the Free Church Assembly there was a notable debate on the employment of hymns in public worship. From time immemorial in certain districts of the country, especially the Highlands, nothing has been sung in public worship but a metrical version of the Psalms; and nowhere has there been a very liberal use of other material, for the sixty-seven "Paraphrases," as they are called, *i.e.*, hymns founded on passages of Scripture, which are bound up with the metrical Psalms, are but sparingly employed. From the force of long-continued habit, many would seem to have had a difficulty in persuading themselves that it could be lawful to sing in public worship anything but the Psalms; and others expressed the fear that the sanction of human compositions would imply a slight on the inspired songs of Scripture. The pro-

* Our attention has been called to an error in a former number identifying the two Messieurs de Pressensé—the *father*, who is the agent of the Bible Society, and the *son*, who is the author of the work on the life of Christ.

gress of the discussion showed the untenableness of such positions, and made it plain enough that there was no good reason for depriving the Church of an aid to faith and devotion on which a marvellous blessing had so often rested. The course resolved on by the majority was the appointment of a committee to consider the whole subject, and to report to next Assembly.

The only case of discipline that had much general interest occurred in the Free Church Assembly, a member of the church in Glasgow having appealed against a sentence that suspended him from church privileges, in consequence of his being employed from one o'clock on Sundays in the printing-office of a daily newspaper. The delicacy of the case was freely admitted, as well as the difficulty of framing rules to determine what can be said to constitute a sufficient justification of Sunday labour. But it was the opinion of the Assembly that in this case there was no such justification; and while the sentence of the inferior court was confirmed, it was remitted to the Kirk-session to deal tenderly with the appellant, in the hope that he would come to see that the course he was following was not justifiable.

Another proof of the practical difficulty of dealing with the Sunday question has been furnished by the course of Lord Chelmsford's bill in the House of Lords, to regulate Sunday trading in the metropolis. The principle, or at least the practical effect, of the measure was, to afford only partial protection for the day for rest. It was accordingly opposed by those who think that the protection of a part sanctions the secularisation of the rest of the day; and even among those who were in favour of protecting a part, there was much difference as to the details which ought to be introduced. The Lord's Day Observance Society had petitioned against the bill; and it was defeated on the third reading by a majority of 69 to 39.

Some of the English bishops seem to be anxious to bring the use of symbolical vestments and other novelties to the test of law, and an elaborate memorial has lately been submitted to eminent counsel—Sir Roundell Palmer and Sir Hugh Cairns, and others—concluding with the following questions:—

I. Suppose a clergyman of the Established Church of England to administer the Holy Communion in a parish church, habited in the vestments prescribed by King Edward the Sixth's first prayer-book (1549) does he infringe the law, and commit an offence cognisable by any legal tribunal?

II. Suppose him to introduce into the Communion Service the use of two or more lights on the communion-table, not burnt for the sake of giving light, but as an ingredient in the service itself; or the use of incense burnt in thuribles or censers for censing persons or things; or the ceremonial mixing of water with the sacramental wine; or the use of wafers instead of bread, such as is usual to be eaten; or the use of hymns before or after the prayer of consecration, or at the time of administering the elements; does he thereby infringe the law and commit an offence cognisable by any legal tribunal?

III. What would be the best way in which to raise these questions so as to obtain a decision upon them?

To these questions the reply has been given, that the first two are to be answered in the affirmative, and that a proceeding under the Church Discipline Act of 1840 is the only way to raise these questions so as to get a decision upon them. The questions refer to but a portion of the practices that have been lately introduced.

A statement is reported to have been lately made by Archbishop Manning, that a thousand of the English clergy were doing the work of the Church of Rome. If Father Ignatius, of Norwich, be one of them, it does not appear that he has had much to encourage him in his efforts to revive monasticism. His father, Mr. Lyne, wrote some weeks ago to a newspaper that his son had returned home, and was reconsidering his course; and while reprobating the cruel scandals that had been circulated against him as unfounded, maintained that his devotion and earnestness, though erratic, were most sincere. Ignatius himself confessed, "I have been deceived by many of the clergy; all support has left me; I am in debt and a beggar, without hope; my health and strength have failed; the slanderer seeks to destroy me; and I fly and am safe in my father's house."

In an earnest appeal issued by the Bishop of London for further contributions to his fund for increasing the means of grace in London, it is stated that since its commencement it has provided stipends for about 110 additional clergy, and 68 additional lay agents, and has expended about £86,000 on buildings and sites for churches, mission chapels, and schools. He reckons that 220,000 persons have thus been brought under spiritual supervision. The entire sum as yet paid and promised, applicable to all purposes, is £254,000. In many cases, the stipends have been provided only for a limited time, and it depends on the energy with which the scheme is worked out, and the particular missions and new charges are fostered, whether or not the benefit will be permanent. On such grounds, the bishop makes a strong appeal for increased support.

Revelations of the miserable condition of our public institutions for the poor are coming before the public with appalling frequency. The casual ward of Lambeth has gained an historical repute. It appears that the ordinary wards in some poor-houses deserve a like notoriety. Recently, charges were brought against the Strand workhouse of a deplorable kind. The sick, it was represented, were almost wholly neglected; they were robbed by the attendants employed to care for them; their food and their medicines were not properly administered; the overcrowding was grievous, especially in the case of children; and little or no effort was made to separate the sick from the healthy. An official investigation into these charges shows that they are not without foundation. It is at least well that daylight is in the course of being let in on these institutions; but it will tax the Christian ingenuity of the country to the utmost to provide a sufficient and satisfactory remedy.

Among the new societies that have sprung from the movements of the day is one that bears the rather high-sounding title of the Victoria Institute, or Philosophical Society of Great Britain. It is designed to prosecute scientific investigation in the spirit of reve-

rence for Divine revelation, and in the belief that there can be no real contradiction between the facts of science, and the statements of the Bible. At its first anniversary, an elaborate address was delivered by the Rev. Walter Mitchell, of Queen's College, Cambridge, and formerly lecturer on natural philosophy at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, in which he expressed a most earnest desire that scientific inquiry would be prosecuted to the utmost, but not under the influence of a principle of rationalism, which had been defined by one of its advocates as the fact that "the gradual reduction of all phenomena within the sphere of established law carries with it, as a consequence, the rejection of the miraculous." He was persuaded that "the more we know, the more deeply we investigate the phenomena of nature, the more are we compelled to admit our own ignorance. Laws of nature we confess, with Hooker, have in them 'more than men have as yet attained to know, or perhaps ever shall attain, seeing the travail of wading herein is given of God to the sons of men, that perceiving how much the least thing in the world hath in it more than the wisest are able to reach unto, they might by this means learn with humility.' Humbly we confess, with Bishop Butler, 'other orders of creatures may perhaps be let into the secret counsels of Heaven, and have the designs and methods of Providence in the creation and government of the world communicated to them, but this does not belong to our rank and condition.' Of one thing I feel the deepest conviction, that nothing man has yet discovered, no length to which science has been pursued, has at all educed any principle diametrically opposed to the truths of religion; any principle like law destroying the idea of creation and design, which should lead us to regard Moses in no other light than a Hebrew Descartes or a Newton."—It is now nearly two years since the indefatigable M. Guizot published the first volume of a work which was to be followed by three other volumes. The work was entitled "Meditations on Christianity," and the first volume was devoted to the essence or subject-matter of the Christian revelation. The second was to be on the history and origin of Christianity; the third, on its revival in the nineteenth century; and the fourth, on its future history. The pressure of events has constrained the author to modify his original plan, and publish as his second volume, "Meditations on the Actual Condition of the Christian Religion." He gives a picture of the revival of religious feeling in France since the commencement of the present century; estimates the various systems of philosophy, pantheism, materialism, &c., which are the rivals of Christianity at the present day; and paints the strange mingling of doubt, incredulity, and carelessness which the religious conflicts of the age have caused. He manifests a deep interest in the various efforts that have been made to liberalise catholicism; while admitting that as yet they have failed. He cannot tell how or when Christian faith and freedom of thought will find their reconciliation, but he is persuaded that the solution of the question will come. M. Guizot's account of the revival of religious feeling in the Protestant community of France is very interesting. He dwells with peculiar fondness and admiration on Adolphe Monod and Alexander Vinet, evidently feeling a degree of sympathy with them which no other Protestant divines have awakened.

The war with Dr. Colenso has assumed a new phase. With an appetite for heresy and strife that grows by what it feeds on, he has raised a fresh issue betwixt himself and the friends of revelation. In a letter published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, he says,—

"A violent attack (as you will see in the *Witness*) has just been made upon me with reference to my new Hymn-book, which (strange to say) I find does not contain the name "Jesus" or "Christ" from one end to the other. This was quite unintentional on my part, and has merely arisen from the fact of my having rejected hymn after hymn which contained *prayers to Christ*, which I do object to on Scriptural and Apostolical grounds, as I hope to set forth in a sermon, and others in which the name of Jesus is used familiarly and irreverently, and others in which some objectionable doctrine is taught in the hymn throughout, or in some verse of it."

In commenting on this letter the *Spectator* admits that Dr. Colenso has taken a step which brings to an end any claim he may be supposed to have had to hold his views within the Church. The whole English liturgy is founded on the principle he impugns, that prayer may and should be offered to Christ. The statement that he objects to such prayer "on Scriptural and Apostolical grounds," if it does not imply Arianism or Unitarianism, expresses a conviction that cannot but be derogatory to the glory of Christ's divine person. The *Natal Witness* gives some samples of the manner in which Dr. Colenso has manipulated certain hymns in which the name of Jesus or Christ occurred. Such verses as the following, which occurred in the old collection, are omitted in the new :—

"Whatever be our destined case,
Accept us in Thy Son;
Give us Thy Gospel and Thy Grace,
And then—Thy Will be done."

"Father! we Thy mercy praise
Which gave Thy Son to die;
Brightness of Thy Father's face!
Thee, too, we glorify;

Holy Comforter Divine!
Praise to Thee by all be given,
Till we in full chorus join,
And earth resounds to heaven."

"My soul, bear thou thy part,
Triumph in God above,
And with a well-tuned heart
Sing thou the songs of love!
Thou art His own Whose precious Blood,
Shed for thy Good, His love made known."

In other instances, the name of Christ is changed into that of God.

"But 'tis enough that Christ knows all,"

becomes,—

"But 'tis enough that God knows all."

"Then He his love in Christ proclaimed,"

is changed into,—

"Then He his love and truth proclaimed."

So also,—

"Who see your Saviour's face,"

is corrected,—

"Who see your Maker's face."

Dr. Colenso's positions were already sufficiently alarming to show the perilous path on which he had entered; that he should so speedily and so gratuitously have made this attack on the very citadel of Christian faith and hope appears a proof of judicial blindness, of a determination to drive off from him even the very small remnant that hitherto have refused to cast him off.

An important step towards the development of a higher missionary spirit, and the training of a missionary staff, has been taken in Edinburgh under the auspices of Dr. Duff. A sum of ten thousand pounds has been contributed for the endowment of a chair of missions in connection with the New College, Edinburgh. It is in contemplation, on the part of Dr. Duff, that the Professor who is to fill this chair shall be the head of a great missionary institute, where the training of workers for foreign fields may be carried on in all its departments.

A letter has been received by a member of the Church Missionary Society, from an American missionary, Mr. C. R. S. Brown, giving some interesting statements respecting Christianity and missionary enterprise in Japan. It appears that for five or six years there have been Protestant missionaries in Japan, representing three or four branches of the Church of Christ. At first the Government regarded them with the utmost suspicion, but the feeling is different now. Some of the missionaries teach schools, and employ and explain school-books that contain statements of Christian truth. At Yeddo, the Council of State is erecting buildings for a school intended to give a high education, including a French and English department, and the Protestant missionaries have been requested to take charge of the latter. A Japanese-English Dictionary, containing some 40,000 words, is now nearly ready for the press. Most of the missionaries have been to work at a translation of the Bible, and in a few months it is hoped that the four Gospels will be published in Japanese. On the part of young men of the upper class, a considerable anxiety is manifested to become acquainted with Western science and literature, and some of them come to the missionaries to read the English Bible, and express the earnest desire that the day may soon come when all their countrymen shall have the Holy Scriptures, and the free political institutions of which they are the basis.

The population of Japan is estimated at 32,000,000. The proceedings of the Jesuits and monks of former times were such that most stringent measures were used to efface the very name of Christianity, and as the Bible was not left behind when the Jesuits were banished, no living seed of Christianity remained to propagate itself. By the existing law, every man, woman, and child must be registered at some Buddhist or Shinto temple, or be denied decent burial. The edicts consigning the Japanese to death if they should embrace Christianity, are as yet unrepealed. The situation of the missionaries, and still more of any converts they might bring to Christ, is thus both delicate and solemn. The ordeal to be passed through might be one of fire and death, should any poor Japanese have courage to confess the name of Christ. The call for prayer is very loud, that the Spirit of God may move the rulers of Japan to grant freedom of conscience to their subjects, and that the treaty-powers represented in Japan may be induced to do all that Christian governments ought to do to secure to the natives this great right and privilege.

Evidences of the manifold progress that India is now making are furnished very rapidly from various sources. A brief statement in the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* brings together a variety of interesting facts. As a proof of *social* progress, reference is made to a recent Exhibition at Nagpore, where, breaking forth from the exclusiveness of former generations, thousands of spectators of all ranks met freely with Europeans and with one another. The *educational* progress is evinced by the marvellous success of the Calcutta University. Mr. Maine, the Vice-Chancellor, at a recent Convocation, declared that since the middle ages such enthusiasm for university studies and honours had not been shown by any European university. Mr. Maine's Bill, "to legalise under certain circumstances the dissolution of the marriages of native converts to Christianity," is another remarkable evidence of progress. The views of the Christian convert on the subject of marriage are now to be given effect to ;—and though in itself this is but a simple act of justice, yet it is indicative of a great change, that the Christian convert, as such, should obtain any legal recognition at all. An important movement among natives against polygamy, too, has been resuscitated. Some years ago, a petition from 25,000 Hindus of Bengal was presented to the Lieutenant-Governor and the Legislative Council "bringing to the notice of the Council the grievous and revolting abuses of the practice of polygamy in Bengal, and praying for a legislative enactment for the prevention thereof." The Indian mutiny broke out almost immediately after, and the matter dropped out of view. But now, 21,000 Bengalees of all classes, chiefly orthodox and educated, have renewed the petition. The petition proceeds on the duty of the British Government to suppress social abuses which are not founded on reason, nor on the national religion, and especially when the people themselves are most forward in asking legislative interference; and it prays the Governor "to emancipate the females of Bengal from the pains, cruelties, and attendant crimes of the debasing custom of polygamy." Mr. Beadon, in his reply, promises to submit the petition to the Governor-General in Council, and with his concurrence, to introduce a Bill next session for securing the object in view. The *Friend of India* says that among the 21,000 signatures, each of which is "intelligent and *bonâ fide*, are the highest in rank, learning, wealth, and sanctity in Bengal; and opposed to the movement is only one family, which represents none but itself." Even the cloudy retreats of the Sanskrit "toles" in Nuddea have failed to send forth a sound against the most monstrous perversion of Hindu law, which annually exposes hundreds of widows and wives to prostitution in Bengal.

ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BY THE VICAR.

XXIX.

But of the two, Catherine had herself to go first. Again and again was I sent for to say farewell to Mrs. Tomkins, and again and again I returned home leaving her asleep, and for the time better. But on a Saturday evening, as I sat by my vestry-fire, pondering on many things, and trying to make myself feel that they were as God saw them and not as they appeared to me, young Tom came to me with the news that his sister seemed much worse, and his father would be much obliged if I would go and see her. I sent Tom on before, because I wished to follow alone.

It was a brilliant starry night; no moon, no clouds, no wind, nothing but stars. They seemed to lean down towards the earth, as I have seen them since in more southern regions. It was, indeed, a glorious night. That is, I knew it was; I did not feel that it was. For the death which I went to be near, came, with a strange sense of separation, between me and the nature around me. I felt as if nature knew nothing, felt nothing, meant nothing, did not belong to humanity at all; for here was death, and there shone the stars. I was wrong, as I knew afterwards.

I had had very little knowledge of the external shows of death. Strange as it may appear, I had never yet seen a fellow-creature pass beyond the call of his fellow-mortals. I had not even seen my father die. And the thought was oppressive to me. "To think," I said to myself, as I walked over the bridge to the village-street—"to think that the one moment the person is here, and the next—who shall say *where?* for we know nothing of the region beyond the grave! Not even our risen Lord thought fit to bring back from Hades any news for the human family standing straining their eyes after their brothers and sisters that have vanished in the dark. Surely it is well, all well, although we know nothing, save that our Lord has been there, knows all about it, and does not choose to tell us. Welcome ignorance, then! the ignorance in which He chooses to leave us. I would rather not know, if He gave me my choice, but preferred that I should not know." And so the oppression passed from me, and I was free.

But little as I knew of the signs of the approach of death, I was certain, the moment I saw Catherine, that the veil that hid the "silent land" had begun to lift slowly between her and it. And for a moment I almost envied her that she was so soon to see and know that after which our blindness and ignorance were wondering and hungering. She could hardly speak. She looked more patient than calm. There was no light in the room but that of the fire, which flickered flashing and fading, now lighting up the troubled eye, and now letting a shadow of the coming repose fall gently over it. Thomas sat by the fire with the child on his knee, both looking fixedly into the glow. Gerard's natural mood was so quiet and earnest, that the solemnity about him did not oppress him. He looked as if he were present at some religious observance of which he felt more than he understood, and his childish peace was in no wise inharmonious with the awful silence of the coming change. He was no more disquieted at the presence of death than the stars were.

And this was the end of the lovely girl—to leave the fair world still young, because a selfish man had seen that she was fair. No time can change the relation of cause and effect. The poison that operates ever so slowly is yet poison, and yet slays. And that man was now murdering her, with weapon long-reaching from out of the past. But no, thank God! this was not the end of her. Though there is woe for that man by whom the offence cometh, yet there is provision for the offence. There is One who bringeth light out of darkness, joy out of sorrow, humility out of wrong. Back to the Father's house we go with the sorrows and sins which, instead of inheriting the earth, we gathered and heaped upon our weary shoulders, and a different Elder Brother from that angry one who would not receive the poor swine-humbled prodigal, takes the burden from our shoulders, and leads us into the presence of the Good.

She put out her hand feebly, let it lie in mine, looked as if she wanted me to sit down by her bedside, and when I did so, closed her eyes. She said nothing. Her father was too much troubled to meet me without showing the signs of his distress, and his was a nature that ever sought concealment for its emotion, therefore he sat still. But Gerard crept down from his knee, came to me, clambered up on mine, and laid his little hand upon his mother's, which I was holding. She opened her eyes, looked at the child, shut them again, and tears came out from between the closed lids.

"Has Gerard ever been baptised?" I asked her.

Her lips indicated a *no*.

"Then I will be his godfather. And that will be a pledge to you that I will never lose sight of him."

She pressed my hand, and the tears came faster.

Believing with all my heart that the dying should remember their dying Lord, and that the "Do this in remembrance of me," can never be better obeyed than when the partaker is about to pass, supported by the God of his faith, through the same darkness which lay before our Lord when He uttered the words and appointed the symbol, we sat, Thomas and I, and young Tom, who had by this time joined us with his sister Mary, around the bed, and partook with the dying woman of the signs of that death, wherein our Lord gave Himself entirely to us, to live by his death, and to the Father of us all in holiest sacrifice as the high-priest of us his people, leading us to the altar of a like self-abnegation. Upon what that bread and

that wine mean, the sacrifice of our Lord, the whole world of humanity hangs. It is the redemption of men.

After the holy symbol had been thus performed, she lay still as before. I heard her murmur once, "Lord, I do not deserve it. But I do love thee." And about two hours after she quietly breathed her last. We all kneeled, and I thanked the Father of us aloud that He had taken her to Himself. Gerard had been fast asleep on his aunt's lap, and she had put him to bed a little before. Surely he slept a deeper sleep than his mother's; for had she not awaked even as she fell asleep?

When I came out once more, I knew better what the stars meant. They looked to me now as if they knew all about death, and therefore could not be sad to the eyes of men; as if that unsympathetic look they wore came from this, that they were made like the happy truth, and not like our fears.

But soon the solemn feeling of repose, the sense that the world and all its cares would thus pass into nothing, vanished in its turn. For a moment I had been, as it were, walking on the shore of the Eternal, where the tide of time had left me in its retreat. Far away across the level sands I heard it moaning, but I stood on the firm ground of truth, and heeded it not. In a few moments more it was raving around me; it had carried me away from my rest, and I was filled with the noise of its cares.

For when I returned home, my sister told me that Old Rogers had called, and seemed concerned not to find me at home. He would have gone to find me, my sister said, had I been anywhere but by a death-bed. He would not leave any message, however, saying he would call in the morning.

I thought it better to go to his house. The stars were still shining as brightly as before, but a strong foreboding of trouble filled my mind, and once more the stars were far away, and lifted me no nearer to "Him who made the seven stars and Orion." When I examined myself, I could give no reason for my sudden fearfulness, save this: that as I went to Catherine's house, I had passed Jane Rogers on her way to her father's; and having just greeted her, had gone on; but, as it now came back upon me, she had looked at me strangely—that is, with some significance in her face which conveyed nothing to me; and now her father had been to seek me: it must have something to do with Miss Oldcastle.

But when I came to the cottage, it was dark and still, and I could not bring myself to rouse the weary man from his bed. Indeed it was past eleven, as I found to my surprise on looking at my watch. So I turned and lingered by the old mill, and fell a pondering on the profusion of strength that rushed past the wheel away to the great sea, doing nothing. "Nature," I thought, "does not demand that power should always be force. Power itself must repose. He that believeth shall not make haste, says the Bible. But it needs strength to be still. Is my faith not strong enough to be still?" I looked up to the heavens once more, and the quietness of the stars seemed to reproach me. "We are safe up here," they seemed to say: "we shine, fearless and confident, for the God who gave the primrose its rough leaves to hide in from the blast of uneven spring, hangs us in the awful hollows of space. We cannot fall out of his safety. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold! Who hath created these things—that bringeth out their host by number? He calleth them all by names. By the greatness of his might, for that He is strong in power, not one faileth. Why sayest thou, O Jacob! and speakest, O Israel! my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?"

The night was very still; there was, I thought, no one awake within miles of me. The stars seemed to shine into me the divine reproach of those glorious words. "O my God!" I cried, and fell on my knees by the mill-door.

What I tried to say more I will not say here. I *may* say that I cried to God. What I said to Him ought not, cannot be repeated to another.

When I opened my eyes I saw the door of the mill was open too, and there in the door, his white head glimmering, stood Old Rogers, with a look on his face as if he had just come down from the mount. I started to my feet, with that strange feeling of something like shame that seizes one at the very thought of other eyes than those of the Father. The old man came forward, and bowed his head with an unconscious expression of humble dignity, but would have passed me without speech, leaving the mill-door open behind him. I could not bear to part with him thus.

"Won't you speak to me, Rogers?" I said.

He turned at once.

"I beg your pardon, sir. I was ashamed of having intruded on you, and I thought you would rather be left alone. I thought—I thought——" hesitated the old man, "that you might like to go into the mill, for the night's cold out o' doors."

"Thank you, Rogers. I won't now. I thought you had been in bed. How do you come to be out so late?"

"You see, sir, when I'm in any trouble, it's no use to go to bed. I can't sleep. I only keep the old 'oman wakin'. And the key o' the mill allus hangin' at the back o' my door, and knowin' it to be a good place to—to—shut the door in, I came out as soon as she was asleep; but I little thought to see you, sir."

"I came to find you, not thinking how the time went. Catherine Weir is gone home."

"I am right glad to hear it, poor woman. And perhaps something will come out now that will help us."

"I do not quite understand you," I said, with hesitation.

But Rogers made no reply.

"I am sorry to hear you are in trouble to-night. Can I help you?" I resumed.

"If you can help yourself, sir, you can help me. But I have no right to say so. Only, if a pair of old eyes be not blind, a man may pray to God about anything he sees. I was prayin' hard about you in there, sir, while you was on your knees o' the other side o' the door."

I could partly guess what the old man meant, and I could not ask him for further explanation.

"What did you want to see me about?" I inquired.

He hesitated for a moment.

"I daresay it was very foolish of me, sir. But I just wanted to tell you that—our Jane was down here from the Hall this arternoon——"

"I passed her on the bridge. Is she quite well?"

"Yes, yes, sir. You know that's not the point."

The old man's tone seemed to reprove me for vain words, and I held my peace.

"The Captain's there again."

An icy spear seemed to pass through my heart. I could make no reply. The same moment a cold wind blew on me from the open door of the mill.

Although Lear was of course right when he said,

> "The tempest in my mind
> Doth from my senses take all feeling else
> Save what beats there,"

yet it is also true, that sometimes, in the midst of its greatest pain, the mind takes marvellous notice of the smallest things that happen around it. This involves a law of which illustrations could be plentifully adduced from Shakespeare himself, namely, that the intellectual part of the mind can go on working with strange independence of the emotional.

From the door of the mill, as from a sepulchral cavern, blew a cold wind like the very breath of death upon me, just when that pang shot, in absolute pain, through my heart. For a wind had arisen from behind the mill, and we were in its shelter save where a window behind and the door beside me allowed free passage to the first of the coming storm.

I believe I turned away from the old man without a word. He made no attempt to detain me. Whether he went back into his closet, the old mill, sacred in the eyes of the Father who honours his children, even as the church wherein many prayers went up to Him, or turned homeward to his cottage and his sleeping wife, I cannot tell. The first I remember after that cold wind is, that I was fighting with that wind, gathered even to a storm, upon the common where I had dealt so severely with her who had this very night gone into that region into which, as into a waveless sea, all the rivers of life rush and are silent. Is it the sea of death? No. The sea of life—a life too keen, too refined, for our senses to know it, and therefore we call it death—because we cannot lay hold upon it.

I will not dwell upon my thoughts as I wandered about over that waste. The wind had risen to a storm charged with fierce showers of stinging hail, which gave a look of gray wrath to the invisible wind as it swept slanting by, and then danced and scudded along the levels. The next point in that night of pain is when I found myself standing at the iron gate of Oldcastle Hall. I had left the common, passed my own house and the church, crossed the river, walked through the village, and was restored to self-consciousness—that is, I knew that I was there—only when first I stood in the shelter of one of those great pillars and the monster on its top. Finding the gate open, for they were not precise about having it fastened, I pushed it and entered. The wind was roaring in the trees as I think I have never heard it roar since; for the hail clashed upon the bare branches and twigs, and mingled an unearthly hiss with the roar. In the midst of it the house stood like a tomb, dark, silent, without one dim light to show that sleep and not death ruled within. I could have fancied that there were no windows in it, that it stood, like an eyeless skull, in that gaunt forest of skeleton trees, empty and desolate, beaten by the ungenial hail, the dead rain of the country of death. I passed round to the other side, stepping gently lest some ear might be awake—as if any ear, even that of Judy's white wolf, could have heard the loudest step in such a storm. I heard the hailstones crush between my feet and the soft grass of the lawn, but I dared not stop to look up at the back of the house. I went on to the staircase in the rock, and by its rude steps, dangerous in the flapping of such storm-wings as swept about it that night, descended to the little grove below, around the deep-walled pool. Here the wind did not reach me. It roared overhead, but, save an occasional sigh, as if of sympathy with their suffering brethren abroad in the world, the hermits of this cell stood upright and still around the sleeping water. But my heart was a well in which a storm boiled and raged; and all that "pother o'er my head" was peace itself compared to what I felt. I sat down on the seat at the foot of a tree, where I had first seen Miss Oldcastle reading. And then I looked up to the house. Yes, there was a light there! It must be in her window. She, then, could not rest any more than I. Sleep was driven from her eyes because she must wed the man she would not; while sleep was driven from mine because I could not marry the woman I would. Was that it? No. My heart acquitted me, in part at least, of thinking only of my own sorrow in the presence of her greater distress. Gladly would I have given her up for ever, without a hope, to redeem her from such a bondage. "But it would be to marry another some day," suggested the tormentor within. And then the storm, which had a little abated, broke out afresh in my soul. But before I rose from her seat I was ready even for that—at least I thought so—if only I might deliver her from the all but destruction that seemed to be impending over her. The same moment in which my mind seemed to have arrived at the possibility of such a resolution, I rose almost involuntarily, and glancing once more at the dull light in her window—for I did not doubt that it was her window, though it was much too dark to discern the shape of the house—almost felt my way to the stair, and climbed again into the storm.

But I was quieter now, and able to go home. It must have been nearly morning, though at this season of the year the morning is undefined, when I reached my own house. My sister had gone to bed, for I could always let myself in; nor, indeed, did any one in Marshmallows think the locking of the door at night an imperative duty.

When I fell asleep, I was again in the old quarry, staring into the deep well. I thought Mrs. Oldcastle was murdering her daughter in the house

above, while I was spell-bound to the spot, where if I stood long enough, I should see her body float into the well from the subterranean passage, the opening of which was just below where I stood. I was thus confusing and reconstructing the two dreadful stories of the place—that told me by old Weir, about the circumstances of his birth; and that told me by Dr. Duncan, about Mrs. Oldcastle's treatment of her elder daughter. But as a white hand and arm appeared in the water below me, sorrow and pity more than horror broke the bonds of sleep, and I awoke to less trouble than that of my dreams, only because that which I feared had not yet come.

XXX.

It was the Sabbath morn. But such a Sabbath! The day seemed all wan with weeping, and gray with care. The wind dashed itself against the casement, laden with soft heavy sleet. The ground, the bushes, the very outhouses seemed sodden with the rain. The trees, which looked stricken as if they could die of grief, were yet tormented with fear, for the bare branches went streaming out in the torrent of the wind, as cowering before the invisible foe. The first thing I knew when I awoke was the raving of that wind. I could lie in bed not a moment longer. I could not rest. But how was I to do the work of my office? When a man's duty looks like an enemy, dragging him into the dark mountains, he has no less to go with it than when, like a friend with loving face, it offers to lead him along green pastures by the river-side. I had little power over my feelings; I could not prevent my mind from mirroring itself in the nature around me; but I could address myself to the work I had to do. "My God!" was all the prayer I could pray ere I descended to join my sister at the breakfast table. But He knew what lay behind the one word.

Martha could not help seeing that something was the matter. I saw by her looks that she could read so much in mine. But her eyes alone questioned me, and that only by glancing at me anxiously from time to time. I was grateful to her for saying nothing. It is a fine thing in friendship to know when to be silent.

The prayers were before me, in the hands of all my friends, and in the hearts of some of them; and if I could not enter into them as I would, I could yet read them humbly before God as his servant to help the people to worship as one flock. But how was I to preach? I had been in difficulty before now, but never in so much. How was I to teach others whose mind was one confusion? The subject on which I was pondering when young Weir came to tell me his sister was dying, had retreated as if into the far past; it seemed as if years had come between that time and this, though but one black night had rolled by. To attempt to speak upon that would have been vain, for I had nothing to say on the matter now. And if I could have recalled my former thoughts, I should have felt a hypocrite as I delivered them, so utterly dissociated would they have been from anything that I was thinking or feeling now. Here would have been my visible form and audible voice, uttering that as present to me now, as felt by me now, which I did think and feel yesterday, but which, although I believed it, was not present to my feeling or heart, and must wait the revolution of months, or it might be of years, before I should feel it again, before I should be able to exhort my people about it with the fervour of a present faith. But, indeed, I could not even recall what I had thought and felt. Should I then tell them that I could not speak to them that morning?—There would be nothing wrong in that. But I felt ashamed of yielding to personal trouble when the truths of God were all about me, although I could not feel them. Might not some hungry soul go away without being satisfied, because I was faint and down-hearted? I confess I had a desire likewise to avoid giving rise to speculation and talk about myself, a desire which, although not wrong, could neither have strengthened me to speak the truth, nor have justified me in making the attempt.—What was to be done?

All at once the remembrance crossed my mind of a sermon I had preached before upon the words of St. Paul: "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" a subject suggested by the fact that on the preceding Sunday I had especially felt, in preaching to my people, that I was exhorting myself whose necessity was greater than theirs—at least I felt it to be greater than I could know theirs to be. And now the converse of the thought came to me, and I said to myself: "Might I not try the other way now, and preach to myself? In teaching myself, might I not teach others? Would it not hold? I am very troubled and faithless now. If I knew that God was going to lay the full weight of this grief upon me, yet if I loved Him with all my heart, should I not at least be more quiet? There would not be a storm within me then, as if the Father had descended from the throne of the heavens, and 'chaos were come again.' Let me expostulate with myself in my heart, and the words of my expostulation will not be the less true with my people."

All this passed through my mind as I sat in my study after breakfast, with the great old cedar roaring before my window. It was within an hour of church-time. I took my Bible, read and thought, got even some comfort already, and found myself in my vestry not quite unwilling to read the prayers and speak to my people.

There were very few present. The day was one of the worst—violently stormy, which harmonized somewhat with my feelings; and, to my further relief, the Hall-pew was empty. Instead of finding myself a mere minister to the prayers of others, I found, as I read, that my heart went out in crying to God for the divine presence of his spirit. And if I thought more of myself in my prayers than was well, yet as soon as I was converted, would I not strengthen my brethren? And the sermon I preached to myself and through myself to my people, was that which the stars had preached to me, and thereby driven me to my knees by the mill-door. I took for my text "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed;" and then I proceeded to show them how the glory of the Lord was to be revealed. I preached to myself that throughout this fortieth chapter of the prophecies of Isaiah, the power

of God is put side by side with the weakness of men, not that He, the perfect, may glory over his feeble children; not that He may say to them—"Look how mighty I am, and go down upon your knees and worship"—for power alone was never yet worthy of prayer; but that He may say thus: "Look, my children, you will never be strong but with *my* strength. I have no other to give you. And that you can get only by trusting in me. I cannot give it you any other way. There is no other way. But can you not trust in me? Look how strong I am. You wither like the grass. Do not fear. Let the grass wither. Lay hold of my word, that which I say to you out of my truth, and that will be life in you that the blowing of the wind that withers cannot reach. I am coming with my strong hand and my judging arm to do my work. And what is the work of my strong hand and ruling arm? To feed my flock like a shepherd, to gather the lambs with my arm, and carry them in my bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. I have measured the waters in the hollow of my hand, and held the mountains in my scales, to give each his due weight, and all the nations, so strong and fearful in your eyes, are as nothing beside my strength and what I can do. Do not think of me as of an image that your hands can make, a thing you can choose to serve and for which you can do things to win its favour. I am before and above the earth, and over your life, and your oppressors I will wither with my breath. I come to you with help. I need no worship from you. But I say love me, for love is life, and I love you. Look at the stars I have made. I know every one of them. Not one goes wrong, because I keep him right. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel—My way is *hid* from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God! I give *power* to the *faint*, and to them that have no might, plenty of strength."

"Thus," I went on to say, "God brings his strength to destroy our weakness by making us strong. This is a God indeed! Shall we not trust Him?"

I gave my people this paraphrase of the chapter, to help them to see the meanings which their familiarity with the words, and their non-familiarity with the modes of Eastern thought, and the forms of Eastern expression, would unite to prevent them from catching more than broken glimmerings of. And then I tried to show them that it was in the commonest troubles of life, as well as in the spiritual fears and perplexities that came upon them, that they were to trust in God; for God made the outside as well as the inside, and they altogether belonged to Him; and that when outside things, such as pain or loss of work, or difficulty in getting money, were referred to God and his will, they too straightway became spiritual affairs, for nothing in the world could any longer appear common or unclean to the man who saw God in everything. But I told them they must not be too anxious to be delivered from that which troubled them; but they ought to be anxious to have the presence of God with them to support them, and make them able in patience to possess their souls; and so the trouble would work its end—the purification of their minds that the light and gladness of God and all his earth, which the pure in heart and the meek alone could inherit, might shine in upon them. And then I repeated to them this portion of a prayer out of one of Sir Philip Sidney's books:—

"O Lord, I yield unto thy will, and joyfully embrace what sorrow thou wilt have me suffer. Only thus much let me crave of thee (let my craving, O Lord, be accepted of thee, since even that proceeds from thee), let me crave, even by the noblest title, which in my greatest affliction I may give myself, that I am thy creature, and by thy goodness (which is thyself) that thou wilt suffer some beam of thy majesty so to shine into my mind, that it may still depend confidently on thee."

All the time I was speaking, the rain, mingled with sleet, was dashing against the windows, and the wind was howling over the graves all about. But the dead were not troubled by the storm; and over my head, from beam to beam of the roof, now resting on one, now flitting to another, a sparrow kept flying, which had taken refuge in the church till the storm should cease and the sun shine out in the great temple. "This," I said aloud, "is what the church is for: as the sparrow finds there a house from the storm, so the human heart escapes thither to hear the still small voice of God when its faith is too weak to find Him in the storm, and in the sorrow, and in the pain." And while I spoke, a dim watery gleam fell on the chancel-floor, and the comfort of the sun awoke in my heart. Nor let any one call me superstitious for taking that pale sun-ray of hope as sent to me; for I received it as comfort for the race, and for me as one of the family, even as the bow that was set in the cloud, a promise to the eyes of light for them that sit in darkness. As I write, my eye falls upon the Bible on the table by my side, and I read the words, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield, the Lord will give grace and glory." And I lift my eyes from my paper, and look abroad from my window, and the sun is shining in its strength. The leaves are dancing in the light wind that gives them each its share of the sun, and my trouble has passed away for ever, like the storm of that night and the unrest of that strange Sabbath.

Such comforts would come to us oftener from Nature, if we really believed that our God was the God of Nature; that when He made, or rather when He makes, He means; that not his hands only, but his heart too, is in the making of those things; that, therefore, the influences of Nature upon human minds and hearts are because He intended them. And if we believe that our God is everywhere, why should we not think Him present even in the coincidences that sometimes seem so strange? For, if He be in the things that coincide, He must be in the coincidence of those things.

Miss Oldcastle told me once that she could not take her eyes off a butterfly which was flitting about in the church all the time I was speaking of the resurrection of the dead. I told the people that in Greek there was one word for the soul and for a butterfly—*Psyche*; that I thought as the light on the rain made the

natural symbol of mercy—the rainbow, so the butterfly was the type in nature, and made to the end, amongst other ends, of being such a type—of the resurrection of the human body; that its name certainly expressed the hope of the Greeks in immortality, while to us it speaks likewise of a glorified body, whereby we shall know and love each other with our eyes as well as our hearts.—My sister saw the butterfly too, but only remembered that she had seen it when it was mentioned in her hearing: on her the sight made no impression; she saw no coincidence.

I descended from the pulpit comforted by the sermon I had preached to myself. But I was glad to feel justified in telling my people that, in consequence of the continued storm, for there had been no more of sunshine than just that watery gleam, there would be no service in the afternoon, and that I would instead visit some of my sick poor, whom the weather might have discomposed in their poor dwellings.

The people were very slow in dispersing. There was so much putting-on of clogs, gathering up of skirts over the head, and expanding of umbrellas, soon to be taken down again as worse than useless in the violence of the wind, that the porches were crowded, and the few left detained in the church till the others made way. I lingered with these. They were all poor people.

"I am sorry you will have such a wet walk home," I said to Mrs. Baird, the wife of old Reginald Baird, the shoemaker, a little wizened creature, with more wrinkles than hairs, who the older and more withered she grew, seemed, like the kernels of some nuts, only to grow the sweeter.

"It's very good of you to let us off this afternoon, sir. Not as I minds the wet: it finds out the holes in people's shoes, and gets my husband into more work."

This was, in fact, the response of the shoemaker's wife to my sermon. If we look for responses after our fashion instead of after people's own fashion, we ought to be disappointed. Any recognition of truth, whatever form it may take, whether that of poetic delight, intellectual corroboration, practical commonplace, or even vulgar aphorism, must be welcomed by the husbandmen of the God of growth. A response which jars against the peculiar pitch of our mental instrument, must not therefore be turned away from with dislike. Our mood of the moment is not that by which the universe is tuned into its harmonies. We must drop our instrument and listen to the other, and if we find that the player upon it is breathing after a higher expression; is, after his fashion, striving to embody something he sees of the same truth the utterance of which called forth this his answer, let us thank God and take courage. God at least is pleased; and if our refinement and education take away from our pleasure, it is because of something low, false, and selfish, not divine in a word, that is mingled with that refinement and that education. If the shoemaker's wife's response to the prophet's grand poem about the care of God over his creatures, took the form of acknowledgment for the rain that found out the holes in the people's shoes, it was the more genuine and true, for in itself it afforded proof that it was not a mere reflex of the words of the prophet, but sprung from the experience and recognition of the shoemaker's wife. Nor was there anything necessarily selfish in it, for if there are holes in people's shoes, the sooner they are found out the better.

While I was talking to Mrs. Baird, Mr. Stoddart, whose love for the old organ had been stronger than his dislike to the storm, had come down into the church, and now approached me.

"I never saw you in the church before, Mr. Stoddart," I said, "though I have heard you often enough. You use your own private door always."

"I thought to go that way now, but there came such a fierce burst of wind and rain in my face, that my courage failed me, and I turned back—like the sparrow—for refuge in the church."

"A thought strikes me," I said. "Come home with me, and have some lunch, and then we will go together to see some of my poor people. I have often wished to ask you."

His face fell.

"It is such a day!" he answered, remonstratingly, but not positively refusing. It was not his way ever to refuse anything positively.

"So it was when you set out this morning," I returned; "but you would not deprive us of the aid of your music for the sake of a charge of wind, and a rattle of rain-drops."

"But I shan't be of any use. You are going, and that is enough."

"I beg your pardon. Your very presence will be of use. Nothing yet given him or done for him by his fellow, ever did any man so much good as the recognition of the brotherhood by the common signs of friendship and sympathy. The best good of given money depends on the degree to which it is the sign of that friendship and sympathy. Our Lord did not make little of visiting: 'I was sick and ye visited me.' 'Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.' Of course, if the visitor goes professionally and not humanly,—as a mere religious policeman, that is—whether he only distributes tracts with condescending words, or gives money liberally because he thinks he ought, the more he does not go the better, for he only does harm to them and himself too."

"But I cannot pretend to feel any of the interest you consider essential: why then should I go?"

"To please me, your friend. That is a good human reason. You need not say a word—you must not pretend anything. Go as my companion, not as their visitor. Will you come?"

"I suppose I must."

"You must, then. Thank you. You will help me. I have seldom a companion."

So when the storm-fit had abated for the moment, we hurried to the vicarage, had a good though hasty lunch, (to which I was pleased to see Mr. Stoddart do justice; for it is with man as with beast, if you want work out of him, he must eat well—and it is the one justification of eating well, that a man works well upon it,) and set out for the village. The rain was worse than ever. There was no sleet, and the wind was not

cold, but the windows of heaven were opened, and if the fountains of the great deep were not broken up, it looked like it, at least, when we reached the bridge and saw how the river had spread out over all the low lands on its borders. We could not talk much as we went along.

"Don't you find some pleasure in fighting the wind?" I said.

"I have no doubt I should," answered Mr. Stoddart, "if I thought I were going to do any good; but as it is, to tell the truth, I would rather be by my own fire with my folio Dante on the reading desk."

"Well, I would rather help the poorest woman in creation, than contemplate the sufferings of the greatest and wickedest," I said.

"There are two things you forget," returned Mr. Stoddart. "First, that the poem of Dante is not nearly occupied with the sufferings of the wicked; and next, that what I have complained of in this expedition, which as far as I am concerned I would call a wild-goose-chase were it not that it is your doing and not mine, is that I am not going to help any body."

"You would have the best of the argument entirely," I replied, "if your expectation was sure to turn out correct."

As I spoke, we had come within a few yards of the Tomkins's cottage, which lay low down from the village towards the river, and I saw that the water was at the threshold. I turned to Mr. Stoddart, who, to do him justice, had not yet grumbled in the least.

"Perhaps you had better go home, after all," I said; "for you must wade into Tomkins's if you go at all. Poor old man! what can he be doing, with his wife dying, and the river in his house!"

"You have constituted yourself my superior officer, Mr. Walton. I never turned my back on my leader yet. Though I confess I wish I could see the enemy a little clearer."

"There is the enemy," I said, pointing to the water, and walking into it.

Mr. Stoddart followed me without a moment's hesitation.

When I opened the door, the first thing I saw was a small stream of water running straight from the door to the fire on the hearth, which it had already drowned. The old man was sitting by his wife's bedside. Life seemed rapidly going from the old woman. She lay breathing very hard.

"Oh, sir," said the old man, as he rose, almost crying, "you're come at last!"

"Did you send for me?" I asked.

"No, sir. I had nobody to send. Leastways, I asked the Lord if he wouldn't fetch you. I've been prayin' hard for you for the last hour. I couldn't leave her to come for you. And I do believe the wind 'ud ha' blown me off my two old legs."

"Well, I am come, you see. I would have come sooner, but I had no idea you would be flooded."

"It's not that I mind, sir, though it *is* cold sin' the fire went. But she *is* goin' now, sir. She ha'n't spoken a word this two hours and more, and her breathin's worse and worse. She don't know me now, sir."

A moan of protestation came from the dying woman.

"She does know you, and loves you too, Tomkins," I said. "And you'll both know each other better by-and-by."

The old woman made a feeble motion with her hand. I took it in mine. It was cold and deathlike. The rain was falling in large slow drops from the roof upon the bed-clothes. But she would be beyond the reach of all the region storms before long, and it did not matter much.

"Look if you can find a basin or plate, Mr. Stoddart, and put it to catch the drop here," I said.

For I wanted to give him the first chance of being useful.

"There's one in the press there," said the old man, rising feebly.

"Keep your seat," said Mr. Stoddart. "I'll get it."

And he got a basin from the cupboard, and put it on the bed to catch the drop.

The old woman held my hand in hers; but by its motion I knew that she wanted something; and guessing what it was from what she had said before, I made her husband sit on the bed on the other side of her and take hold of her other hand, while I took his place on the chair by the bedside. This seemed to content her. So I went and whispered to Mr. Stoddart, who had stood looking on disconsolately:—

"You heard me say I would visit some of my sick people this afternoon. Some will be expecting me with certainty. You must go instead of me, and tell them that I cannot come, because old Mrs. Tomkins is dying; but I will see them soon."

He seemed rather relieved at the commission. I gave him the necessary directions to find the cottages, and he left me.

I may mention here that this was the beginning of a relation between Mr. Stoddart and the poor of the parish—a very slight one indeed, at first, for it consisted only in his knowing two or three of them, so as to ask after their health when he met them, and give them an occasional half-crown. But it led to better things before many years had passed. It seems scarcely more than yesterday—though it is twenty years ago—that I came upon him in the avenue, standing in dismay over the fragments of a jug of soup which he had dropped, to the detriment of his trousers as well as the loss of his soup. "What am I to do?" he said. "Poor Jones expects his soup to-day."—"Why, go back, and get some more."—"But what will cook say?" The poor man was more afraid of the cook than he would have been of a squadron of cavalry. "Never mind the cook. Tell her you must have some more as soon as it can be got ready." He stood uncertain for a moment. Then his face brightened. "I will tell her I want my luncheon. I always have soup. And I'll get out through the greenhouse, and carry it to Jones."—"Very well," I said; "that will do capitally." And I went on, without caring to disturb my satisfaction by determining whether the devotion of his own soup arose more from love to Jones, or fear of the cook. He was a great help to

me in the latter part of his life, especially after I lost good Dr. Duncan, and my beloved friend Old Rogers. He was just one of those men who make excellent front-rank men, but are quite unfit for officers. He could do what he was told without flinching, but he always required to be told.

I resumed my seat by the bedside, where the old woman was again moaning. As soon as I took her hand she ceased, and so I sat till it began to grow dark.

"Are you there, sir?" she would murmur.

"Yes, I am here. I have a hold of your hand."

"I can't feel you, sir."

"But you can hear me. And you can hear God's voice in your heart. I am here, though you can't feel me. And God is here, though you can't see him."

She would be silent for a while, and then murmur again—

"Are you there, Tomkins?"

"Yes, my woman, I'm here," answered the old man to one of these questions; "but I wish I was there instead, wheresomever it be as you're goin', old girl."

And all that I could hear of her answer was, "Bym by; bym by."

Why should I linger over the death-bed of an illiterate woman, old and plain, dying away by inches? Is it only that she died with a hold of my hand, and that therefore I am interested in the story? I trust not. I was interested in *her*. Why? Would my readers be more interested if I told them of the death of a young lovely creature, who said touching things, and died amidst a circle of friends, who felt that the very light of life was being taken away from them? It was enough for me that here was a woman with a heart like my own; who needed the same salvation I needed; to whom the love of God was the one blessed thing; who was passing through the same dark passage into the light that the Lord had passed through before her, that I had to pass through after her. She had no theories—at least, she gave utterance to none; she had few thoughts of her own—and gave still fewer of them expression; you might guess at a true notion in her mind, but an abstract idea she could scarcely lay hold of; her speech was very common; her manner rather *brusque* than gentle; but she could love; she could forget herself; she could be sorry for what she did or thought wrong; she could hope; she could wish to be better; she could admire good people; she could trust in God her Saviour. And now the loving God-made human heart in her was going into a new school that it might begin a fresh beautiful growth. She was old, I have said, and plain; but now her old age and plainness were about to vanish, and all that had made her youth attractive to young Tomkins was about to return to her, only rendered tenfold more beautiful by the growth of fifty years of learning according to her ability. God has such patience in working us into vessels of honour! in teaching us to be children! And shall we find the human heart in which the germs of all that is noblest and loveliest and likest to God have begun to grow and manifest themselves, uninteresting, because its circumstances have been narrow, bare, and poverty-stricken, though neither sordid nor unclean; because the woman is old and wrinkled and brown, as if these were more than the transient accidents of humanity; because she has neither learned grammar nor philosophy; because her habits have neither been delicate nor self-indulgent? To help the mind of such a woman to unfold to the recognition of the endless delights of truth; to watch the dawn of the rising intelligence upon the too still face, and the transfiguration of the whole form, as the gentle rusticity vanishes in yet gentler grace, is a labour and a delight worth the time and mind of an archangel. Our best living poet says—but no; I will not quote. It is a distinct wrong that befalls the best books to have many of their best words quoted till in their own place and connection they cease to have force and influence. The meaning of the passage is that the communication of truth is one of the greatest delights the human heart can experience. Surely this is true. Does not the teaching of men form a great part of the divine gladness?

Therefore even the dull approaches of death are full of deep significance and warm interest to one who loves his fellows, who desires not to be distinguished by any better fate than theirs; and shrinks from the pride of supposing that his own death, or that of the noblest of the good, is more precious in the sight of God than that of "one of the least of these little ones."

At length, after a long silence, the peculiar sounds of obstructed breathing indicated the end at hand. The jaw fell, and the eyes were fixed. The old man closed the mouth and the eyes of his old companion, weeping like a child, and I prayed aloud, giving thanks to God for taking her to himself. It went to my heart to leave the old man alone with the dead; but it was better to let him be alone for a while, ere the women should come to do the last offices for the abandoned form.

I went to Old Rogers, told him the state in which I had left poor Tomkins, and asked him what was to be done.

"I'll go and bring him home, sir, directly. He can't be left there."

"But how can you bring him in such a night?"

"Let me see, sir. I must think. Would your mare go in a cart, do you think?"

"Quite quietly. She brought a load of gravel from the common a few days ago. But where's your cart? I haven't got one."

"There's one at Weir's to be repaired, sir. It wouldn't be stealing to borrow it."

How he managed with Tomkins, I do not know. I thought it better to leave all the rest to him. He only said afterwards, that he could hardly get the old man away from the body. But when I went in next day, I found Tomkins sitting, disconsolate, but as comfortable as he could be, in the easy chair by the side of the fire. Mrs. Rogers was bustling about cheerily. The storm had died in the night. The sun was shining. It was the first of the spring weather. The whole country was gleaming with water. But soon it would sink away, and the grass be the thicker for its rising.

XXXI.

My reader will easily believe that I returned home that Sunday evening somewhat jaded, nor will he be surprised if I say that next morning I felt disinclined to leave my bed. I was able, however, to rise and go, as I have said, to Old Rogers's cottage.

But when I came home, I could no longer conceal from myself that I was in danger of a return of my last attack. I had been sitting for hours in wet clothes, with my boots full of water, and now I had to suffer for it. But as I was not to blame in the matter, and had no choice offered me whether I should be wet or dry while I sat by the dying woman, I felt no depression at the prospect of the coming illness. Indeed, I was too much depressed from other causes, from mental strife and hopelessness, to care much whether I was well or ill. I could have welcomed death in the mood in which I sometimes found myself during the next few days, when I was unable to leave my bed, and knew that Captain Everard was at the Hall, and knew nothing besides. For no voice reached me from that quarter any more than if Oldcastle Hall had been a region beyond the grave. Miss Oldcastle seemed to have vanished from my ken as much as Catherine Weir and Mrs. Tomkins—yes, more—for there was only death between these and me; whereas, there was something far worse—I could not always tell what—that rose ever between Miss Oldcastle and myself, and paralysed any effort I might fancy myself on the point of making for her rescue.

One pleasant thing happened. On the Thursday, I think it was, I felt better. My sister came into my room and said that Miss Crowther had called, and wanted to see me.

"Which Miss Crowther is it?" I asked.

"A little lady, that looks like a bird, and chirps when she talks.

Of course I was no longer in any doubt as to which of them it was.

"You told her I had a bad cold, did you not?"

"Oh, yes. But she says if it is only a cold, it will do you no harm to see her."

"But you told her I was in bed, didn't you?"

"Of course. But it makes no difference. She says she's used to seeing sick folk in bed; and if you don't mind seeing her, she doesn't mind seeing you."

"Well, I suppose I must see her."

So my sister made me a little tidier, and introduced Miss Crowther.

"O dear Mr. Walton, I am *so* sorry! But you're not very ill, are you?"

"I hope not, Miss Jemima. Indeed, I begin to think this morning that I am going to get off easier than I expected."

"I am glad of that. Now listen to me. I won't keep you, and it is a matter of some importance. I hear that one of your people is dead, a young woman of the name of Weir, who has left a little boy behind her. Now, I have been wanting for a long time to adopt a child——"

"But," I interrupted her, "what would Miss Hester say?"

"My sister is not so very dreadful as perhaps you think her, Mr. Walton; and besides, when I do want my own way very particularly, which is not often, for there are not so many things that it's worth while insisting upon—but when I *do* want my own way, I always have it. I then stand upon my right of—what do you call it?—primo—primogeniture—that's it! Well, I think I know something of this child's father. I am sorry to say I don't know much good of him, and that's the worse for the boy. Still——"

"The boy is an uncommonly sweet and lovable child, whoever was his father," I interposed.

"I am very glad to hear it. I am the more determined to adopt him. What friends has he?"

"He has a grandfather, and an uncle and aunt, and will have a godfather—that's me—in a few days, I hope."

"I am very glad to hear it. There will be no opposition on the part of the relatives, I presume?"

"I am not so sure of that. I fear I shall object for one, Miss Jemima."

"You? I didn't expect that of you, Mr. Walton, I must say."

And there was a tremor in the old lady's voice more of disappointment and hurt than of anger.

"I will think it over, though, and talk about it to his grandfather, and we shall find out what's best, I do hope. You must not think I should not like you to have him."

"Thank you, Mr. Walton. Then I won't stay longer now. But I warn you I will call again very soon, if you don't come to see me. Good morning."

And the dear old lady shook hands with me and left me rather hurriedly, turning at the door, however, to add—

"Mind, I've set my heart upon having the boy, Mr. Walton. I've seen him often."

What could have made Miss Crowther take such a fancy to the boy? I could not help associating it with what I had heard of her youthful disappointment, but never having had my conjectures confirmed, I will say no more about them. Of course I talked the matter over with Thomas Weir; but, as I had suspected, I found that he was now as unwilling to part with the boy as he had formerly disliked the sight of him. Nor did I press the matter at all, having a belief that the circumstances of one's natal position are not to be rudely handled or thoughtlessly altered, besides that I thought Thomas and his daughter ought to have all the comfort and good that were to be got from the presence of the boy whose advent had occasioned them so much trouble and sorrow, yea and sin too. But I did not give a positive and final refusal to Miss Crowther. I only said "for the present;" for I did not feel at liberty to go farther. I thought that such changes might take place as would render the trial of such a new relationship desirable; as, indeed, it turned out in the end, though I cannot tell the story now.

I have, I think, entirely as yet, followed, in these memoirs, the plan of relating those things only in which I was personally concerned. I will now depart from this plan—for once. Years passed before some

of the following facts were reported to me, but it is only here that they could be interesting to my readers.

At the very time Miss Crowther was with me, as nearly as I can guess, Old Rogers turned into Thomas Weir's workshop. The usual, on the present occasion somewhat melancholy, greetings having passed between them, Old Rogers said—

"Don't you think, Mr. Weir, there's summat the matter wi' parson!"

"Overworked," returned Weir. "He's lost two, ye see, and had to see them both safe over, as I may say, within the same day. He's got a bad cold, I'm sorry to hear, besides. Have ye heard of him to-day?"

"Yes, yes; he's badly, and in bed. But that's not what I mean. There's summat on his mind," said Old Rogers.

"Well, I don't think it's for you or me to meddle with parson's mind," returned Weir.

"I'm not so sure o' that," persisted Rogers. "But if I hadn't thought, Mr. Weir, as how you would be ready to take me up short for mentionin' of the thing, I wouldn't ha' opened my mouth to you about parson—leastways, in that way, I mean."

"But what way *do* you mean, Old Rogers?"

"Why, about his in'ards, you know."

"I'm no nearer your meanin' yet."

"Well, Mr. Weir, you and me's two old fellows, now—leastways I'm a deal older than you. But that doesn't signify to what I want to say."

And here Old Rogers stuck fast—according to Weir's story.

"It don't seem easy to say no how, Old Rogers," said Weir.

"Well, it aint. So I must just let it go by the run, and hope the parson, who'll never know, would forgive me if he did."

"Well, then, what is it?"

"It's my opinion that that parson o' ours—you see, we knows about it, Mr. Weir, though we're not gentlefolks—leastways, I'm none."

"Now, what *do* you mean, Old Rogers?"

"Well, I means this—as how parson's in love. There, that's paid out."

"Suppose he was, I don't see yet what business that is of yours or mine either."

"Well, I do. I'd go to Davie Jones for that man."

A heathenish expression, perhaps; but Weir assured me, with much amusement in his tone, that those were the very words Old Rogers used. Leaving the expression aside, will the reader think for a moment on the old man's reasoning? My condition *was* his business; for he was ready to die for me! Ah! love does indeed make us all each other's keeper, just as we were intended to be.

"But what *can* we do?" returned Weir.

Perhaps he was the less inclined to listen to the old man, that he was busy with a coffin for his daughter, who was lying dead down the street. And so my poor affairs were talked of over the coffin-planks. Well, well, it was no bad omen.

"I tell you what, Mr. Weir, this here's a serious business. And it seems to me it's not shipshape o' you to go on with that plane o' yours, when we're talkin' about parson."

"Well, Old Rogers, I meant no offence. Here goes. *Now*, what have you to say? Though if it's offence to parson you're speakin' of, I know, if I were parson, who I'd think was takin' the greatest liberty, me wi' my plane, or you wi' your fancies."

"Belay there, and hearken."

So Old Rogers went into as many particulars as he thought fit, to prove that his suspicion as to the state of my mind was correct; which particulars I do not care to lay in a collected form before my reader, he being in no need of such a summing up to give his verdict, seeing the parson has already pleaded guilty. When he had finished,

"Supposing all you say, Old Rogers," remarked Thomas, "I don't yet see what *we've* got to do with it. Parson ought to know best what he's about."

"But my daughter tells me," said Rogers, "that Miss Oldcastle has no mind to marry Captain Everard. And she thinks if parson would only speak out he might have a chance."

Weir made no reply, and was silent so long, with his head bent, that Rogers grew impatient.

"Well, man, ha' you nothing to say now—not for your best friend—on earth, I mean—and that's parson? It may seem a small matter to you, but it's no small matter to parson."

"Small to me!" said Weir, and taking up his tool, a constant recourse with him when agitated, he began to plane furiously.

Old Rogers now saw that there was more in it than he had thought, and held his peace and waited. After a minute or two of fierce activity, Thomas lifted up a face more white than the deal-board he was planing, and said,

"You should have come to the point a little sooner, Old Rogers."

He then laid down his plane, and went out of the workshop, leaving Rogers standing there in bewilderment. But he was not gone many minutes. He returned with a letter in his hand.

"There," he said, giving it to Rogers.

"I can't read hand o' write," returned Rogers. "I ha' enough ado with straight-foret print. But I'll take it to parson."

"On no account," returned Thomas, emphatically. "That's not what I gave it you for. Neither you nor parson has any right to read that letter; and I don't want either of you to read it. Can Jane read writing?"

"I don't know as she can, for, you see, what makes lasses take to writin' is when their young man's over the seas, leastways not in the mill over the brook."

"I'll be back in a minute," said Thomas, and taking the letter from Rogers's hand, he left the shop again.

He returned once more with the letter sealed up in an envelope, addressed to Miss Oldcastle.

"Now, you tell your Jane to give that to Miss Oldcastle from me—mind, from *me*; and she must give it into her own hands, and let no one else see it. And I must have it again. Mind you tell her all that, Old Rogers."

"I will. It's for Miss Oldcastle, and no one else to know on't. And you're to have it again all safe when done with."

"Yes. Can you trust Jane not to go talking about it?"

"I think I can. I ought to, anyhow. But she can't know anythink in the letter now, Mr. Weir."

"I know that; but Marshmallows is a talkin' place. And poor Kate aint right out o' hearin' yet.—You'll come and see her buried to-morrow, won't ye, Old Rogers?"

"I will, Thomas. You've had a troubled life, but thank God the sun came out a bit before she died."

"That's true, Rogers. It's all right, I do think, though I grumbled sore. But Jane mustn't speak of that letter."

"No. That she shan't."

"I'll tell you some day what's in it. But I can't bear to talk about it yet."

And so they parted.

I was too unwell still either to be able to bury my dead out of my sight or to comfort my living the next Sunday. I got help from Addicehead, however, and the dead bodies were laid aside in the ancient wardrobe of the tomb. They were both buried by my vestry-door, Catherine where I had found young Tom lying, namely, in the grave of her mother, and old Mrs. Tomkins on the other side of the path.

On Sunday, Rogers gave his daughter the letter, and she carried it to the Hall. It was not till she had to wait on her mistress before leaving her for the night that she found an opportunity of giving it into her own hands.

Then when her bell rang, Jane went up to her room, and found her so pale and haggard that she was frightened. She had thrown herself back on the couch, with her hands lying by her sides, as if she cared for nothing in this world or out of it. But when Jane entered, she started and sat up, and tried to look like herself. Her face, however, was so pitiful, that honest-hearted Jane could not help crying, upon which the responsive sisterhood overcame the proud lady, and she cried too. Jane had all but forgotten the letter, of the import of which she had no idea, for her father had taken care to rouse no suspicions in her mind. But when she saw her cry, the longing to give her something, which comes to us all when we witness trouble—for giving seems to mean everything—brought to her mind the letter she had undertaken to deliver to her. Now she had no notion, as I have said, that the letter had anything to do with her present perplexity, but she hoped it might divert her thoughts for a moment, which is all that love at a distance can look for sometimes.

"Here is a letter," said Jane, "that Mr. Weir the carpenter gave to my father to give to me to bring to you, miss."

"What is it about, Jane?" she asked listlessly.

Then a sudden flash broke from her eyes, and she held out her hand eagerly to take it. She opened it and read it with changing colour, but when she had finished it, her cheeks were crimson, and her eyes glowing like fire.

"The wretch!" she said, and threw the letter from her into the middle of the floor.

Jane, who remembered the injunctions of her father as to the safety and return of the letter, stooped to pick it up; but had hardly raised herself when the door opened, and in came Mrs. Oldcastle. The moment she saw her mother, Ethelwyn rose, and advancing to meet her, said,

"Mother, I will *not* marry that man. You may do what you please with me, but I *will not.*"

"Heigho!" exclaimed Mrs. Oldcastle with spread nostrils, and turning suddenly upon Jane, snatched the letter out of her hand.

She opened and read it, her face getting more still and stony as she read. Miss Oldcastle stood and looked at her mother with cheeks now pale but with still flashing eyes. The moment her mother had finished the letter, she walked swiftly to the fire, tearing the letter as she went, and thrust it between the bars, pushing it in fiercely with the poker, and muttering—

"A vile forgery of those low Chartist wretches! As if he would ever have looked at one of *their* women! A low conspiracy to get money from a gentleman in his honourable position!"

And for the first time since she went to the place, Jane said, there was colour in that dead white face.

She turned once more, fiercer than ever, upon Jane, and in a tone of rage under powerful repression, began,—

"You leave the house—*this instant.*"

The last two words, notwithstanding her self-command, rose to a scream. And she came from the fire towards Jane, who stood trembling near the door, with such an expression on her countenance that absolute fear drove her from the room before she knew what she was about. The locking of the door behind her let her know that she had abandoned her young mistress to the madness of her mother's evil temper and disposition. But it was too late. She lingered by the door and listened, but beyond an occasional hoarse tone of suppressed energy, she heard nothing. At length the lock as suddenly turned, and she was surprised by Mrs. Oldcastle, if not in a listening attitude, at least where she had no right to be after the dismissal she had received.

Opposite Miss Oldcastle's bedroom was another, seldom used, the door of which was now standing open. Instead of speaking to Jane, Mrs. Oldcastle gave her a violent push, which drove her into this room. Thereupon she shut the door and locked it. Jane spent the whole of the night in that room, in no small degree of trepidation as to what might happen next. But she heard no noise all the rest of the night, part of which, however, was spent in sound sleep, for Jane's conscience was in no ways disturbed as to any part she had played in the current events.

It was not till the morning that she examined the door, to see if she could not manage to get out and escape from the house, for she shared with the rest of the family an indescribable fear of Mrs. Oldcastle and her confidante, the White Wolf. But she found it was of no use: the lock was at least as strong as the door. Being a sensible girl and self-possessed, as her

parents' child ought to be, she made no noise, but waited patiently for what might come. At length, hearing a step in the passage, she tapped gently at the door and called, "Who's there?" The cook's voice answered.

"Let me out," said Jane. "The door's locked."

The cook tried, but found there was no key. Jane told her how she came there, and the cook promised to get her out as soon as she could. Meantime all she could do for her was to hand her a loaf of bread on a stick from the next window. It had been long dark before some one unlocked the door, and left her at liberty to go where she pleased.

Unable to find her young mistress, Jane packed her box, and, leaving it behind her, escaped to her father. As soon as she had told him the story, he came straight to me.

(To be continued.)

A MORNING MEDITATION.

Along the way, this coming day,
Your feet and mine must tread the road;
And still press on, thro' storm and sun,
Till we can rest in God's abode.

The daily care will everywhere
Gloom down and darken on the mind;
But as we go, now fast now slow,
Each step will leave it more behind.

Around us still, by vale or hill,
Our Foe his traps and snares will set;
But when our eyes dread no surprise,
Our Friend our feet will rescue yet.

And for the day shall be a stay,
On which our souls may rest their need;
And even where the lands are bare,
A Table shall be spread to feed.

And for the night shall be a Light,
To shine our devious steps about;
Bright'ning from far, like ev'ning star,
Which wildest winds can ne'er blow out.

And then at last, when all is past,
Heaven's glory will begin to rise;
A happy Land, where God's kind hand,
Will wipe the tears from all the eyes.

Along the way, this coming day,
Your feet and mine must tread the road;
And still press on, thro' storm and sun,
Till we may rest in God's abode.

Alfred Norris.

THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST.

God for us, God with us, God in us—here are the ideas which describe our religion. For they explain its motive, they declare its meaning, they define its doctrine. The motive is, that God being for us, all things shall work together for our good, if we are for Him. The meaning is, that God being with us, a Divine Providence is ever ready to lead us on "by the right way." The doctrine is, that an Indwelling God is our salvation.

Adolphe Monod, detecting a historical relation between these ideas of God's favour, God's presence, and God's indwelling, has localised the first in the Old Testament, the second in the Gospels, the third in the Epistles. In the Old Testament we see God both on our side, and also with us, yet with us but occasionally, and in the form of angels: and we find nothing of what may be called the foundation truth of St. Paul's system, the union of the human soul with the Spirit of God. In the Gospels God speaks to us by his Son. Since Christ went away, we have had the promise of the Comforter. "He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

Like blazing torches gleaming at long intervals over a wide and dark plain, the various manifestations of Jehovah in the interval from the Fall to the Incarnation kept fresh in men's hearts the truth of a Living God. What, indeed, was the precise nature of the intercourse between Adam and his Maker before sin made him hide himself "from the presence of the Lord in the trees of the garden" it is easier to speculate than ascertain. He heard a voice, but did he see a similitude? When he fled, was it from a face, on which he had been wont to look, or from a Holiness, which he had learned to fear? How, further, God told Noah to make the ark, or bade Abram leave his father's house, or spoke with Moses by the burning bush, Scripture does not explain. Sometimes we read of visions, as when Abram sat in his tent-door in the heat of the day; or of dreams, as when God showed to Nebuchadnezzar what He was about to do to him, or of similitudes, as when Moses and Aaron "saw the God of Israel, and there was under his feet, as it were, a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of Heaven in his clearness." When Israel came out of Egypt the cloud by day and the flame by night were the visible guarantees of the Divine promise—"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." The one promise by which God ever strengthened the hearts of his servants, whether patriarchs, or prophets, or kings, was the dis-

tinct assurance of his Divine presence, saying to Isaac, "I will be with thee," and to Jacob, "Behold, I am with thee," and to Moses, "Certainly I will be with thee," and to Jeremiah, "I am with thee to deliver thee." While of Hezekiah it was written, "The Lord was with him," and it was David's joyful boast, "When I awake, I am still with Thee."

When Christ came, for a brief interval which cut the world's life into two distinct halves, God was "manifest in the flesh." Surely it is most instructive to observe how, by his words before his Resurrection, and his acts after it, He prepared the Church for his protracted absence. The outward symbols of bread and wine, in the solemnly instituted sacrament of the Lord's Supper, while they conveyed to faithful partakers the blessed sustenance of his spiritual body and blood, were also to enable his followers to realise, when they willed it, the fact of his presence in their hearts. Of all his many hard words to them, none were so hard as those in which He strove to assure them that his going away would be for their gain, no explanation so disappointing as that by which He maintained it. He was going away, but He was coming back. The world should not see Him, but they should see Him, and their joy should abide. It was not, however, to be a mere sight of the senses, as it was then, but the beholding of Him by faith in the power of the Spirit. His coming back to be with them was not so much his return to the world for forty short and disappointing days, but his coming with his Father to those who loved his words to take up an abode in their hearts. "Abide in me, and I in you." Henceforward the life of the Church was to be his ever present absence. Those manifold and abrupt appearances and disappearances after the Resurrection were not merely to show by many infallible proofs, that He was risen from the dead, but by a process of kind weaning to prepare them for the time when He would have ascended into his glory. He would teach them that He was always at hand, though they did not see Him, always thinking of them and watching over them, though He might seem to be far away; absent in the body He was present in the spirit, and in the fulness of his Divine power, He would not leave them orphans, He would come to them. The vision of the glorified Saviour at the right hand of God nerved Stephen to die. To St. Paul at Corinth, set in the midst of great dangers, the Lord spake in a vision: "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee." The tradition of Paradise is also the hope of glory. Interrupted by the Fall, and restored by the Cross, it will be perfected in the Resurrection. The Revelation, which in the beginning tells us how the beloved Apostle in Patmos fell down as dead before the excellent glory of Jesus, in the end assures us, that in the new Jerusalem "they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads." We shall not fear Him then, for "perfect love casteth out fear:" and his presence will not only be a spiritual nearness to soiled and earthly hearts little capable of it, little thankful for it, but the unveiled face of the Lamb, which is in the midst of the Throne.

To ascertain precisely what we are to understand by this "Presence of Christ," we must separate it from a truth with which it may easily be confounded, and distinguish it from the doctrine in which it is virtually contained.

It is not, for instance, a mere physical nearness, identical with the truth of the Divine omnipresence (which, expressed more accurately, is rather the presence of all things before God, than God present to all things). For that truth may be as much a thought of terror as of consolation, and equally affects inanimate with animate things, irrational with rational, bad men with good men, hell with heaven. And though God cannot dwell in our hearts without blessing us with his presence, though to have Him in us must be to have Him with us, and so all that we actually need for our provision and safety is infallibly ensured for those who trust in Him; the sun behind the clouds can never be the same quickening and fertilising power on the chilled and wet earth, as when shining out in its strength; we ask for the light of God's countenance to give us peace; and even Jesus when his Father hid Himself found it heavier than He could bear,—to be forsaken was harder than to die. The Divine Presence symbolised under the rod and staff of the Good Shepherd means the sense of Christ's sympathy, and the assurance of Christ's aid.

Sympathy, let us observe, is more than love, being love perfected by experience. It is impossible to sympathise with what we do not fully understand, and some things can be understood only by the actual endurance of them. We must ourselves have been ill quite to sympathise with the sick; the rich may be kind to the poor; but to know what it is to want daily bread, our own shelf must have been empty. When we seek comfort, do not we naturally go to those whose actual wounds have shed the same kind of blood as ours? Our little children love us, and when death has robbed us of the best treasure of our home, it comforts us that we still have them to love, we feel as we take them on our knee, we are not bankrupts yet. But a great gulf separates us from them; they are sorry for us, they try to understand our sadness, they look into our face, and kiss us more tenderly than ever, they mean to be good, just to make us happy. But they cannot understand what we have lost, and we do not attempt to explain it; neither do we complain that their tears are too soon dried, or that in a few days they are as merry as ever. The loud laughter ringing down the nursery-stairs, the wooden horse running swiftly over the floor, somehow, after the first jar do not really disturb us. We are not so unjust as to think them unfeeling because they are not like ourselves; yet the end of it is, we mourn alone. Christ's sympathy is the fellow feeling of one who, loving us to begin with, and so disposed to pity us, understands what we suffer, for He has suffered it himself, nay, suffers it all with us, for his life and our life are one. "I am the Vine, ye are the branches." When the vine is pruned, and the sap runs out, a living pain shudders through the entire tree. "In all our affliction He is afflicted, and the angel of his presence saves us." O, who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Nothing, indeed, outside of us can do it. Satan has

no power over us but what we are pleased to give him. Why should Christ rob himself of his purchased possession? How can He change, or tire, or forget us, who is the "same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever?" If we lose this blessed sympathy, it is because we ourselves throw it away. No hand can cut us off from Christ but our own.

Yet He is God as well as man, and the comfort of his presence consists mainly in this, that He is able as well as willing to save. How often have we to confess, sadly, if not bitterly, the helplessness of mere sympathy. It is useless to inquire, when the end is just the same, which is the more mortifying, will without power, or power without will. But our Master, Christ, has both. St. Paul had learned not only his Lord's tenderness, but also his strength. "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, for when I am weak, then am I strong." Let us learn with the apostle that the presence of Christ means the sympathy of a kind friend, and the help of a strong one; the right arm and right hand of one who, rejoicing with us when we rejoice, and weeping with us when we weep, can cover our head in the day of battle. When pain is sharp, when illness is tedious, when hopes are disappointed, when temptation is strong, when "the enemy comes in like a flood," and we cry out "all these things are against me," then let our question be, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Then let our consolation be, "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

For though He is not now on earth to tell us, face to face, of his love, He comes to us, He speaks with us through his Spirit. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." It is the Spirit's work to glorify Jesus. "He shall receive of mine, and show it unto you." It is our privilege to receive the Spirit, and we are bidden to be *filled* with Him; and who shall say, what light and joy, what liberty and holiness, what power and usefulness might be ours, if we would but believe. Yet this is just what we will not do. Christ's sympathy seems much less real, and much farther off than man's; and Christ's power, which is possible enough when we read of it in an inspired book, seems impossible when we try to apply it to our present difficulties, and our hearts are so full of earthly cares and earthly possessions, that once more it is true, "There is no room for him in the inn." Oh, our inconsistency and insincerity! Oh! the deliberateness with which we deceive ourselves! Oh the resoluteness with which we set ourselves to the utterly impossible task of following Christ without taking up the cross! If we could but make up our mind to decide on one or the other, and to be honest about it; either to choose Christ and to be altogether Christians, or to choose Mammon, and to be altogether for this world, there would be gain each way, and no one would be disappointed or deceived. But now Christ loses, the Church loses, the world loses; and, as to ourselves, even if at last we are saved, as through the fire, what a loss of peace now, and of glory to come!

Christ's presence is always blessed, for the still moments and for the noisy moments, when we are at work and when we are at rest, when we mourn and when we sing. "Abide with us for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent," is ever the devout utterance of all true hearts to Him; when is there a moment, when we can afford to lose Him, or that He can be an intrusive guest?

Yet there are times when we specially need Him, and when, therefore, He specially offers himself. How much we read in the Bible about fear, and how continually we are there warned against it. For though fear, like anger, is an original element of our nature, and "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom," there is much fear that dishonours God and debases and enfeebles men. The greatest of the saints have had their moments of fear. Abram feared, when he went down into Egypt; Moses, when God sent him to Pharaoh; Elijah, when he fled from Jezebel. One of the grandest passages in the Old Testament is the Divine expostulation with Israel: "I, even I, am He that comforteth you: who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the Son of Man which shall be made as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy Maker?" One of the most blessed promises in the Old Testament is in the book of the same prophet: "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

Perhaps the most common, and human, and reasonable of all kinds of fear is the fear of death. Yet even here, as the Psalmist tells us, the Divine Presence is sufficient. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

The expression, "shadow of death," occurs eleven times in Scripture, viz., five times in Job, four times in the Psalms, once in Jeremiah, once in Amos; and we are yet more familiar with the image through its introduction into the "Pilgrim's Progress," where Christian after his victory over Apollyon, and long before he reaches the Celestial City, passes through the valley with terrible conflict, and is joined by Faithful soon after he comes out. I have called the fear of death reasonable, and it is surely fair to say so, if love of life is a Divinely ordered law for us, and if but for that fear men would rush much oftener than they do into its mysterious darkness with all their sins on their head. The great bulk of men, indeed, whom youth and vigour seem to separate from it by an almost infinite interval, seldom think of it, will not look at it; and what we steadily ignore can hardly cause us acute alarm. Besides, it is hard really to face it until it faces us. Human nature will not needlessly, cannot easily, by mere force of fancy, or in the gratuitous indulgence of a morbid whim, lay itself down with Charles V. within the narrow walls of a tomb, to dramatise its dissolution. Only, when sentence of death is pronounced, and we feel that there is no postponing it, do we rouse ourselves in

earnest to think what it must really be. And then, let us confess, it *is* a dark valley that opens out before us, and many ghastly shadows are flitting through it; it is a real enemy, and it must be conquered; it is something more than the mere fluttering of the wing of the impatient spirit, it is somewhat harder than the unconscious dropping of the garment of our mortality; we will not overrate it, but we will not despise it; and if in a few rare natures there be the sublime spectacle of triumph in death; if some, through the exceeding vividness of their faith, and the ardour of their hope, and the intenseness of their love long for it, and welcome it, it will be safer for most of us to wait quietly till it comes, knowing who bids it come, neither shrinking from it in unmanly terror, nor rushing to meet it in hysteric joy. Sometimes the bitterness of death is passed long before we die; Hopeful, as he forded the river, could think of nothing but the glorious land beyond; and if there are more "Christians" than "Hopefuls," "when the shore is won at last, who will count the billows passed?" "Thou art with me:" this is all we care for; it is the presence of Christ that robs death of its sting.

We shall see this more clearly if, first, we briefly inquire what there is to fear in death, and then consider how the Saviour's presence chases that fear away.

Death means loss, solitude, and retribution. Certainly it is loss, loss of all we know and possess, and enjoy, and love. It is loss of the blue sky, and the sweet flowers, and the rolling sea, and the purple hills; it is loss of home with its living treasures, of life with its stirring activities, of science with its secrets, and art with its skill; it is loss of the joy of travel, of the rapture of music, of the society of books; it is loss of the fireside of winter, of the sweet freshness of the summer morning, of the ripeness of autumn, of the greenness of spring. And then (unless the hurrying away be more premature still) just when the enjoyment of these things is deepening, and our possessions are accumulating, as the dreams of youth solidify into the occupations of manhood, as the heat and burden of the day give place in their turn to the repose and memories of age; when the tide of life is at its full, when the pinnacle is reached, the prize won, the fortune made, the children reared; when our mistakes are forgotten, and our errors condoned, when neighbours esteem us, and strangers respect us; when we have learned (after innumerable failures) in some slight degree how to conquer self, how to use money, how to do good without doing harm, how to choose the right way without first going the wrong; at the moment when we are most capable of making others happy by our kindness, and good by our example, and wise by our experience. The enemy who has been waiting for us ever since we were born, and who was content to wait, knowing that we could not escape him, comes to fetch us away; and we must go. "Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth: and mine eye is as nothing before thee; verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity."

Death is also solitude. "Je mourrai seul." Of course all sorrow is solitary. For though the outward facts and features of our sorrow be identical with those of other men's, and produce some effects which are common to the race, one man's moral nature is so different to another man's, and the shafts which pierce us are so variously aimed, so differently weighted, that each of us, besides what he endures in common with his fellows, has his own pain, which no one else can suffer quite in the same way.

But in death there is a solitude, which exists in no other kind of sorrow, for we only die once; and not one of the friends, who stand by watching us, can know, from personal experience, what dying means. Possibly they have been very near it. They may have stood on the edge of the dark river, and its cold waves may have washed over their feet; they may have taken their last farewells, and set their house in order, and looked right into the Eternal world. But they did not die, and to expect death is not the same thing as to endure it. For the first time, perhaps, in all our lives we are starting on a journey which we must travel alone; and those who most wish to be with us, and whom we, too, most wish for, must stay behind, while we go on. They can bless us, they can tell us of their sweet and passionate and undying love; they can pray, and the last sound we hear is the name of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life; but the end of it is that we go, and they stay, and never is human love felt to be more utterly impotent than when it watches an ebbing life.

And death means retribution. "For God shall bring every work into judgment, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." It is quite true that conscience does not always wake up before death, and Lord Bacon has observed that there is not a single quality in our moral nature, which has not at some time or other mastered the fear to die. But it is also true, that in a great multitude of instances conscience at such times does make cowards of us; and when it is too late to do what we ought to have done, and to repent of what we ought not to have done, prayer is but the spasm of a panic,—we fear hell, not God. And yet, not only to the unforgiven and impenitent soul, drifting helplessly on towards its final doom, is the thought of death a thing of sadness; it is often, oh! often, both a humiliation and a bitterness to the soul, which long before had cast its sins on Christ, and found rest and peace through his blood. Life come to an end, and so little done in it! Sin still so strong, the world still so powerful, self still so dominant, prayer still so hard! We recall past opportunities, and feel how sinfully we have neglected them; this soul and that soul have come in our way, and we did not even try to do them good. How much money we have wasted on vanity: how little we have denied ourselves to spare for Christ or his kingdom. Talking, listening, planning, beginning! Oh! of that there has been an abundance; but what will there be to show Christ when He returns, of actual finished work, that will stand the fire?

Yet even in death "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." "Thou art with me," said David, and we have yet the more sure word of the New Testament. "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death,

that is, the devil; and deliver them, who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

For if death is loss, Christ can make up for it ten thousand fold. Is our earthly life ended? He gives us a long life, even for ever and ever. Does death sever us from those we love on earth? Christ unites us to those we love in heaven. He takes us from sin to sinlessness, from perfect weakness to perfect strength, from restlessness to rest, from faith to sight, from men to angels, from cold prayers to the song that ceases not day nor night, from a world lying in wickedness to the just made perfect in sight of the Throne. If Christ cannot, or will not do all this for us, then He is nothing to us, and why do we believe on Him? If He can, and will, "to die is gain."

As to solitude, who knows so much of solitude in life as the Man of Sorrows? Who has tasted so bitterly of solitude in death as He who said of himself by the Prophet, "I have trodden the wine-press alone"? His life was eminently one long solitude in its condition and nature, in its aims and purposes, in its hopes and fears. Not only by his enemies, but by his disciples, not only by his disciples, but by his brethren, not only by his brethren, but by his mother, was He hindered, and disappointed, and misunderstood. Prayer was the only real interruption of his loneliness; and when He died, there was but one Apostle to stand by his cross.

Oh, the solitude of death is filled with Jesus! He knows it all, for He has tasted it all. He who has died that He might save us, is with us, when He has saved us to sustain us in the dizziness of our fainting consciousness, and to lull us with a brother's tenderness into our sleep in Him.

For once more we are sinners, and to complete the assurance of our faith, He who is our dearest, kindest, strongest friend in the world is also our born Saviour. He has saved us from the guilt of sin, and from the power of sin, and from the punishment of sin. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with his stripes we are healed." And so if Satan comes (as he often does come) at our last hour to accuse us bitterly in the court of our own conscience, to cast doubts on our pardon, to wound us with bitter recollections of past shortcomings, and to lash us into the sin of despair, at such moments let the tempted soul instantly cast itself on Jesus to hide in Him, to cling to Him; let it bid the tempter go to Him, our surety and representative, who long ago made himself responsible for us, when we made our great exchange, of laying on Him our debts, and taking from Him his righteousness. The one name we utter shall be Jesus, the one answer that we make shall be Jesus, the one plea we urge shall be Jesus. We know that we have no suffering of our own to offer as an atonement; but this we also know that—Christ has died. We are quite aware that we have no righteousness of our own to prefer, as our claim for heaven; but if any one asks how we expect to get there, we take the question to Him who has called himself "the Way, the Truth, and the Life," and the answer comes back in a flood of peace, which "none but his loved ones know." Nay, if for a moment we are in darkness, and have no light: if we know not how to deny the suggestion that our iniquities have separated between us and our God; and that the barrier between us is of our own making—well, we are saved, not by joy, but by faith. If we must perish, we will perish clasping the cross, and clinging to the Saviour, quite sure that He will not suffer the very least of his elect through any pains of death to fall from Him.

As a matter of experience there is no rule to measure this fear of death, and no principle to determine it; often there is none of it, where it might be most looked for, sometimes it is very terrible where we should have thought it could not come. In some cases the cause is entirely physical, either seated in the constitution, or closely connected with disease; and not unfrequently those who in the distance have most dreaded it, and on the brightness of whose life it has ever projected a cold and dark shadow, when the time has come, much to their own surprise, have found it but falling asleep. It does, however, sometimes happen that even with tried Christians a thick mist envelopes the soul in its declining hours, and though the setting sun before it dips under the horizon bursts out into gold and flame, it has been a sore struggle, and for long it seemed in vain to pray. Now there are at least two purposes which we may reverently suppose God desires to accomplish by a trial of this kind. One is the conversion or edification of those who stand by; the other is the final perfecting of those who suffer. It is a story often told of an eminent servant of God, who had during his life-time frequently prayed that his happy death might be blessed to an ungodly son, that when his time came, fear and sadness overwhelmed him; not so much the thought of Christ's salvation possessed him, as the fact of his own sinfulness; the joy of heaven faded before his utter unworthiness of admission there. Yet God, who was wiser than he, answered his prayer in a way that he knew not. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." The careless son, who might not have been affected by his father's happiness, was deeply moved by his father's fear, "If a man like him, after a useful and religious life, fears to die, what is death likely to be to me? Surely except I repent I shall perish." Now, for such an end, who would not welcome such a sorrow? There is yet another reason why it may seem good to God in the last hours of our life to hide his face for a little moment. We may have been leaning too much on outward helps, or on past experience, or on systems of doctrine, and we have not come quite close to God himself to cleave with all our strength to Him. Therefore He must teach us, and through us others, that orthodox opinions cannot give us peace; that sermons, and sacraments, and ordinances, cannot give us peace; that pious parents, faithful pastors, exemplary friends cannot give us peace; that belonging to this sect, or pronouncing this shibboleth, or confessing this creed, or observing this ritual, cannot give us peace; that the esteem and commendation of our neighbours cannot give us peace;—in a word, that all

covering of our own must be torn into shreds that all unsound hopes must be utterly disappointed that every shelter but the shelter of the Saviour's cross must be swept away before the winds of heaven, that every other name as a way of salvation must be as sounding brass, or tinkling cymbal, save Jesus, Son of God. Sooner or later all this must come to us; it is better if it comes before, but better then than never; and dark as the declining hour may be, severe as the actual crisis may be, it comes to an end at last. The fight is won, the cross is clasped, the light comes, the joy comes, for the Saviour comes; and He who only waited to be more gracious, who hid himself only to shine out more glorious at last, who denied, that in the end He might be more bountiful, who seemed to frown, only because He purposed to smile, comes and whispers, "Thy sins be forgiven thee, go in peace;" and the rough water is passed, the ship glides into harbour, "and the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land."

Does the thought cross any one who reads this paper, "How shall I myself die?" Well, it is something worth thinking about. Of course we all wish to die happily. There are many Balaams, if there are few Pauls. Yet it is something worse than folly to forget that death hangs on life, to make death the crisis and life the trifle; whereas death merely pronounces the verdict, life settles it: it is solemn to die, only because it is awful to live. What we all of us need to learn more is how to walk with God hour by hour as a man with his friend; not so much to be continually going in and out of his presence as to be always living in it, without effort thinking of Him, without insincerity consulting Him, without hesitation obeying Him, without embarrassment speaking of Him. Instead of endeavouring, in the happy simplicity of an almost unconscious religion, to set Christ before us in all we do, to have Him with us wherever we go, to make joy safe by asking Him to share it, to rob care of its carefulness by casting it as it comes all on Him, we are too apt to separate prayer from life, heaven from earth, holiness from happiness, as if human affections lowered divine aspirations, as if we could be more like God by being less like men. Thus when we go to meet Him we have formally to prepare ourselves for solemn audience. It is almost as if we had to unclothe ourselves of the earthly and to clothe ourselves with the heavenly. Reverence! how can we be reverent enough; but surely He prefers the simple trustfulness of kinsfolk to the distant homage of strangers; and if we made it more our endeavour to bring every thought, every word, every habit, every employment, every recreation, every commonest act of life into captivity to Christ, and so into harmony and fellowship with Him, it would not violently interrupt us, as it often does, to lay down the task of the moment, to hold intercourse with Him.

There are three chief conditions of abiding in Christ's presence—obedience, meditation, and love. We must obey Him. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." How is it possible, I will not say to desire, but even to endure the thought of Christ's company, if we are wilfully wandering from Him, or resisting Him, loving what He hates, or doing what He forbids? It is a question how many there are of his own true people who if told, as one of old was told, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee," would rise to go to Him with a glow of happy surprise. Then there must be more of secret, and continuous, and real thinking of Him. If prayer is the worship of the heart, meditation is that of the mind. Pascal has said, "Thought makes the greatness of men." Why is there so little meditation among Christians—such a lack of that quietness, and stillness, and thoughtfulness of soul and spirit, in which alone the dews fall on us, and the life of Christ grows. There is much activity of hands and feet, much listening, far too much talking. Yet, where the heart is, there the treasure is; and it is in human nature to think of what we love. Once more we shall seek Christ, we shall be with Him, we shall think of Him just in proportion as we love Him. We never find it irksome or dull to be with those we love; we have always something to speak of to them. O, to love Christ better! One true throb of love to Him is worth more in his sight than the thrones of a hundred kings. If we really loved Christ, and trusted Him, we should seek his presence to make life happy as well as death easy; and then, when the summons does come, when the most unutterable, the most momentous of all convictions seizes us—that at length our own life is over, it will be but like going out of one room into another, we shall indeed be more than conquerors through Him that loved us, when his love has been the reality of our life.

"It is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the Judgment." Mr. Alexander Smith, in one of his "Essays in Dreamthorp," has strikingly observed that death gives a kind of dignity to the very meanest and shabbiest of human beings. When we are dead, our enemies cease to envy us, our friends love us better than ever, some admire, all pity. But why will not we go a little further, and, not content with imagining our friends and neighbours in the sublime repose of death, also think of them in the vast spirit land, and standing under the great White Throne? It is in the power of every one of us to make some one fitter to go before the judgment-seat of Christ. "Christianity would sacrifice its divinity if it abandoned its missionary character. When the power of reclaiming the lost dies out of the Church, it ceases to be the Church. Where the power remains, there, whatever is wanting, it may still be said that the tabernacle of God is with men." Yet is there anything so evident or so inexplicable as the paralysis that affects so great a multitude of professing Christians in their intercourse with those who plainly know not God? Is it that we do not believe that souls can be lost, or is it that we do not care? Either there is a hell, or there is not. If there is not, then how do we know that there is a heaven? If there is, and if Jesus died to deliver us from it, and if there is one human being on this earth whom we can influence, praying where we cannot speak, where we can speak praying too, let us do whatever we may with all possible kindness, and wisdom, and humility, and earnestness, to bid men

flee from the wrath to come, and to win our Saviour souls.

So, whether for ourselves, or for those we love, we will fear no evil, if only Christ be ours. Death has yet to come; and we do not know in what shape it will come; it may be quite near or it may still be far away.

> "Thou inevitable day,
> When a voice to me shall say
> Thou must rise and come away;
> Art thou distant, art thou near,
> Wilt thou seem more dark or clear,
> Day with more of hope or fear?"

Anyhow, we will not dwell too much on it; instead of looking down into the open grave we will look up for the glorious appearing; we know of a happy country across the dark river; we have heard of the shining ones who will lead us up the hill. It is no new temptation, but one that is common to man. He who has helped others through it will help us through it. Those gone before us, who have got it over found Him near them. He who was faithful to them will be faithful to us, and to those whom we leave behind. Do we sometimes ask in the secret of our own thoughts, which of us will go first? Do what we will, do not sad fears sometimes force themselves on us, as we think of the whitening hair, or the thinned hands, or the pale cheeks, or the tottering footsteps of those we love? Well, they may go first, but the interval between them and us in the balance of eternity is but the single tick of a pendulum; "sorrow endureth but for a night, joy cometh in the morning." The bed of death is the presence chamber of Jesus. We who stand by cannot see with our mortal eyes what is vouchsafed to those who are putting on immortality; but if we cannot know, we may at least believe, and the radiant joy that sometimes lights up the wan countenance of a dying Christian, tells of an Invisible Presence that is shining there. It is a solemn moment as the soul passes away; yet for us only is it a time of sadness. They, if they could speak, would say, "Weep not for me, but sing with me, O death, where is thy sting; O grave, where is thy victory?"

And He who goes with them stays with us. For He is in Paradise with those that sleep in Him. He is on earth with those that wait for Him. He can think of the living as well as of the dying; of those who have still to grapple with the last struggle, as well as of those who sing the conqueror's song. So we pass out of the sight of our dead, wondering at our own calmness; thankfulness for the glorious change passed on them absorbs all selfish thought of the grief come on us; we too feel that if we have lost much we have gained much; earth is beneath us, we have stood on the very threshold of Heaven, and the love of Christ is more real than ever. On the morrow, when we go out of our chamber to do our work, to meet our friends, to feel our loss—He who was with us in the quiet night meets us in the glare of the morning; we remember the promise, "Thy brother shall rise again."

A. W. Thorold.

HEROES AND MARTYRS OF THE REFORMATION IN ITALY.

IV.—THE LADIES ISABELLA MANRICHA AND VITTORIA COLONNA.

Next to Giulia da Gonzaga, the most prominent place among the female followers of Juan Valdez is due to the lady Isabella Manricha da Bresagna. Of the history of this devoted lady only a few facts have been preserved; but enough remains to show that she is to be numbered among the most sincere, earnest, and honourable of the adherents of evangelical truth in Italy at the time of the Reformation.

The lady Isabella was probably a Spaniard by descent, if not by birth. To this we are led by her name, which is that of a Spanish family famous in the annals of their country. Among the minor poets of Spain a high place is held by Jorge Manricha, who died in 1485, and whose "Coplas," a series of elegiac odes on the death of his father, Don Federigo, have been much admired, and have received the honour of being edited and translated by Longfellow.* Alfonso Manricha, Archbishop of Seville, is mentioned by Juan Valdez in his Dialogue between Mercury and Charon, where he is celebrated for his moderation and for the success with which he preserved peace amid the agitation which arose in consequence of the writings of Erasmus. It is frequently said that Isabella was his sister; this may have been the case, but the statement lacks authority. In the absence of any decisive information as to her birthplace, it may be allowable to attach some weight to the language of Celio Curione, who, in dedicating to her the first edition of the collected works of Olympia Morata, says that he has so done "in order that she whom Italy produced, and to whom Germany supplied a grave, might in some sense be restored to her own Italy."* This language would seem to imply that Isabella Manricha, as well as Olympia, belonged by birth to Italy. It may be added that Simler speaks of Italy as the native land (*patria*) of Isabella.†

Isabella was one of the earliest of the adherents of Valdez, and none more thoroughly embraced the doctrines he taught than she. When the little society was dispersed after his death, she, turning a deaf ear to the earnest solicitations of her relatives, who would have had her renounce the opinions she had embraced, and finding that, as from solicitations they advanced to threats, it was no longer safe for her to remain in Naples, betook herself to Germany. She afterwards

* Ticknor's "History of Spanish Literature," i. p. 373. Boston, U.S., 1833.

* "Hac ratione quam Italia genuit, Germania sepelit, suæ quodam modo restituetur Italiæ."—P. 6.

† Vit. Pet. Mart. in the Scrinium Antiq., III., 1, 4.

removed to Zurich, and ultimately to Chiavenna, in the Valtelline. In this rich, extensive, and populous valley the Protestant doctrines had obtained a firm footing, though in the face of much opposition on the part of the clergy, the monks, and the ignorant populace. Stretching down from the higher part of the Grisons to the Lago di Como, the Valtelline became a place of meeting for Swiss and Italians, and the seeds of Divine truth, which were scattered first among its people by visitors from the north, were watched over, watered, and still more widely diffused by refugees from various parts of Italy. Numerous churches were thus planted in that region; and, though at no time altogether free from the consequences of the bitter hatred and watchful jealousy of the Romanists, they enjoyed, under the sway of the Republic, protection from outward violence; and by the blessing of God upon the labours of their faithful pastors—amongst whom was the learned, acute, and profound Jeronimo Zanchi—many flourishing congregations had been established.

As the people of that district used the Italian language, it was natural that refugees from Italy should betake themselves thither when compelled to forsake their own homes because of their attachment to evangelical truth. To the Valtelline, accordingly, some of the dispersed congregation at Naples fled after the death of Valdez; and among the rest the lady Isabella Manricha. Here she "led a life of poverty and retirement with as much cheerfulness as if she had never known what it was to enjoy affluence and honours."* Renounced by her family, and dependent, apparently, upon the kindness of others for her means of support,† she felt that all she had thus to endure was more than counterbalanced by the privilege she enjoyed of liberty of conscience and of hearing God's truth preached in its purity and simplicity. The respect in which she was held by her fellow-Protestants may be inferred from the fact (already mentioned) that Curione dedicated to her the first edition of the collected works of Olympia Morata (the second being dedicated to Queen Elizabeth of England), and the fact that Ochino dedicated his treatise on the Sacrament to her.

In 1551 the hostility of the opponents of the Reformation broke out in violent measures against those who, under the protection of the government of the Grisons, were openly professing attachment to it, and enjoying the privileges its advocates asserted. Roused by the efforts of the priests, and excited by fanatical harangues from a body of monks sent by the Bishop of Como with that intention, the populace demanded of the government that the law allowing the Italian refugees to settle in the Valtelline should be repealed. This demand, refused by the diet, was conceded by the local governor through dread of a popular insurrection. The consequence was that the preachers were silenced, and that several persons of rank, who had taken refuge there, made preparations to remove to Switzerland; among whom was the lady Isabella Manricha. It was not found necessary, however, to carry this design into execution. The Diet, indignant at what had taken place, renewed the edict granting liberty of conscience and worship to the exiles, and charged the authorities of the Valtelline to see it faithfully observed. How long Isabella remained at Chiavenna after this, or whether she ever left it, remains uncertain. The only subsequent notice of her we possess informs us that in June, 1559, she was still there, but uncertain whether to continue or to remove elsewhere. After this the shadows close over her; and we can trace her career no farther. There is every reason to believe, however, that she remained faithful to the last to the principles she had so long professed, and for her devotion to which she had suffered so much.

Less decided in her attachment to the party of the Reformers, but not, we believe, less imbued with evangelical beliefs and feelings, was another of the female attendants on the teaching of Juan Valdez at Naples, Vittoria Colonna, Marchioness of Pescara. She was the daughter of Fabricio, Grand Constable of the Kingdom of Naples and of Anna di Montefeltro, sister of Federigo, Duke of Urbino. Her birth took place about the year 1490, at Marino, a fief of her family. At the early age of four years she was affianced to Ferdinando, or Ferrante d'Avalos, Marquis of Pescara, a child a year or two her senior. When she had reached the age of seventeen they were married. The union was one of mutual affection, and proved a source of much happiness to both parties; but it was not destined to be of uninterrupted enjoyment or of long duration. Pescara was a soldier, and one who, like the war-horse of Job, smelled the battle from afar, and had joy in the thunder of the captains and the shouting; and, as the times were times of prevailing conflict, he was not suffered long to rest without provocation to join in the strife. The first few years of his married life were spent with his youthful and accomplished bride on the beautiful island of Ischia, which, in one of her sonnets, she celebrates as the home of

> "Beauty chaste, of worth and courtesy
> As great as earth hath seen or heaven bestowed,"

and as a place to which

> "Both wind and wave give honour, and whose air
> Tempers the warm and cold."*

To the happy years she spent here with her husband, immediately after their marriage, she often reverted with mournful interest in future years, as well as to the lonely hours through which she lingered there when his duties on the field summoned him to the risks and sufferings of warfare. The first occasion of his thus leaving her was when he accompanied her father to join the troops mustered to meet the inroad made by Gaston de Foix on the Papal States. The two armies met before the town of Ravenna, and a great battle was fought, in which the French were victorious, though with the loss of their chivalric leader.† In this battle both Colonna and Pescara were

* M'Crie: "Reformation in Italy," p. 188.

† When Carnesecchi was on his trial, one of the charges against him was that he was cognisant of a provision of 100 crowns a year sent by a person friendly to him to Donna Isabella Bresagna, a heretic and fugitive at Chiavenna. The lady referred to was undoubtedly the Donna Isabella Manricha.

* Rime di Vittoria Colonna, ed. Visconti, p. 78.

† Guicciardini, Storia d'Italia, bk. x., ch. 4.

taken prisoners, the latter being severely wounded. He was carried to Milan, where he solaced his hours of suffering and captivity by writing dialogues on love to his wife. She, on her side, called the Muses to her aid, and gave utterance to her anxieties and griefs in varied verse. His liberation was at length effected on the payment of a large ransom, and for a brief season he was restored to the felicities of home. But the time was not one of peace, and ere long he was again in the field, and his wife had to console herself, as best she could, for his absence, by the pursuits of literature and the charms of her beautiful retreat. Plaintively she complains, that while she cried for peace others shouted war, and whilst she would have been satisfied only to have had her husband with her in quiet, honour and duty stimulated him to embark in dangerous adventures. After this they met only at short intervals; and at last the intelligence came to her that he was dying. Enfeebled by wounds which he had treated with too much indifference, and worn out by anxiety and arduous exertion, his strength gave way; and, finding himself sinking, he sent for his wife, hoping that her presence would act on him as a restorative. She instantly obeyed the summons, and set out for Milan, where he then was; but she had only reached Viterbo when she was met by news of his death. For several days she gave herself up to the agony of her grief, reading over incessantly the account of his last hours, and giving vent to her emotions in moans and tears. After the first burst of her sorrow had somewhat subsided, she repaired to Naples, where his body was to be buried; there she remained till the last rites were paid, and then she hastened to bury herself in the solitude of her beloved Ischia. For seven years she lived in this retirement, battling with her grief and seeking solace in the utterance of her feelings in verse. To all the suggestions of her friends, who would have had her form another connection with some one of those whom her beauty and accomplishments had attracted, she had but one reply—that her sun ("il mio sole," as she always styles her husband in her poems) was still near her, and that she still felt the bond that united them as strong as when it was first knit.

> "Time cannot change the ancient plighted troth:
> Firm is the knot as when it first was tied,
> Nor comes the deep cause to my heart less dear
> For all the bitter fruit I now must gather."*

She had a melancholy satisfaction in visiting every spot which was associated with recollections of his presence, and "where he had made brighter to her the day." As she watched the sun rising over her "dear rock," as she calls Ischia, she cheered herself with the thought that her own fair sun was shining in heaven; the hope of rejoining him, "her other true soul," made her often long for death; and she would fancy herself happy with him in heaven, assured that he had already "ascended to God." In all this there is the manifestation of a deep and pure affection, and there can be no doubt that to a certain extent Vittoria found solace for her grief in the outpouring of her soul in verse. As yet, however, she was a stranger to the only true and abiding source of consolation for the bereaved. With a mind highly cultivated, with pure and warm affections, and with a large measure of natural religiousness, she had not yet been brought to know God as her Father in heaven, who, rich in love, not only designs affliction, when He permits it to come upon his children for their good, but is able and ready to give them such abundant support under the affliction that they shall be brought even "to glory in tribulations also."* As yet she had not been brought under the elevating and sanctifying power of Gospel truth, and thus had as yet to learn that deep lesson of the Divine love which this alone can teach. And so she had her seven long years of unabated sorrow; the shadows seeming ever to become denser as time rolled on, deep calling unto deep, and the clouds returning after the rain.

But the time at length arrived when the mourner was to be consoled; when she who had been thus "afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted," was to find a peace which the world cannot give, and which it cannot take away. How far she was indebted for this to the instructions of Valdez it is not possible to say. But we know that she was among his auditors; and as he seems to have been peculiarly skilful in bringing the Gospel to bear for comfort and direction on bruised and afflicted souls, it is more than probable that it was to him, as the instrument, that Vittoria Colonna was indebted for her introduction into that higher state of spiritual life in which she henceforward walked. Certain it is that the change on her religious state synchronizes with her introduction to the circle of the Reformers at Naples.

From this time forward her poetry breathes the sentiments of a heart that has found rest in God, and is content to wait his will. She confesses how the blind love of the world, and a desire for fame, had secretly influenced her soul, and been nursed by her like a snake in her bosom, and declares that only lament and languishing were her portion until her soul turned to the Lord, from whom the remedy came. She speaks of the delights (*dolcezze*) that distil from the living Fount divine into the softened heart; intimates that, knowing these, she ceases to wonder that the wisest men, transported with love (*ebbri d'amore*), should have retired with their cross to mountain wilds, and found life in what the rest of the world, deceived by shadows, would count death; and then she exclaims:—

> "When the soul, quickened, is to God restored,
> And humbly to his will, its will submits,
> Then outward war to it is secret peace."

In one of her sonnets she strikingly ascribes true spiritual enlightenment to the reading of the sacred Scriptures, and meditation on the sacrificial work of the Redeemer.

> "Two ways we have by which to reach the height
> Of heaven's high grace: the one is to explore
> The sacred writings, from whose blessed lore
> Shines to the quickened eye the purest light;
> The other is to raise the inward sight
> Up to the cross, and there, with reverend look,
> Peruse Himself, revealed as in a book,
> So near, so sure, all doubt is put to flight."

* Rime, p. 19.

* Romans v. 3.

As illustrative of the state of mind in which Vittoria now rested and rejoiced, it may be well to give a translation of one or two of her sonnets entire :—

"Eternal God, what peace of mind has he,
What light, what love, what joy of various kind,
Whose heart, to sin and self no more inclined,
With full desire is turned again to Thee ?
Now is he given thy purer flame to see,
And, held by ties that more securely bind
In thy restraint, his liberty can find,
And bitterest death a crown of life to be.
Thus inward teaching makes his faith alive
Knowledge from faith and hope from knowledge spring,
And genuine hope begets new fires again.
Till the rebellious thoughts no longer strive
Against the soul, but both together wing
Their flight, and mortal cares loathe and disdain."

"Thanks to thy sovereign grace, O God ! if I
Am graft in that true Vine a living shoot,
Whose arms embrace the world, and in whose root,
Planted by faith, our life must hidden lie.
But Thou beholdest how I fade and dry,
Choked with a waste of leaf and void of fruit,
Unless thy spring perennial shall recruit
My sapless branch, still waiting fresh supply.
O, cleanse me, then, and make me to abide
Wholly in Thee, to drink thy heavenly dew,
And watered daily with my tears to grow.
Thou art the Truth, thy promise is my guide ;
Prepare me when Thou comest, Lord, to show
Fruits answering to the stock on which I grow."*

"As hungry nestling, when her beating wings
Announce his mother, and he sees her nigh,
Bringing him food, welcomes with joyous cry
And fond delight both her and what she brings ;
And, to the nest confined, struggles and springs
With keen desire to follow as she flies ;
And with his chirping thanks her in such wise
As if he fain would answer as she sings,—

"So when to me the warm and vital ray
Of that celestial Sun that warms my heart
With more than wonted lustre on me shines,
I move my wing, owning within love's sway ;
And, though my knowledge is but yet in part,
I make His praise the subject of my lines."

After the death of Valdez, Vittoria Colonna seems to have held but partial intercourse with the avowed Reformers. For a season she was much in the society of Ochino, and doubtless received from his instructions no small spiritual light. But when he openly revolted from the Romish Church, Vittoria drew back and even broke off all communication with him. Those with whom she now consorted may be described as belonging to the Evangelical party within the Church of Rome. Her most intimate friend and adviser was Cardinal Contarini, a man of many virtues, and whose religious beliefs had led him far out of the bondage of Romish superstition and error. She lived on terms of intimacy also with "Monsignore d'Inghilterra," as she calls Cardinal Pole, with Carnesecchi, Marc Antonio Flaminio, and others, whose views were more or less of a Lutheran tendency. Pole at this time was so avowedly a Lutheran in his views of justification by faith alone, and kindred doctrines, that Romish writers have found it necessary to apologise for him, on the ground of imperfect study of theology, and have admitted that his conduct occasioned great astonishment and scandal.* De Thou states that his election to the cardinalate was opposed on the ground that he held erroneous sentiments in theology, and says that during his residence at Viterbo he had showed too much favour to the heretics.† As it was at Viterbo that Vittoria Colonna, then resident as a secular person in the convent of Santa Caterina there, came into communication with him, and indeed seems to have submitted to him as her spiritual director, there is no reason to doubt that the opinions which he at this time held were shared by her. It is certain that he and those associated with him were much occupied in the study of Scripture, and had embraced those views of the way of salvation through Christ alone which are there taught. If Pole afterwards "made shipwreck of the faith and of a good conscience," there were others of his associates at Viterbo who remained faithful even unto the death. It is worthy of notice, also, that the nunnery of Santa Caterina at Viterbo was reported as one of the places suspected of heresy.‡

In 1541 a dispute between the Pope and Asconio Colonna, the brother of Vittoria, led to open war between them, the issue of which was the defeat of Colonna, and the ruin for the time of the Colonna family. Vittoria had retired during the conflict to the convent of St. Paolo, at Orvieto. Here she was closely watched, but nothing could be laid to her charge, nor could anything be elicited from her injurious to her brother. "She has shut herself up," writes the governor of Orvieto to Cardinal Farnese, "in the convent of St. Paolo, with two maids, and keeps two servants without to provide what she needs. She lives in those practices of religion which persons of pure and pious minds generally observe."§ On the death of Paul III. her family recovered their possessions, and Asconio returned to enjoy his estates in peace. In this, however, he was disappointed, for he found an enemy in his own son, who sought to dispossess him, and from whom he had to seek safety in flight. He died shortly after at Naples, where he had been cast into prison by the viceroy, Cardinal Pacecco.

Vittoria continued to reside in the convent at Orvieto till her health began to fail. In 1543 she had suffered from a severe attack, apparently of bronchitis, accompanied with spitting of blood, during which the most anxious fears for her life were excited among her friends. Though she surmounted the immediate severity of the attack, her constitution was seriously shaken by it, and the death unexpectedly of a relative in whom she had from his childhood taken a mother's interest, Alfonso Alvarez, Marquis del Vasto, together with vexations to which she was subjected on account of her religious beliefs, at length completely overcame her. Finding her end drawing near, she left the convent of Sta. Anna at Rome, whither she had removed from Orvieto after her illness, and betook herself to the house of her relative, Giulia Colonna, the wife of Giuliano Cesarino, the only relative she had in Rome. Here she died in February, 1547,

* These two Sonnets are from "Lyrical Compositions selected from he Italian Poets, with translations by James Glassford, Esq."

* Adriani, Suoi Tempi, quoted by Young, ii. 577.
† Hist., bk. vi., ch. 4.
‡ Carracciolo, cited by Young, ii. 204.
§ Young, ii. 206.

aged 54 years, and was buried in the common burying-ground of Sta. Anna. No monument marks the place of her sepulture; and one of the noblest, most lovely and gifted of Italy's daughters seems to have been laid in her tomb with no more ceremony than if she had been one of the humblest inmates of the convent. But many noble spirits mourned her loss, and one grand head at least bent itself in deepest sorrow over her coffin. Among her most intimate friends was the great Michael Angelo Buonarotti; to him she had stood in the relation of a spiritual teacher and counsellor; together had they searched the Scriptures, and earnestly conversed on spiritual things; and to her he confesses in one of his poems that he owed "the turning of his life to heaven by the better way."* When he heard of her death he was overwhelmed with grief, and for a season almost beside himself. Hastening to the place where her remains were, he threw himself beside them in a passion of sorrow, and tenderly kissed her hand. Ere long her countrymen awoke to a sense of what they owed to her genius and worth. In an age of poetry, when it was the fashion for ladies of the highest rank to cultivate the Muse, Vittoria Colonna won for herself a foremost place, and alone of the fifty poetesses whose works the historian tells us were published at that time, has left behind her what the world will not let die.† Six editions of her poems appeared during the sixteenth century; and one so late as the year 1840, carefully edited by Visconti, and beautifully got up at the expense of Prince Alessandro Torlonia, attests the place she still holds in the literature of her country.

It has been disputed with some keenness whether Vittoria Colonna can be claimed by the Protestants as belonging to their party. The truth is, that neither Protestants nor Romanists can wholly claim her. She was not a Protestant in the sense of having seceded from the communion of the Church of Rome, but as little was she a Romanist in the sense of being bound by all the doctrines or attached to all the usages of the Church of Rome. In religious belief she was nearer undoubtedly to the Reformers than to their opponents. She was free from superstitious practices; she claimed and used the privilege of studying the Scriptures for herself; she looked to Christ alone for salvation and help; and in the mercy and grace of God alone she trusted for comfort and solace. There can be no doubt that by the Papal party she was on account of this regarded with suspicion, and was closely watched as one in whom "heretical pravity" might be found. The records of the Inquisition themselves attest that she was subjected to the scrutiny of the Holy Office, and Carracciolo expressly declares that it was under suspicion of heresy on account of her intimacy with Ochino that she was examined.* But whether she was Catholic or Protestant is of small moment—let us hail her by the higher title of Christian in its purest sense.

A prayer is still extant which she composed in Latin, probably towards the close of her life, and it is such as any pious Christian might use. We subjoin a translation, and with that conclude this notice:—

"Grant, I pray, O Lord, that with that lowliness of mind which befits my humble condition, and that elevation of soul which thy majesty demands, I may ever adore Thee; may I continually live in that fear which thy justice inspires, in that hope which thy clemency permits. May I submit myself to Thee as all-powerful, leave myself in thy hands as all-wise, and turn unto Thee as all-perfect and good. I beseech Thee, most merciful Father, that thy most vivid fire may purify me; that thy clearest light may illuminate me; and that that purest love of thine may so advance me that, held back by no mortal influence, I may return safe and happy to Thee."

W. Lindsay Alexander.

* "Voi che le viver mio
Volgeste al ciel per le più bella strada."
Rime de M. A. Buonarotti, p. 127.

† "Her poems are not inferior to those of the majority of the Petrarchian poets of that age, and to her is due, moreover, the praise of having shown how felicitously the ordinary poetry can be allied to sacred themes. This has been attempted by others, whose piety, however, is more to be commended than their poetry."—Tiraboschi, vii. 1168: Firenze, 1812.

UNFORGIVING AND UNFORGIVEN.

BY THE EDITOR.

Part I.

"Murder will out," is a common saying, whereby people mean that though that crime is one seldom committed in the presence of witnesses, or to be proved otherwise than by circumstantial evidence, God takes special care to bring it to light, and such as commit it to justice. The fact that it has been often revealed in a very remarkable way is known to all. Many cases are on record where the finger of Providence seemed pointed at the murderer, and circumstances turned up which said, as plainly as the prophet Nathan, Thou art the man! Indeed, one can hardly read a trial for murder without meeting something in the evidence so strange, so unlooked-for, so unexpected, and yet so important for the ends of justice, as to impress us with a sense of a presiding Providence, and of there being more than a vulgar superstition in the saying, "Murder will out." Though they had no claims to be classed with the *Causes Célèbres*, I myself have met with two cases of the kind.

In one case the crime was committed by a wandering gipsy. He had killed his wife, in a lone *corrie* of the Grampians, counting no doubt that, buried below the winter snows, and bleached by the sun and wind and summer rains, the body, ere it was discovered, would be a withered skeleton—not to be recognised by the mother who bore it. Yet her blood was hardly dry

* Vita di Paolo IV., MS., cited by Young, ii. 204.

on the heather, nor had the raven ventured from his perch on an old mountain ash, where he sat whetting his beak and croaking over the corpse, when some smugglers, who were seeking to elude the revenue officers by taking the wildest bypaths over the hills, came on the body. Rough men, and not slack, if brought to bay, to make their bludgeons ring on the heads of the excise, they were horrified at the spectacle, and hastened to raise the alarm. Up rose the hue and cry ; and the body being recognised as that of a woman whom some had seen the day before lying on the hill-side in company with a man that others had met pushing on by himself for the low country, he became an object of suspicion, and also of an active pursuit. They traced him for miles down into Strathmore, and to a village inn where he had spent the night. Here, as when the hounds start a fox, and the whole pack, giving tongue as the prey breaks cover, set off at his heels, the people learned what, removing all doubt of their being on the right track and after the right man, quickened the pursuit. According to the landlady, he whom they had traced to her house, and who had left it but a few hours before, had conducted himself there in a strange, mysterious way. His bedroom was right above her own; and, through the livelong night, depriving her of sleep, he had paced the floor overhead with heavy step—deep groans mingling from time to time with the tramp of his restless foot. Each of these steps was a step to the gallows. In the judgment of those who had taken up the pursuit they proved him the murderer as plainly as if they had left bloody footprints on the floor. Abandoning now all intention of giving up the chase, they resumed it with renewed vigour ; and in a few hours more the man was in the hands of justice, betrayed by the guilty horrors of his own conscience. However, as there were none there to identify him, and as he gave some feasible explanation of his suspicious behaviour in the inn, he was set free, but not to go off like a shot from a gun, with the speed of one who, to use a common but expressive saying, "had rubbed shoulders with the gallows." For some hours the ruffian circled about the spot, as we have seen a moth in an autumn evening about the candle, till it plunges to perish in the flame. "Murder will out." Contrary to what might reasonably have been expected of a man in his circumstances, like one stricken of God with a blind infatuation, he hovered about the place. He was again seized ; and afterwards was tried, condemned, and hanged. I saw him in the dock in Edinburgh ; and who that has seen, amid the awful silence of a crowded court, a man stand up, while his pale features work convulsively and his fingers clutch the bar, to hear his doom from the trembling voice of a fellow mortal, can forget a scene so awfully suggestive of the last great judgment, and the despair of those who, clinging to Christ's feet, are dragged away to everlasting punishment !

The other case was one connected with my old country parish. Though the respective rights of the heritors on the one hand and the minister, or incumbent, on the other over the church and churchyard are not very distinctly defined, yet, where there is no interference on the part of the landed proprietors, who in Scotland are bound by law both to build and uphold all the ecclesiastical edifices, the control of the church and churchyard is vested in the minister. This in old times was expressed, not in words but in symbol, at his induction, when the keys of the parish church were publicly and formally committed to his hands. Therefore it was that one summer-day I had a visit from a sheriff's officer, or, as some of these officials are called, "messenger-at arms," who presented a warrant requiring me to allow a grave in the churchyard to be opened, and the body to be exhumed and examined. It was the grave of a woman who had resided elsewhere ; but, being a native of my parish, had been brought there to be buried, that, in conformity with a very old as well as common feeling, she might be gathered to her fathers ; her dust might mingle with that of her kindred. Since the funeral, which had taken place six weeks before, rumours had begun to float about that she had got foul play ; and her husband, to whom all the suspicions pointed, had been thrown into jail under the charge of murder. The officer, whose warrant, though shocked by the circumstances and sure that this meddling with the dead would greatly shock the people, I was ready to obey, was speedily followed by other officials and the doctors. They came prepared to examine the body for marks of violence or poison. The news flew like wild-fire through the quiet village beside which my manse, the church, and churchyard stood. It was thrown into an uproar, the natural horror that people feel at disturbing the dead being much aggravated by the outrages which the *resurrection men*, as they were called—those who rifled graves at the dead of night to supply bodies for dissecting-rooms—were at that time committing on the tenderest feelings of humanity. I believe I incurred some odium by my willingness to aid in the investigation : at any rate, none else would furnish utensils or render any assistance—the few whose curiosity overcame their horror standing far apart as we broke into the house of the dead. The only help obtained was the use of an old empty barn, without which indeed it would have been hardly possible to have examined the body. It was the height of summer ; the day was bright and hot ; and I remember well, when the coffin was raised and the lid forced open, how the whole air seemed instantly filled with a cloud of blow-flies that settled down in thick black swarms on the corpse. On the face-cloth being thrown back and the body unswathed, the spectacle was one, if anything short of divine grace could do it, to humble vanity and the pride of personal charms ; nor shall I ever forget, as I stood at her feet looking on while one of the doctors, with mallet and chisel, was opening the skull, how the dead woman, as if she recognised me, nodded her head at every blow.

On relating that he had gone to see a criminal die under the guillotine, and how he had watched the whole affair with an opera-glass, Lord Byron says it is well to see such things once : and, however repulsive the spectacle, when I have seen some pretty but vain, silly woman come vapouring with mincing steps and haughty air into the house of God, not to worship, but be worshipped, I have thought it would be well that such people, for once at least, saw

what they are to become. Nor am I singular in that. It is told of an Italian friar, one of Rome's great Lent preachers—a class of men who often subdue their audience into tears, and by vivid descriptions of hell and purgatory throw women into fainting-fits and men into convulsions—that denouncing on one occasion "the lust of the eye and the pride of life," he fixed his large, black, brilliant eyes on a proud beauty who sat before him, and drove the colour off her cheek. Taking a grinning skull from out the folds of his cloak, he suddenly held it up before her face, to say, See what thou shalt be! There is no sin in admiring beauty. Not the devil, but He gave it who made Eve lovelier, I believe, than the fairest of her daughters; and, whether in the human face and form, or in beast, bird, and beetle, or in the flowers of the field and the gorgeous tints of the evening sky, gave it to be admired, gave it to minister to our happiness and pleasure. The sin lies in worshipping it, setting a too high value on it, feeling proud of possessing it; or, if a woman is plain, envying such as are pretty, and feeling displeased with God for making us what we are. Such a sight as the secret of that grave disclosed was well calculated, with God's blessing, to abase vanity in the dust, mortify pride, and crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. In that "chamber of horrors" how much to be preferred to a beauty which could turn into loathsomeness, to charms the hand of death had so horribly defaced, appeared what the apostle calls "the hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

But there we saw something more shocking than the poor unlovely remains—evidences of death cruelly inflicted by the very hand which, on other days, had held that cold hand, when pledges of love were passed and vows were taken to be faithful "till separated by death." The viscera showed unmistakeable evidence of the presence of arsenic—a substance which, unlike vegetable poisons, remains in the body to be, as lawyers say, a *damning* witness of crime; and which also, being a powerful antiseptic, or corrective of putrefaction, actually preserves the body, whose life it destroys, to speak out at the bidding of the chemist, and convict the murderer of his crime. In many cases of murder, and especially in those where arsenic is administered, the proverb is not true—"Dead men tell no tales." Murder will out, I said to myself, as the knife laid bare another and another red patch on the organs of digestion, betraying the action of a deadly poison. But the truth came out sooner than we expected; and more clearly than might possibly have been the result of a chemical analysis. While we were examining the body, the husband was otherwise occupied. Left in his lonely cell, to the worst of company—a guilty conscience, he had taken alarm on hearing that doctors and officers of justice had gone to exhume and examine the body of his wife. There was nothing remarkable in the circumstance that I should have been the last preacher he had heard, but it was a remarkable coincidence that my text on that occasion should have been so ominous of his fate, and appropriate to his case. Unknown to preachers, God may often be directing them when they take an arrow at random from the quiver and draw the bow at a venture in the pulpit. Whether I shook the sense of security he had been entertaining that, as his victim had been now six weeks in the grave, the fatal secret was safely buried with her till the day of doom, or whether I had roused a sleeping conscience and made a coward of him, I know not; but, curious coincidence to say the least, my text was the words with which the first murderer sought, but vainly, to hide his crime, these, to wit, "Am I my brother's keeper?" On their return, the doctors and law-officers found themselves saved all further trouble. There was no need for the first analyzing the contents of the bottles in which they had carried off portions of the body, nor for the second collecting evidence and preparing a case for the crown. The man was found dead in his cell. He had anticipated the executioner: had cheated the gallows, as they say—hanging himself. Judas-like, he precipitated his fate; and, adding the crime of suicide to that of murder, was found hanging there, a proof that "Murder will out," and an awful evidence also of the Scripture truth, "The ways of transgressors are hard."

Such cases are calculated to produce a sense of a presiding Providence on all minds, but especially on those of the common people, who, as in the days when they heard Jesus gladly, though less learned, often form sounder opinions on moral and religious subjects than those called their "betters." And it was to the deep and solemn feeling produced by such cases, and which, in the common people, as appeared on the occasion I am to refer to, may be more or less tinged with superstition, that I owed a visit, paid me late in a November afternoon, when residing for some time in a part of the country which I had visited years before. The person who waited on me had left the death-bed of an old woman in a cottage in the neighbourhood; and knowing that I was a minister of the gospel, she came to ask me to return with her. It was a peculiar, and in her judgment as well as in that of some others who kindly watched with her, also a "frightsome" and mysterious one. She had stood by many a dying bed, but never by one like it. The woman was dying, and yet could not die; nor, impatient and wearied of the long struggle, could succeed in putting an end to herself—though, awful to relate, they had more than once detected her attempting it. The closing scene, which usually occupies two or three hours, before the curtain falls and all is over, had been prolonged in her case over as many days; and seemed no nearer an end than ever. At first astonished, then puzzled and perplexed, she and other two women who watched with her had at length got frightened. The case was *by common;* and they had no other explanation of it to offer but the conviction which had taken strong possession of them, that this old dying woman had an awful load of guilt upon her conscience, and that, having in bygone days committed some of those great crimes which God brings to light in unexpected ways, she was not to be allowed to die till she confessed her guilt—making good the old adage that "Murder will out."

HAGAR AND ISHMAEL.

It happened, as will appear in the course of the narrative, that I had become acquainted with the person whose strange mode of dying had given birth to such horrible suspicions, long years before this time: having known her when I was a boy, and renewed my acquaintance with her afterwards under circumstances of which I had a vivid and painful recollection. She had met with her full share of misfortunes, and was dying in much poorer circumstances than once she lived in. But, judging from her state of mind the last time we met, calamity had done as little to humble her haughty heart as age to bend her erect and imposing figure. When she lost her property, she retained all her pride; and, though it was beautifully lighted up when she smiled, it was easy for one quite ignorant of physiognomy to discover in her face, its firm mouth and strongly-marked lines of determination, and in those grey eyes that sometimes flashed from under their shaggy eyebrows, evidences of an iron will as well as of a fiery temper. Like a lonely tree, the hoar and aged remnant of an ancient forest, she had outlived all her early companions: having survived to see succeeding generations, and among them all her children but one, of whom more afterwards, borne to the grave. But no early criminality, so far as I had heard, ever attached itself to her name; yet I knew enough of her to believe that she would have stuck at almost nothing rather than brook public shame; and that, presented with a powerful temptation, she was capable of proving one of those, happily rare, women who have nerve for deeds that most men are too great cowards to attempt—whom Shakspeare represents in the *Lady Macbeth* of his drama, whom Scotland in our day produced in Miss ——, and England in Mrs. Manning, sitting brisk and lively at the tea-table, with her feet resting on the hearth-stone below which lay the still fresh and bloody form of the paramour she had murdered and buried there. The truth is, that while both men and women stand in continual need of the constraining and restraining grace of God, women make more profit of it, and suffer greater loss by the want of it than men. As the sweetest wines turn into the sourest vinegars and the hottest climates develop in plants and animals the most deadly poisons, so women, with their warm impulses and impassioned tempers, when they become bad, become very bad. In the hands of the Spirit of God, as witness the group by the Cross, they grow into the bravest and most beautiful saints; while in the hands of the devil, as witness Jezebel, and Athaliah, and Herodias' mother, they appear perfect fiends—in fact we could not describe them better than in the words which describe the prophet's figs, "The good are very good; the bad are so bad that they cannot be eaten."

However that may be, and whatever this poor woman might once have been capable of doing or been left to do, I was unwilling, even though I had been superstitious enough to be able, to entertain the suspicions which her strange death-bed had produced in others. Hoping to smooth the thorns of a dying pillow, to guide aright the steps of one who was struggling so hard to get through the dark valley, I agreed to my visitor's request, and soon followed her—but by a short bye-road through a ravine, where I thought I could trust myself to find the way. The period of the year and the scene were in unison with my feelings as I set out on this melancholy errand. The year was drawing to its close. The day itself was dying, fast sinking into darkness. There was hardly light enough to see the footpath which followed the wanderings of a winding stream, that now lost itself under overhanging banks, and now flashed out, reflecting in its quiet pools the last lights of evening. The white stones that stood up among the rank grass of an old burying-ground which I had to pass, presented in the dim light of the *gloamin'* a weird and spectral look. The shattered towers and gables of an old feudal castle looked grimly down from the summit of a neighbouring rock; turning my thoughts on the brave lords and gay ladies who had long left them to moulder to dust in the quiet grave-yard below, and recalling to memory these quaint lines:—

> The knights are dust,
> Their swords are rust,
> Their souls are with the saints we trust.

Thickly strewed with withered leaves that rustled and crackled under my feet, the pathway itself was associated with solemn thoughts of mortality; and as the night wind sighed and groaned among the naked branches, and the sea came moaning from the bar which the stream had thrown up at its mouth, I felt in a mood to think that it was Nature mourning over the sufferings of her children—the voice of one that, according to the words of Scripture, "groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now."

A little while, and I had found my way to the cottage door; but the scenes I saw, and the lessons I learned there, must be left to form the subject of a future article.

HAGAR AND ISHMAEL.

"Ah me! My son, my son!
Pitiless light pours down the burning sky,
And water there is none."

"My mother! is it night?"
"Th' accursed sun hath blinded his sweet eyes,
Those living wells of light.

"Night in the midst of noon,—
O would that it were death, that he might wake
No more out of his swoon.

"But he will waken wild
With thirst, and rave, and water there is none—
Oh, God! my child! my child!

"Would I my soul could pour
Out like a well-spring in this scorching waste,
That he might thirst no more.

"Would he my life might drain,
As once my breast, I'd hold it to his lips,
That he might live again.

"I cannot see him die—
O God, how canst thou see it up in Heaven,
Nor help, if Thou art nigh?

"Wilt Thou cast off for aye,
Like Abram? Hast Thou not enough for all?
That all may hope and pray.

"Yea, if Thou art the Lord,
Uncovenanted though thy mercy be,
Wilt Thou not help afford?"

She ceased! A stony look
Uplifting to the burning sky once more,
The fainting lad she took,

And lifted him with care
Into the shadow of a rock, and strode
Away in her despair.

She will not see him die;
But hears her heart throb in the voiceless waste
While listening for his cry.

And listening thus there breaks
A mystic murmur on her straining ear—
As from a dream she wakes.

A mist before her eyes
Of angel wings departing—a white cloud
That lessens up the skies.

And at her feet she knows,
From the soft gush among the sinking sand,
The living water flows. I. C. Knox.

BEAR AND FORBEAR:

A PAIR OF BUFFERS FOR UNIVERSAL USE.

In those weary half-hours which now and then you spend pacing a railway platform, waiting for a train behind its time, you are glad to find some occupation for your mind in watching the porters and drivers adjusting trucks and carriages, unshackling some from one train and attaching them to another, or shunting them into the sidings. As you do so, your ear becomes familiar with a sudden bumping sound, as one carriage comes into sharp contact with another, and you see the usefulness of those strange projections which bear the unclassical name of buffers, and are designed to break the force of the carriages as they run against each other. If you are at all in meditative and imaginative mood, you begin to think that something of the same kind might form a useful appendage to human beings:—not, of course, to the outer man, but in the region of the temper, where collisions are so apt to occur. You think how differently some of your friends are constituted in this respect. There, for example, is your friend Ramstam, a blunt, heedless fellow, always bumping up against some one, always taking the bull by the horns, and always requiring some one to arrange matters for him, when he has contrived, as he is always contriving, to get into difficulty. How different it is with your other friend, Mr. Tact! He glides with ease and safety between

angry neighbours, like a railway porter between moving carriages, and seems to have some mysterious faculty of adjusting difficulties, managing delicate negotiations, and even saying and doing unpleasant things, without either offending others, or hurting himself. Expressing the difference in railway language, you would say that Mr. Tact was provided with buffers, and Mr. Ramstam with none. And the difference is so great that if all the world were Ramstams, society would be positively unendurable. You are compelled to go in for buffers; elegant or inelegant, they are a great comfort, and whoever devotes himself to promote the use of them does a real service to his race.

It is of a valuable pair of these appendages that we would now treat. The two qualities or habits we have in view are—bearing and forbearing; or, as some one has called them, the two bears. In the Christian sense of these terms no better contrivances could be found for smoothing the intercourse of life, and preventing collision in little matters. If you go into the turmoil of the world without them, you will be familiar all your days with blows and buffets. If you are careful to provide yourselves with them, they will carry you through stormy and dangerous scenes, almost as quietly as if you glided spirit-wise, or as if God had given his angels charge concerning you, and in their hands they bore you up, lest at any time you should dash your foot against a stone.

It is a wonderful power we have got from our Maker—if only we had grace to use it—that of making up our minds to things that are unpleasant. More than half the discomfort of many things seems to disappear when once you have made up your mind to them. A draught of medicine, a surgical operation, a sea-voyage, a large payment of money, a toilsome effort, a great coming down in the world, seem alike to lose more than half their disagreeableness when you have determined to bear them. Formerly, they seemed nothing but tormentors, hateful and horrible to look at; they hovered about you like vultures ready to tear your flesh; the very thought of them was harassing, and threw you into a fever. But when you calmly considered your position, when you saw that they were inevitable, and made up your mind to bear them, their grim, grinning aspect seemed to disappear, and your soul regained its composure and its comfort. The fact is, you caught their sting upon the buffer "bear." The impatient schoolboy, for example, thinks it a dreadful thing to have to learn some odious task. Perhaps he spends half-an-hour, to begin with, in weeping over it, sometimes clenching his fists, gnashing his teeth, and tearing his hair, to vary the expression of his disgust. But when, yielding to better counsels, he makes up his mind to the effort, his misery passes away. His spirits rise as he masters portion after portion in succession; and when at last he closes the book in triumph, he feels at once what a miserable thing it is to kick against the pricks, and how little one would feel the pricks if only one would not kick against them. The control one is enabled to gain in this way over hundreds of the minor miseries of life is amazing. Where this power of accommodation is unknown, the passage through life resembles those dismal scrambles which Dr. Livingstone describes, through thickets of thorn and cactus. Where it is known and used, the thorns seemed to fold themselves up, like the leaves of the sensitive plant, and the traveller gets through with little hurt.

With some persons, this faculty of "bearing" seems almost an instinct. As regards the common troubles of life, it comes to them almost without an effort. Many persons endure a life of toil, suffering, and manifold privations and hardships with a patience that is all the more beautiful because it seems so natural. It is a settled point with them—it has been so, through God's mercy, all along,—that life is not an easy sail down a smooth-flowing river. They have made up their minds to find in it many tempestuous passages and painful experiences, just as they have made up their mind to seasons of storm and winter. It would never occur to them to be angry with frost and snow, or to gnash their teeth at foul weather. As little would they think of being ruffled or enraged at crosses or troubles in their providential lot. The one thing for them to do is to assume a calm attitude, and adjust themselves as they best can to hardships that are inevitable. Like men in business, they lay their account with a certain amount of loss and fruitless labour, and when it comes, they are little disturbed—they know it was to be looked for. Business is not all profit, and life is not all pleasure.

It is very different with another class. Their bristles rise at the slightest cross or unpleasantness, as surely as those of the cat or the tiger at the sight of a natural foe. To learn to bear has been no part of their education, either common or Christian. The effects of this are various in different cases. In some the effect is a constant and passionate irritability, passing, as life advances, into a settled sourness or perpetual grumbling. Such persons cannot be happy, their nerves are as unstrung as if they underwent a daily whipping, they never calm down. The Flagellants that went about in the Middle Ages, with bare shoulders, whipping themselves till the blood streamed down their bodies, hardly could have suffered more self-inflicted pain than those who thus fret and fume daily at every annoyance. What a different life Lord Byron might have led if he had been trained to bear, if he had become reconciled to such trifles as his club-foot, and had made up his mind to a due share of the buffets and snubbings of the world! It is surely one of the most important parts of early training that is neglected when the young are not taught the necessity of bearing. Even in games and recreations nothing is more necessary. How often, when victory seems on the eve of being grasped, fortune suddenly changes, the first are last and the last become first. On the croquet-green, the ball that lay a few inches from the final post may be rudely dislodged at the last moment, and the hopes that had been becoming more eager as the crisis of the game approached, are dashed at the very moment when they were most intense. It is no small achievement to bear this with calmness and

good humour; as one succeeds or fails in doing so, one is likely to succeed or fail in meeting the more serious disappointments that are seldom wanting in the struggles of active life.

In another class, the absence of the power of bearing leads to restlessness and constant change. A boy, unused to bear, is apprenticed to an occupation that has its unpleasant features; he hates them, and instead of getting used to them, the longer he continues he hates them the more. He fancies that another occupation will be free from them, but when he makes the change he finds that he has but parted with one set of disagreeables for another; change succeeds change, and at each successive move he falls lower and lower. To boys unaccustomed to "bear," it is steady labour in any form that is the real bugbear; what they try to fall in with is a berth where the labour is not very hard, or at least, not very steady. So much the worse for their own ultimate welfare. How infinitely better for them it would have been to make up their minds at once to a career of patient industry, and get thoroughly used to its wholesome discipline! After all, "it *is* good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth."

Still more, perhaps, the spirit of restlessness shows itself in the case of those whose engagements are for shorter periods. It is only too common for a young domestic servant to leave a desirable situation because of some little unpleasantness which it would not have been very difficult to bear. And how often does she find at her leisure that it would have been better for her to bear the ills she had, than fly to others that she knew not of? I have read somewhere of a person who was told to go through a certain wood, and select a straight rod from its trees, but on one condition, that he was only to cut one, and that he was never to turn backwards for a rod he had once passed. He came upon many that seemed straight, but in the foolish hope of finding one more perfect, he passed through the wood without helping himself to any. So it is with some servants and their situations. Happy the servant who has sense to know and grace to bear the little trials of a lot of average desirableness, and who does not throw overboard advantages of real value, in the vain search for a perfection that cannot be found.

In its best and highest form the power of bearing is a Christian grace. It is a fruit of the Spirit. True Christian charity "beareth all things." And well it may. It has a wonderful pattern of "bearing" in its Master. What did He not bear for our sakes, and what ought we not to bear for his? Nothing serves more to lighten a burden or to make provocations endurable, than love to one for whose sake they are borne. It was easy for Jacob to bear the selfishness and perversity of Laban for seven years for the love he bore to Rachel. It was easy for Paul to bear the hardships of his missionary life for the love he bore to his Master and to the souls for whose good he laboured. It becomes easy for the Christian to bear his crosses, when he does it for the sake of Him who died on the cross for him. Under Christian teaching, too, he gets a far higher and more satisfying view of the end for which such crosses and trials exist. All are seen to enter into the grand scheme of discipline by which he is getting trained for a life of heavenly glory, heavenly purity, and heavenly bliss. There is a philosophical view of trials and hardships that has little or no religion in it, but which is not without a considerable practical effect. People argue that it is more reasonable, more manly, and will be better for them in the end, to endure patiently, than to quarrel with the yoke, or to pollute the air with bootless imprecations. "What cannot be cured must be endured," is one of the maxims they quote, and quote truly; "It will be all the same a hundred years hence," is another. On such maxims as these they fall back, to keep down any rising murmur of impatience, and often with no slight success. But how much higher the considerations that bear upon the Christian, and how much more powerful ought to be their effects! "No cross, no crown," is something far higher than any maxim of worldly wisdom. And no mere philosopher or worldly wise-man ever wrote in this way:—"We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us." The truth is, when you come where Christ is, when you stand at the cross and recal the life and the love of the Saviour, the spirit of bearing seems to fill the very atmosphere, the high example of Christ has a contagious influence; like Saul among the prophets, the most impetuous temper becomes meek and quiet.

Every one must have noticed the prominent place assigned to patience among the graces of the New Testament. The singular endurance of martyrs and confessors under persecution forms one of the chief glories of the Christian Church. And even in ordinary life, people instinctively feel that a Christian without patience is but a sorry specimen of his order. On the other hand, one of the most impressive marks of real saintliness, one of the features that most undeniably proclaim the heavenly birth, is a habitual serenity, and even benignancy of spirit, especially under trials. This is the power of "bearing" in its highest form. And the beauty of this spirit in the eyes of others is not less than the happiness it brings to its possessor. Let any one study, in some expressive picture or photograph, the face of the two thieves that shared the crucifixion with our Lord. On the face of the one he will see an incipient look of resignation, a subdued air, a meek calmness, contrasting strongly with the unconquered spirit of rage and blasphemy which still distorts the other. Is it necessary to ask which is the more beautiful? Or can there be any doubt which is the more blessed in itself, or brings the happier feelings to its owner? What causes the difference? In the one case the soul, through living fellowship with Christ, has become armed with the power of bearing; in the other, it is exposed without protection to the storm of its own passions, and driven by its own madness, without check or break, to kick against the pricks.

If the power of "bearing" be thus a most happy protection from many of the jars and buffets of ordi-

nary life, that of "forbearing" is hardly less so in its peculiar sphere. The one leads you to endure quietly things that befall yourself; the other leads you to abstain from contending with others on many occasions when you might naturally be tempted to give them battle. One of the best uses of the latter is expressed in the well-known proverb of Solomon,—"A soft answer turneth away wrath." When you are treated sharply, your natural tendency is to treat sharply, or, as the phrase is, to give as good as you got. On second thoughts, you feel that the soft answer is more agreeable to Christian duty, and more likely to prevent sin, and to restore peace; you arm yourself with this safeguard against collision, and when it is brought into play, the waves of passion subside, and immediately there is a calm.

"Forbearing" is especially necessary when two opposite wills are likely to come into collision; and the closer the two persons are to one another, the greater is the need of forbearance. Nothing can be more unseemly than a collision between husband and wife—between those who are one flesh before God, but not always of one sentiment. Opposition on some points it is almost certain there will be; if there be no forbearance on either side, if, indeed, there be not some forbearance upon both sides, there must either be a perpetual jar, or a reign of terror. As often as any matter comes up that causes a difference, there will either be an unedifying wrangle, or the weaker nature will sullenly submit to the stronger, but with a mortifying sense of defeat and wrong. And like a thorn in the sole of your foot during a long walk, or a mote in your eye on a windy day, this little matter may cause no small discomfort throughout life's long journey. Where a little forbearance has been acquired at the beginning, it is as if the thorn were extracted, and the mote removed; and then the journey is made in comparative comfort and peace.

And who has not observed how much in every relation of life harmony and good feeling depend on not pushing things to extremities, not pressing rights to the uttermost, not contending to the death for every trifle? Whether the relation be that of parents and children, masters and servants, partners in business, or counsellors or directors of public companies, it is forbearance that oils the wheels, and enables the machinery to work smoothly, and at the same time efficiently. Of course, "forbearing," like "bearing," must have its limits, and of these I will speak presently. But no small point is gained when the necessity of this quality in some form and to some extent is apprehended by all; when people, and especially young people, come to see that if they are to get on comfortably with their fellows, there must be some forbearance in pressing their opinions or even urging their rights; there must be some consideration even for the infirmities and unreasonableness of others; some care taken not to drive them without cause into open hostility, not to bring things to a deadlock with them. It is melancholy to think what feuds have often raged through want of this forbearance. Even Christian congregations have been convulsed by lasting quarrels that have begun about the merest trifles. A whole neighbourhood has been known to be at daggers drawn on the question whether a school should be built on one site or on another. Neighbouring families have been kept at variance for years because on one occasion a member of the one has sneered at the dress worn by a member of the other. According to the story, the Trojan war had its origin in the fact of the palm of beauty being accorded by the shepherd on Mount Ida to Venus, in preference to Juno and Minerva. How many bloody wars have been due to causes quite as frivolous, it is impossible to say. Of the six millions of men in the prime of life who are maintained by Europe in arms at this day, who can tell how many might be set free for the pursuits of productive industry, to gladden homes and spread peace and plenty, if only there was more forbearance in the temper of nations, and of those who rule them?

But we are wandering into the region of great events, in place of confining ourselves to those of humble or ordinary life. We do not wish so much to show how the great collisions of war may be avoided, as the little collisions of daily experience. Yet, probably, it is just the same spirit of forbearance that would equally prevent the one and the other. One little text of Holy Scripture—"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men"—written by God's Spirit on men's hearts, would do it all. Only get men generally to have regard to that simple rule of the Christian life, and what a different world you would have! How many domestic brawls, how many children's squabbles, how many ecclesiastical strifes, how many public feuds, how many gigantic wars it would prevent! How many policemen it would supplant, how many regiments of the line, how many iron-clads and Monitors, how many rifled cannon and patent shells! How greatly it would facilitate the transaction of business! How much it would sweeten the breath of society! How much it would do to bring back the balmy breezes of Paradise,—to restore to those that have almost ceased to dream of it, the long-lost golden age!

But how far is one to carry this habit of bearing and forbearing? Is it to extend to every thing? Are we to let ourselves be trampled on as far and as long as men choose to oppress us, and never to strike a blow in defence of our rights or our interests? By no means. And yet, we admit, it is impossible to define the exact limits either of bearing or of forbearing. The settlement of these limits in each case must be left in great measure to what has been called very justly—sanctified common sense. With the counsellors it has to guide it, it will not be very difficult for that faculty to settle where Christian endurance ends, and where weak and cowardly submission would begin. No man can doubt that there are times when it would be a weakness to shrink from a conflict, when Christian manliness cannot but give battle to injustice and oppression. We have no formal rules for determining when such times are, but to sound sense, examining the circumstances and pondering the Word, in alliance with the Christian spirit, it will not be very difficult to find it out. It is no indiscriminate use of "bearing and forbearing"

we plead for. It is rather for an intelligent appreciation of their excellent properties on all occasions when it is right to make use of them. If on any occasion we decide not to make use of them, let us at least see that we do so in deference to higher, and not to lower considerations. Let us take care that what we defer to is not our pride, not our spite, not any paltry or selfish consideration, but reasons that have a close connection with the will of God and the good of men. Let us especially see to it that our eye be single, for then the whole body will be full of light. It is the double-minded that are commonly in greatest perplexity as to the path of duty. There never was a more single-hearted man than St. Paul, and there never was a man who knew better where forbearance should end, and resistance begin. "All things to all men" was his motto within certain limits, but if these limits were crossed, no man was ever more uncompromising in the stand he made. There was no bound to his concessions as long as vital interests were untouched, but whenever saving truth was involved, even an angel from heaven would not have escaped the thrust of his weapon. He seemed to have no difficulty in drawing the line between occasions when forbearance might have full swing, and occasions when it would have been treason to give it the slightest scope; but this was due, under God, to his remarkable singleness of heart, united to his strong common sense. The union in St. Paul of forbearance and faithfulness, catholicity and earnestness, width of sympathy and intensity of conviction, was one of the most striking things in his very remarkable character. And withal, he knew how to unite the deepest personal humility with a becoming respect for his rank and privileges. Humble and self-denied to the last degree all through his life, he was nevertheless indignant when his apostolic authority was questioned; he would not leave the Philippian prison till the magistrates came for him, nor suffer insult from the high-priest without remonstrance, nor let the chief captain scourge him uncondemned. Solomon could not have surpassed his skill in determining the time to bear and the time to forbear; and, on the other hand, the time to remonstrate and the time to resist.

If we may get such lessons on bearing and forbearing, from fellowship with St. Paul, much more shall we get them from fellowship with his Master. The very act of prayer, indeed, tends to calm and soothe the spirit. You cannot really go into the Divine Presence and ask from the Father the calmness and patience needed by you in times of provocation, without having your soul tempered to the spirit which you seek. There is something in that Presence that so marvellously subdues the boisterous and stormy, that when we really stand before God, the spirit of tumult can no more prevail than a branch covered with hoar-frost can retain its covering before the mid-day sun. Especially when we realise, that the God in whose presence we are is that God who, in Christ Jesus, has shown to us such marvellous forbearance and forgiveness. What offence on our part has HE not borne? What punishment due to us has HE not forborne to inflict? Shall all this have no effect upon us? Let our nature be what it may, the wonder surely must be, if after we have stood in the presence of this God, we should need further persuasion to induce us to set about practising the twin graces—BEAR and FORBEAR.

W. G. BLAIKIE.

A WORKING CONGREGATION.

I WAS requested to take charge of a class every Sunday at three o'clock; but, to tell the truth, this was not exactly the thing I wanted. I had been in the habit of dining every Sunday with my friend, Mr. Leyton, and of enjoying his very interesting and edifying conversation in his library or his garden; and all this, of course, I should have to give up, since he lived about two miles from the chapel. Nor was it particularly welcome to me, I confess, to be set to work in the second month after I had settled down in this district, and become a member of the church. It appeared to me that it would have been as well to have allowed me—say a twelvemonth, for making acquaintance with the members, before entrusting any part of the work to my care. But such did not seem to be the opinion of the Rev. Mr. Redburn, who was our minister, and undoubtedly one of the most active pastors that ever guided a flock. The church was not very large; it numbered from two hundred and fifty to three hundred members, who formed what is called a "respectable congregation" as they sat in the pews of the well-built Gothic chapel. The district was not very aristocratic, though far from being a low quarter. Indeed, many a well-to-do merchant and prosperous shopkeeper had his villa here, and of these not a few were members of Mr. Redburn's church. By far the greater portion of the population consisted, however, of artisans and poor people. With the exception of a few who worshipped with us, these seemed to think that church-going was a business which ought to be left entirely to the higher class, while they themselves took care that the public-house did not want for frequenters.

Notwithstanding my petty objections, I did become a Sunday-school teacher, for, upon closer examination, I found that, if I refused, I should be the only young man in the church who had not some work to do. My friend Mr. Leyton, who was himself a member of the church, strongly advised me to undertake the duty. "It is just like our minister, to give you some work at once," he said to me; "for he is of opinion that people never get to know each other well, until they work together. And I believe he is right. Mere conversation seldom brings out a man's true character and value. Words are flexible, but a man's work is his soul and life."

I felt there was a deal of truth in what Mr. Leyton

said, and so one evening at a meeting of the Sunday-school teachers, Mr. Redburn formally introduced me into their company. It was a very agreeable assemblage, there being about a dozen present. I learnt that I was to take the class of a Mr. Rixdale, who had gone to Australia. A little printed bill was given me, which contained a list of six Bible stories, six texts of Scripture, and as many hymns. My class was expected to learn these well during the ensuing quarter. The boys I had to teach were from eight to twelve years of age, and, on the whole, pretty intelligent. Their number averaged between twelve and sixteen; in my opinion too many for one teacher. I found, however, that they were so well-disciplined, that to keep them in order gave me little trouble, and they were, on the whole, attentive. As I was requested not to introduce other topics than those put down in the bill, all I had to do was to try to make them know the six stories, texts, and hymns thoroughly. The last Sunday of the quarter was appointed for examination. This was conducted by one of the members of the "examining committee," which was composed of members of the church, both ladies and gentlemen, who themselves had been Sunday-school teachers. It was a real pleasure to see how anxious the boys were to come well through the trial, and do credit to their teacher. My class I understood had always been well reported of at the annual meeting, at which the members of the examining committee, in presence of the teachers, the children, and the whole church, gave their judgment as to the progress of each class, and the state of instruction generally in the school. On that day prizes were distributed to the classes according to their attainments during the past year. The class which showed the most regular attendance and the smallest number of wrong answers in the teacher's and the examiner's book, received six neatly-bound books, each bearing an inscription, from the minister and the deacons. Some classes received four books, and some only one. These books were placed in the juvenile library of the church, from which the children could obtain books to read all the year round. A "library committee," consisting of four members, each of whom sat one evening in the month in the library to give out and to receive the books, controlled this work. They, again, were under the supervision of the "examining committee," which once a year took stock, and ascertained whether the books were duly cared for. It would sometimes happen that at the quarterly examination a class proved so backward that the teacher received no fresh bill, and the old one had to be gone through for another quarter. This was reckoned to be the greatest disgrace that could fall upon a class, and the dread of it of course contributed not a little towards keeping up an interest in the instructions.

Though this system of Sunday-school teaching put me under greater control than I had been accustomed to, yet, upon finding that it worked admirably, I soon felt quite at ease. Sometimes little disputes would arise between teachers, or between a teacher and an examiner, but in most cases these differences were settled by the parties themselves, and where this proved impossible, the committee took the matter in hand, and always succeeded in restoring peace.

"I wonder," I said, one day, to my friend, Mr. Leyton, "that our minister so seldom interferes when differences arise between the teachers and the examiners? All are very fond of him, and one word of his would go farther than ten from anybody else."

"Mr. Redburn is a wise man," said Mr. Leyton. "He knows perfectly what he is about. Of course he is the highest official in our little commonwealth. Matters would soon get into confusion if he allowed every trifle to be brought before him. Besides, he would soon break down under the amount of work, and get no thanks but the name of being a pope and a busybody. He is a bad captain who, instead of giving orders, climbs up the rigging to mend a rope himself."

I soon became convinced that this encomium upon Mr. Redburn's wisdom was not exaggerated. Connected with the church was a Dorcas society, which met every fortnight in the schoolroom, as the number of the members was too large to admit of their meeting in each other's houses. This society was not a source of great pleasure to Mr. Redburn. First because, considering its numbers, the amount of work done was comparatively small. The greater portion of the time, I understand, was spent in cutting out the material, which was usually done by one or two ladies, while the others, having nothing to do, filled up the time with talking. And this talking was often carried on in a spirit which, though not incompatible with the rules of respectable society, was certainly not exactly that which might have been expected from a company of Christian women, meeting for a charitable purpose. Mr. Redburn had often expressed a wish that the two ladies who had the management of the cutting would do that portion of the work the day before the meeting. Here, however, he met with stubborn opposition on the part of one of the ladies, a Mrs. Parkes, the wife of one of the wealthiest and most influential members of the church, who said that, having already too much work on hand, she could not possibly spare a morning every fortnight for that purpose. To obviate this difficulty, one of the other ladies had willingly offered to do it for her, but Mrs. Parkes had received this offer almost as though it had been an insult, and nobody had the courage to broach the matter again. Mr. Redburn had never spoken on the subject to Mrs. Parkes herself, nor did he deem it wise to do so in the present state of affairs. She was a very clever and active woman, who, through her influence and wealth, did an immense deal of good in the church and in the district. But it must be said that she was a little imperious, and not very easy to deal with if opposed. The pastor perceived that by irritating her, greater damage might be done to the church than benefit to the Dorcas society.

Still he was bent upon having the Dorcas society freed from its defects. After having reflected on the matter, he was convinced that the only way in which he could keep Mrs. Parkes in good temper, and at the same time get the society improved, was by

giving her some work to do in another quarter, and thus disconnecting her from the society. It had often occurred to him that a soup-kitchen, where the poor people might get a basin of nutritious soup for a penny, three times a week, was very much wanted in the neighbourhood. There was an old but substantial little building in a back street, not far from Mr. Parkes' house, which he thought might be easily obtained, and fitted up for the purpose at a slight expense. As this institution might be made the means of bringing the poor people under the influence of the Gospel, it was desirable to have it in connection with the church. Nor could there be any doubt that the church would gladly accept the proposal, if some influential members would put their shoulders to the wheel. Mr. Redburn, knowing that Mrs. Leyton was an intimate friend of Mrs. Parkes, broached the matter one evening in a private conversation with Mr. Leyton, suggesting that his wife might take the opportunity of speaking about it to Mrs. Parkes, without letting her know that the plan had originated with the minister. Not many weeks elapsed before Mrs. Parkes called, one morning, upon Mr. Redburn to ask his opinion about a scheme which had just been brought under her notice—that of establishing a soup-kitchen in the old leather-warehouse in Brackett Street. Mr. Redburn was quite delighted with the idea, and said he had no doubt that, if Mrs. Parkes would take up the matter, and speak about it to other influential ladies, such, for instance, as Mrs. Leyton, and——

"Oh, Mrs. Leyton is quite in favour of it."

"Excellent. And then if you would speak to Mrs. Binny, and Mrs. Hawthorn, and Miss Leeds, I am assured the gentlemen would not keep aloof; and your husband, if he brought the matter before the church, would be sure of general support."

Of course he would. Before three months had elapsed the soup-kitchen was established, and the whole of the management put into the hands of Mrs. Parkes, as the president of the committee of ladies appointed for that purpose. A few weeks later Mrs. Parkes resigned her connection with the Dorcas society, as, unfortunately, the day of its meeting fell upon one of the busiest soup-kitchen days, and besides, she had her hands so full now that, &c. &c.

A thorough reform was brought about in the Dorcas society. On Mrs. Leyton's suggestion the cutting of the material was transferred to another day, so that the ladies could devote all their time to their work. Mr. Redburn then agreed, along with a few elderly gentlemen, who had no business to occupy them, to spend, each in his turn, an hour or two with the ladies at their meeting. These visits were very welcome, as the ladies themselves had felt that their conversation during the meeting often lacked order and substance, and was in need of some controlling influence. Mr. Redburn and the other gentlemen sometimes read a chapter from the Bible and entered into a discussion on it with the ladies. Oftenest, however, some extract from a good book was read, which contributed much towards increasing their knowledge of the Christian literature of the day. The subjects which were thus brought under their notice often became the topic of conversation after the gentleman had departed.

The soup-kitchen, which was admirably managed under Mrs. Parkes' superintendence, proved a real boon to the neighbourhood. It is true the first year closed with a considerable deficit, but Mrs. Parkes knew how to make its burden unfelt by the church.

The poor families which regularly availed themselves of this beneficent institution had now become pretty well known to the committee. Mr. Redburn therefore thought that the time had come for the establishment of some scheme to provide them spiritual food in addition to the bodily nutriment. "Philanthropy," he often said, "is a good thing, provided it leads to Christian charity; if it does not, it is like a railway train that stops half way, and fails to take its passengers to their destination."

One Sunday Mr. Leyton asked me whether I should like to join a society of ladies and gentlemen who were going to unite for the purpose of regularly visiting the poor people in Brackett Street and its vicinity on one evening in the week. Seventeen had already joined, and he said if I had no objection, the number would just be complete for a three weeks' round, each member taking an evening. I counted the evenings of the week on my fingers to ascertain whether I had still an evening left to spare, for since I had become a member of this church, evening after evening had gradually been taken from my leisure time.

"And what is the work we shall have to do?" I asked. "I suppose you wish to make a kind of Scripture-reader of me, to visit the people from house to house and read a chapter and pray with them."

"Well, of course, that's something like it, though not quite the thing we have in view. We do not wish you to visit from house to house, but to take four or five families under your charge which we shall select for you. We find that the number of families which regularly come to our soup-kitchen amounts to about eighty. Now, as there will be eighteen visitors, we reckon that four or five families may be assigned to the care of each of them. We desire each visitor to limit his or her visits to these four or five all the year round, and to regard them as families exclusively entrusted to his or her care. The chief object of this plan, of course, is to bring these families thoroughly under the influence of the Gospel. You would, therefore, be expected to speak to them about the Saviour, to read to them, and to pray with them, if it can be done in a kind and prudent way. By your often visiting the same families, it is hoped that you would gain their affection and confidence, and thus become their friend and counsellor, assisting them in keeping their households in good order, in giving up bad habits, in overcoming difficulties, and giving them useful hints as to the training of their children, and showing them ways to prosperity and happiness they would not otherwise have had suggested to them; and thus prove in every respect a comfort, a help, and a blessing to them."

"A charming idea," said I; "but do you really expect me to realise it? You know that, though I am not

a *very* young man, I am quite inexperienced in the routine of domestic life. You know that my own life has always been very much like a calm stream. It has pleased God to lead me along so gently that I have scarcely if ever had a brush with this world's thistles and thorns. How, then, can you expect me to be a fit comforter for the afflicted, an adviser of those who are worried with care, and a teacher of the married concerning the management of their households, and the training of their children? You might as well send me to Greenland to teach the people how to catch seals."

"Well, if they were bad seal-hunters, you might perhaps be able to tell them where their fault lay," replied Mr. Leyton, with a smile. "One does not need to be a shoemaker to tell where the shoe pinches. It seems a little odd, of course, to ask a young man to be the counsellor and teacher of people many of whom are older than himself; but Solomon says, 'Better is a wise child than an old and foolish king.' Nor is it contrary to Scripture that the Holy Spirit should use the young as teachers of the old. Paul wrote to Timothy, 'Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in purity;' and this apostle, than whom married couples certainly never had a better adviser, was an unmarried man himself. It will all depend upon the spirit in which you address yourself to the work. Of course if you mean to enter the houses of the people in the spirit of an arrogant critic, you will be sure to get the doors slammed in your face. But love and humility, on the contrary, will not only open the doors of the houses, but the hearts of the people as well."

"True," I replied; "but you must admit that pure as may be the principle, and good the intention, yet from lack of experience the practice may be unwise and even absurd. I am afraid that, though I acted according to the best of my knowledge, I would often say things which would make the people think there must be something wrong with my brains. Domestic life is a web of so complex a texture that a great deal of practical wisdom is required to know how its numerous threads run, and to unravel its often intricate knotting. And practical wisdom, you know, though a gift of God, is seldom given through the channel of inspiration, but through exercise and experience."

"I agree with you there," said Mr. Leyton; "but we have made provision to meet that difficulty as far as we can. The society of visitors, some of whom are married, will be under the guidance of two committees. One of these will be composed of four married gentlemen, and have Mr. Redburn for president, and the other of four married ladies, of which Mrs. Binny is to be the president. It is proposed that on a certain day every quarter there shall be a meeting of the gentlemen, and, on another day, of the lady visitors, with their respective committees, to have a friendly chat. The visitors would then give an account of their varied experience in their families, and by mutual exchange of thought, advise and help one another. And those visitors who are in need of information concerning practical matters could either obtain it then from their friends, or at least learn the best way to get it. Perhaps in the first weeks of your visiting you would meet with many a difficulty, but I have no doubt these would soon be solved, and their number decrease with every fresh quarter."

I cannot deny that after this explanation the scheme pleased me very much, and not a month had elapsed before I had paid my first visit to the five families which were entrusted to my care. I am bound to say they were wisely chosen. Three of them were married couples without children; the fourth family consisted of a widow with six children, the five eldest of whom were boys of from ten to eighteen; while the fifth was an old man and his daughter, who supported him and herself by working in one of the mills. It appeared that our committees had as far as was practicable assigned the families in which males predominated to the gentlemen, while such families as were blessed with numerous little children were allotted to the married visitors, and especially to the ladies. The families I visited received me very kindly, especially those of them who expected me to afford them some substantial relief. And indeed I could not help sometimes dropping half-a-crown into the hand of one, or a shilling into the hand of another. I learnt at our first meeting of the visitors that this was a mistake, though, much to my consolation, I found that I had not been the only trespasser in this respect. It was observed by Mr. Redburn that it would certainly be at variance with the principles of Christian charity always to keep one's purse closed when calling upon the poor in the character of a regular visitor, but that on the other hand it was a wise rule to open that purse only in cases of extraordinary urgency, and, as much as possible, to tender the gift in the light of a reward for good conduct. One of the visitors remarked that the habit of giving pecuniary aid would be apt to spoil the working of the society altogether, inasmuch as the members were not equally blessed with means: the non-giving visitors would be lowered in the estimation of the poor, and a spirit of envy and jealousy would be kindled. To this Mr. Leyton, who was a member of the committee, added the observation, that injudicious and too frequent pecuniary assistance was also injurious to the very object of the society, which was not to bring the families into easy circumstances through the liberality of others (which would be tantamount to taking away their self-respect), but to raise their social, their moral, and especially their Christian character, and thus to enable them to help themselves through the right application of the principles of the Gospel. "The poor people," said Mr. Leyton, "ought rather to be taught that the Apostle expressed a truth of great practical value when he wrote 'Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise not only of the life which is to come, but also of the life that now is.' The object of the society is, not to show the people the power of money, but of a sound faith in Jesus Christ."

The evening we spent at this meeting was one of the most instructive, amusing, and edifying evenings in the year. All of us soon began to long for the coming of our quarterly visitors' meetings. There was

no platform formality, nor anything like the ordinary committee machinery. That we might be able to see each other when speaking, we were seated on chairs in a large circle in the church, regardless alike of age and social position. Mr. Redburn would often sit next to the youngest, and the other members of the committee in the same way dispersed themselves at random among the company. Prayer being offered up, the pastor would call upon the gentleman whose turn it was to open the conversation. This was sufficient to set the discussion going in the most interesting and lively way, observations being elicited, or objections made, or questionable points debated. Reports were never read, nor was every member expected to prepare one; but in the course of the conversation most of us were led spontaneously to tell something of our experience, either to confirm or to oppose some one's observations, or to illustrate some assertion or support a proposal. Some of the cases brought under our notice were very sad, and often the condition of a certain family would become a matter of earnest concern with the whole assembly. Occasionally we were highly edified by the account of a conversation one had had with an anxious soul, an invalid, or a dying person. Sometimes, too, we were greatly amused by descriptions of scenes which had been witnessed, or of the mistakes that were made by the visitor, who sometimes was candid enough, or perhaps sometimes silly enough, to relate his own blunders. On the whole, we took it good-humouredly when we were thus laughed at, since we knew that others had most likely fallen into the same errors of judgment.

Sometimes, when it was deemed desirable, we had a combined meeting of the gentlemen and ladies, which of course was rather more formal than our special meetings. These combined meetings were not so much devoted to discussing questions as to communicating cases in which the ladies were in need of the co-operation of the gentlemen, and *vice versâ*. Thus, for instance, the ladies would give an account of the character and attainments of boys whom they wanted to have apprenticed to some trade, or the gentlemen would inquire whether the ladies knew girls who were able and would be willing to assist mothers of numerous families in mending the children's clothes or such matters. In this way the society became also a medium through which the poor families could show each other mutual kindnesses.

At one of those meetings our attention was directed to the fact that about seventy per cent. of the individuals above twelve could neither read nor write. The impediment this state of ignorance put in the way of the visitors in imparting spiritual instruction was keenly felt. Several of the poor people expressed a desire to be taught. There could be no doubt that an evening-school for adults would be well attended. It was impossible, however, to obtain a suitable room in the neighbourhood, and so it was resolved to request the congregation to build a room over the soup-kitchen. The matter was brought before a meeting of the church, but here it unfortunately became a source of such contention as retarded the execution of the plan for many months. One of the members, Mr. Leeds, proposed that the room should be built only over that part of the kitchen which contained the washhouse, and that it should have its entrance by a staircase leading up from the street. This proposal was strongly supported by many, because it was undoubtedly the cheapest plan. It was, however, keenly opposed by Mr. Parkes and a few other members. Mr. Parkes said his chief objection lay in the architectural difficulties to Mr. Leeds' plan. What these architectural difficulties were, however, was best ascertained from the comments which Mrs. Parkes made among her friends. Mr. Leeds' plan, she would say, was quite absurd. It would make the building a disgrace to the street, and an object of derision to every passenger. It would make the soup-kitchen look like a huge dromedary, with a large bundle upon its back. She at least would never give her consent to such a mutilation of the soup-kitchen, which, as it was visible from her bedroom window, would be an eyesore to her every morning. In her opinion, a complete storey ought to be raised over the building, with a nice front towards the street. It was true, all the space would not be required for an evening-school, but she was assured that soon some other useful scheme would be begun for which the superfluous room would be useful and highly desirable.

Now, certainly this plan was much more acceptable in every respect than that of Mr. Leeds, except as regarded the expense; for, upon due inquiry, it appeared that Mr. Parkes' proposal could not be properly carried out unless the whole building were taken down and an entirely new two-storied house put up, which would cost at least £400; whereas Mr. Leeds' plan would only require an outlay of £80. After there had been many meetings and repeated discussions, the church at length resolved that Mr. Parkes' plan should be carried out if the required sum of £400 could be raised within twelve months. One of the members thereupon moved that the collecting of this sum should be entrusted to the children of the congregation. It had, he said, been evident on previous occasions how effective was the activity of the children in collecting. Many a good work in the vineyard of the Lord owed its existence to the indefatigable and disinterested zeal of the "little ones." Now, in his opinion, the building of an evening school for adults was, more than any other work of God, a task that should be laid upon the children, since in no other way could the children better show their gratitude for the education which they had received, and which guarded them against the ignorance that so sadly marred and hindered the happiness of the poor.

This motion was strongly opposed by Mr. Leeds. He could, of course, he said, have no objection to an expensive building being erected in the room of the present one, if the proposers and advocates of such a costly plan provided the required means to carry it out; but he could not see how, with any show of reason, the burden of it should be laid upon the shoulders of the children. In his opinion, the employing of children for collecting purposes ought not to be resorted to so readily. It was a matter of a

highly delicate nature. As far as he was able to judge he was of opinion that the sending out children, in the name of Christ, to beg money merely for a matter of luxury, could not fail to degrade the cause of religion in the estimation of the young themselves.

This observation again raised the flame of contention in the assembly. It is true the speeches were all delivered in a tone quite becoming a Christian congregation; but the parties now took different sides so decidedly, that I feared the result would be the failure of the entire plan of building a school-room. Happily, Mr. Redburn succeeded in preventing this fatal issue. He observed that on the one hand it certainly could not be said that the erection of an entirely new house was imperatively necessary; but, on the other, it was also saying too much, if the whole of it was called a mere matter of luxury. Taking the sum of £400 as a fair representation of the value of the proposed building, and keeping in mind that, according to Mr. Leeds' estimate, £80 would be required for the building of a school-room, he calculated that out of the total sum one-fifth, *i.e.* £80, would go to providing the poor with a useful and necessary institution, while the remaining four-fifths, or £320, would go to satisfying the architectural taste of Mr. Parkes and his friends. Now he felt assured that neither Mr. Parkes nor any other member of the church would desire the children to collect £320 for the gratification of architectural tastes. He felt equally sure that neither Mr. Leeds nor any one else would have any objection to the children collecting £80 for a school-room for the poor. So he moved that the children should be requested to try to collect the £80, if Mr. Parkes and his friends would pledge themselves to raise the £320 within twelve months hence.

This proposal at once gave a cheerful turn to the discussion. The general and continued applause of the whole congregation left no way of escape for the proposers of the expensive plan. Mr. Parkes rose with an air of mock reluctance, and accepted the pledge. Ten months had not elapsed before the new building was finished. It contained a splendid soup-kitchen below, according to Mrs. Parkes' desire, and a lofty school-room on the first floor, according to the wish of the visitors.

And thus an institution came into existence which very soon proved a real blessing to the neighbourhood. It opened up a new channel for useful work to the members of the church But I should be too prolix were I to tell the whole story just now, and must therefore keep it in reserve for another article.

WILLIAM PRICE.

IN THE LIFE OF OUR LORD.

THE EMBASSY OF THE BAPTIST—THE GREAT INVITATION.

St. Matt. chap. xi.

OUR Lord's public ministry in Galilee began at the time that John had been cast into prison, and had now continued for more than half-a-year. There was much in this ministry which those disciples of the Baptist who kept aloof from Jesus could not comprehend. There was the entire absence of that ascetic rigour and stern denunciation of all iniquity, by which their Master's character and teaching had been distinguished. There were no fastings, no prescribed repeated prayers, there was the call of a publican to be an apostle, there was the eating and drinking with publicans and sinners. All this appeared to them not only different from, but inconsistent with the idea of that kingdom, of whose advent their Master had announced himself as the herald. Some of them carried their doubts and difficulties to John himself in the prison, Hearing from them of the works of Christ, the Baptist sent two of their number to Jesus, and bade them put to him the question, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" As coming from John himself, and meant for his personal satisfaction, the question certainly would imply that some temporary misgiving had crept over the Baptist's mind. It is somewhat difficult to believe after the revelations made to him, after what he had seen and heard at the baptism, after his own repeated public proclamations of it, that his faith in the Messiahship of Jesus had been shaken. His long and unexpected imprisonment, however, must have severely tried his faith. To such a man, from infancy a child of the desert, who had roamed with such free footstep through the wilderness of Engedi, who, when the time came for his manifestation to Israel, had but exchanged the freedom of his mountain solitudes for those liberties of speech and action he took with his fellow-countrymen, the months of his imprisonment must have moved slowly and drearily along, turning even his strength into weakness. The chilly damp of being hurried unexpectedly from Herod's presence and his former open active life into the cheerless, idle solitude of the prison, fell all the chillier upon his heart on his coming to know that Jesus was apprised of his imprisonment, yet no message of sympathy was sent, no movement for his deliverance was made. His notions of the coming kingdom may not have been different from those entertained at the time by the apostles and other followers of Christ. Perhaps he fancied that at the setting-up of this kingdom all injustices, and oppressions, and spiritual wickednesses in high places were to be done away, the axe to be laid at all their roots, the fan to be so used as thoroughly to purge the threshing floor. Perhaps in rebuking Herod as he did, he thought that it was but a first blow dealt at that which the mightier than he who was to come after him was wholly to destroy. And when, instead of his expectations being fulfilled, he was left unvisited, uncheered, unhelped; and he heard of the course which Jesus was pursuing, gather-

ing crowds indeed around him, but carefully abstaining from announcing himself as the Messiah, or doing anything towards the erection of a new kingdom,—in some season of disquietude and despondency, perplexed and a little impatient, sharing their feelings, and in the hope of at once relieving their doubts and removing his own misgivings, he sent two of his disciples to put to Him a question which might be the means of drawing from Jesus a public declaration of his Messiahship, and of inducing Him openly to inaugurate the new kingdom.*

The messengers arrived and delivered their message at a very opportune conjuncture. "In the same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits ; and unto many that were blind he gave sight."† Jesus kept John's messengers for a season near him instead of answering them, going on with his healing work. He then turned to them and said, "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard ; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached." It is not simply to the miracles as displays of superhuman power that Jesus appeals ; it is to their kind and character, as peculiarly and prophetically Messianic. Jesus had, hitherto, refrained from assuming the title of the Messiah or announcing himself as such. John by his messengers urges him to do so. Christ contents himself with simply pointing to such works done by Him as the Baptist could not fail to recognise as a fulfilment of those prophecies of Isaiah, in which the days and doings of the Messiah were described. Nor can we fail to notice that, side by side with the greatest of the miracles, reserved as the closing crowning testimony to the Messiahship, is the fact that to the poor the Gospel was preached ; to the poor as well as to rich, to no favoured people, class, or section of mankind, to all in that universal character which all sustain as sinful, responsible, immortal. The words that Jesus added, "And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me," may have carried with them a special allusion to the Baptist, while proclaiming the blessedness of the man who was not offended at the patience and gentleness of Jesus, his readiness to wait and to suffer, to invite and encourage, rather than to denounce and to punish.

Having given them what seemed a sufficient answer, Jesus sent John's messengers away. He had something more, however, to say to the people that was not for the Baptist's ear ; which must not be said till the messengers were gone. What they had just seen and heard was fitted to create an unfavourable impression, as if the faith, or fortitude, or patience of John had utterly given way. Eager to shield the character of his forerunner, Jesus turned to the multitude and said to them concerning John, "What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?" a man bowing and bending as the reed does before every passing breeze, a man fickle of purpose, changeable in faith, believing at Bethabara, disbelieving now at Machærus. Not such a man is John ; rock-like, not reed-like—such as he was in the wilderness, such is he in Herod's keep. "What went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment?" caring for the comforts and luxuries of life, or a man who, all negligent as he had been of these before, feels now the hair-cloth to be too hard a garment, and would fain exchange it for a softer one? Not such a man is John. The wearers and lovers of soft raiment you will find in palaces, not in prisons. John cares as little for such raiment now as when of his own free will he chose the hair-cloth as his garment. "But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet."—The only one among all the prophets whose course and office were themselves the subjects of prophecy, whose birth, like that of his Great Master, an angel was commissioned to announce ; his predecessors seeing but from afar across the breadth of intervening centuries, he, the friend of the bridegroom, standing by the bridegroom's side, his office such towards Christ as to elevate him to a height above that ever reached before, yet this kind of greatness, one springing from position and office, as local, external, temporary, not once to be mentioned alongside that other kind of greatness which is moral, spiritual, intrinsic, eternal. "For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist ; notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

More than one public testimony had been borne by John to Jesus. Jesus answers these by the witness He thus bears to John. But as He thinks of himself, in conjunction with the Baptist, the strange and inconsistent treatment that they respectively had met with from the men of that generation presents itself to his thoughts. (Matt. xi. 16—19.) It is but seldom that anything like criticism or complaint touching those around Him comes from the lips of Jesus. All the more interesting is the glance that He here casts, the judgment that He here pronounces upon the men of his own age and nation. Addressed by two different voices, speaking in two different tones, they had turned a deaf ear to both. The rigour of the Law came to them in the message of the Baptist ; they took offence at it. The gentleness and love of the Gospel came to them in the message of Jesus ; they took equal offence at it ; justifying in either case their conduct by fixing on something in the character or lives of each of the two messengers which they turned into matter of complaint and accusation ; guilty of great unfairness in doing so, exhibiting the grossest inconsistency, charging opposite excesses upon John and upon Jesus, saying of the one that he was too austere and ascetic, that he had a devil—saying of the other that He was too free and social, that He was a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, the friend of publicans and sinners. Had it been any other two of Heaven's chosen messengers that they had to deal with,

* Many think that it was for the sake of his disciples, and for their sakes alone, that the Baptist sent them on this errand, not that he had any doubts himself, but that he knew they had. It is altogether likely that he had some regard to their establishment in a true faith in Christ. The question, however, put into their lips comes too directly from himself, and the answer is directed too plainly and pointedly to him, to allow us to shut out the idea of personal relief and satisfaction being contemplated.

† Luke vii. 21.

they might have had less difficulty in fixing on some irregularity or eccentricity of conduct out of which to fashion the shelter they sought to construct. But that even with them they tried this expedient, and imagined that they had succeeded, only shows to what lengths that principle or tendency of our nature will go which seeks to mix up the claims of religion with the character of its advocates.

But now the Saviour's thoughts pass onward from the contemplation of that folly and inconsistency which a familiar similitude borrowed from the market-place may expose, to dwell more profoundly upon the conduct of those cities wherein most of his mighty works were done. In endeavouring to follow and fathom from this point onwards the train of our Lord's reflections, as recorded by the Evangelist, we enter a region remote and very elevated. "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day." Who is He who announces so confidently what certain communities would have done had they been placed in other circumstances than those which they actually occupied, and what altered outward destiny would have followed the different course pursued? "It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon and for the land of Sodom at the day of judgment than for you." Who is He who anticipates the verdicts of eternity, pronouncing so confidently upon the greater and the lesser guilt, fore-announcing the lighter and the heavier doom?

But now before the eye of the man Christ Jesus, there spreads out a section of the great mystery that hangs over this world's spiritual history. Here are men—these inhabitants of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum—involved in all the greater guilt, incurring all the heavier doom, in consequence of the presence of Jesus in the midst of them. They were men—those inhabitants of Sodom, and Tyre, and Sidon, who, had they lived in an after-age and enjoyed the privileges bestowed upon the others, would have repented and shared in all the blessings of the heavenly kingdom. How many questions, as we stand in front of facts like these, press upon our thoughts and rise to our trembling lips—questions touching the principles and procedure of the Divine government as affecting the future and eternal destinies of our race—questions we cannot answer, that it pains and perplexes us to the uttermost even to entertain? It is in this very region that there comes one of the greatest trials of our faith. Was there no trial of the like kind for the man Christ Jesus, as He, too, stood gazing down into these depths? In what way or to what extent the human spirit of our Lord lay open to that burden and pressure which a contemplation of the sins and sufferings here and hereafter of so many of our fellow-creatures brings down upon every thoughtful spirit that has any of the tenderness of humanity in it, it is not for us to determine. But that He who was tempted in all things like as we are did at this time feel something of this burden and pressure, seems clear from the attitude into which He immediately throws himself. "At that time"—when thought was hovering over this dark and awful region—Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven. Some light has broken in upon that darkness from above, drawing his eyes upwards to its source. Some voice from above has spoken, that comes, as his own came upon the troubled waters of the lake, to still the inward agitation of his thoughts. "Jesus answered and said, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth!" Infinitely wise, infinitely merciful, infinitely loving Father, thou art Lord of heaven and earth. The past has all been ordered—the future will be all arranged, by Thee, and in thy character and purposes and providence over all as at once the Father and the Judge, the solution lies of all that to created eyes may seem obscure. "I thank thee . . . that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Why are the things that belong to their eternal peace hidden from some and revealed to others, hidden from so many, revealed to comparatively so few? One beam of light falls upon the darkness here, and for it the thanks are given.

It is not an arbitrary distinction, drawn by a capricious hand that loves to show its power. The fate of Sodom, Tyre, and Sidon was not one that it was impossible for them to have evaded, that nothing could have turned aside. They might have repented, and had they repented, the ruin had not come. A thick cloud, charged with bolts of vengeance, hung over Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum because of their unbelief. All over the land it was but one of a family, or two of a city, who had welcomed the Saviour and his message. The right interpretation of all this was not given by saying that it was by a divine decree that had no regard to the character and conduct of each, that the eyes of some blinded and the eyes of others opened to the heavenly light. It was from the wise and prudent, who thought themselves so much wiser or better than others, whose pride it was that blinded them, that the Gospel was hidden. It was to the babes, to the humble, the meek, the teachable, that it had been revealed. And it is not so much for the hiding it from the one as for the revealing it to the other that Jesus her gave thanks. On two after occasions of his life He had each of the two alternatives—the hiding and the revealing, separately and exclusively before Him, and the difference of the emotions felt and expressed by Him marked the difference of their effects upon his mind and heart. Would we know what impression the revealing made, let us plant ourselves by his side as the seventy return from their brief but successful mission, and tell Him of the results; when without a shadow on his joy, He rejoices in spirit, and repeats in words the very thanksgiving that He now offered. Would we know what impression the hiding made, let us plant ourselves beside Him as He beheld the city and wept over it, exclaiming "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem! if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."

But is it a full solution of the mystery that those

left in darkness have themselves, by their wilfulness, and pride, and carnality, created a medium through which the heavenly light cannot pass? Why is it, if the spirits of all men are equally and absolutely beneath the control of the Creator, that any are suffered to remain in such condition? There is no answer to such a question, for, take up the great enigma of the doings of God and the destinies of man at what end you may, approach it from what quarter you please, adopt whatever method of solution you may prefer, make your way through the difficulties that beset you as far as you can, sooner or later you reach the point where explanation fails, and where there is nothing left for us but to join with Him who said "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

The occasion now before us may have been the first in which Jesus was seen and heard in the act of prayer. The stopping of the current of his address to them by the offering up of a short and solemn thanksgiving to his Father in heaven must have made a deep impression on the multitude. It was singularly fitted to excite wonder and awe, and to lead them to inquire what the peculiar relationship was in which Jesus stood to the Great Being whom he so addressed. Was it not as one reading their thoughts and graciously condescending to unfold so much of the mystery of his Sonship to the Father, that Jesus went on to say, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; . . . . and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." The Baptist, in his closing testimony to Jesus, had declared, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." Jesus now takes up and appropriates this testimony. With special reference, we may believe, to the things hidden and revealed of which he had been speaking, he says:—All things—all those things concerning man's relationship to God, and his condition here and hereafter, have not simply been revealed, but been delivered to me,—handed over for adjustment, for discovery to, for bestowal upon men; and chiefly that of the true knowledge of God. Intimate and complete is the mutual knowledge which the Father and the Son have of another, a knowledge in kind and in degree incommunicable. It is the Father alone who knoweth who the Son is; the Son alone who knoweth who the Father is. "As the Father knoweth me," said Jesus, "even so know I the Father."* Finite may measure finite, like comprehend its like, man know what is in man, but here it is infinite embracing infinite, the Divine Son and the Divine Father compassing and fathoming the Divine Nature, and the Divine attributes belonging equally to both.

And yet there is a knowledge of the Father to which man may reach, yet reach only by receiving it through the Son. Had we been told simply that no man knoweth the Father but the Son, nor the Son but the Father, we should not have known to which of the two we were to look for any such acquaintance with either or both as our finite minds are capable of attaining; but when Jesus says no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him, He announces himself to us as the sole revealer of the Father; this no small or secondary part of his gracious office, to make God clearly known to us as our Father which is in heaven. To some obscure and partial knowledge of the Supreme Being as Creator, Upholder, Sovereign, Governor, we may attain without help of this revelation of Him by Christ, but if we would know Him in his living personality, know Him as a God not afar off but near at hand, know Him in all the richness and fulness of his mercy and love, know Him as a pitying, forgiving, protecting, providing, comforting, reconciled Father, we must get at that knowledge through Christ, we must see him as the Son reveals Him. No man knoweth thus the Father, but he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. But who is he to whom this revelation of the Father is offered? Let the broad unrestricted invitation with which the statement of the Saviour is immediately succeeded supply the answer:—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This invitation loses half its meaning, taken out of the connection in which it was spoken. We understand and appreciate the fulness and richness of its significance only by looking upon it as grounded on and flowing out of what Christ had the moment before been saying. At first sight it might seem as if there was something like confinement and contraction in the preceding utterances of Jesus. He claims all things as committed to Him. Otherwise than through Him nothing can come to us. He tells us that for all true knowledge of the Father we must be indebted exclusively to him. As to our knowing and receiving, does this not seem to narrow the channel, to present to our eyes a confined contracted stream. Yes, it looks so as we gaze upon this channel and the stream which flows through it as lying outside our earth, spanning the mysterious distance between it and Heaven; but watch it as at its nearest end this channel touches the earth and spreads out its waters on every side, and then see how all narrowness and contraction disappears. "All things are delivered unto me of my Father." But why so delivered, why put so exclusively into his hand? Simply and solely that they might so easily, so freely, so fully come unto ours. For us to go elsewhere than to Him, to expect that otherwise than through Him we are to receive anything, is to resist and repudiate this ordinance of the Father. But He has all, He holds all as the Treasurer of the Kingdom, the Steward of the Divine mercies, the sinner's divinely constituted Trustee and He has all and holds all under the condition that there shall be the freest, most unrestricted, most gracious dispensing of all the treasures committed to his custody, that whoever asks shall get, that no needy one shall ever come to Him and be sent unrelieved away. "No man knoweth the Father but he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." But does He niggardly withhold that revelation, or restrict it to a few? No; wide as the world is, of all who seek to know the Father that knowing Him they may have peace, so wide is the unlimited invitation spread. In many a sublime attractive position do we see Jesus standing while executing his gracious office here on earth—in none loftier or more divine

* John x. 15.

than when placing Himself in the centre of the wide circle of humanity, and, looking round upon the millions of our race,—labourers to weariness,—with this or that other burden pressing them to the earth, with the full consciousness of one who has the power to relieve all who come, he says :—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Rest,—this is what our inward nature most deeply needs ; for everywhere, in every region of it—in our intellect, our conscience, our affections, our will—the spirit of unrest, like a possessing demon, haunts us with its disturbing presence. Then let us see how Christ would have us bring these vexed souls of ours to Him, that from every such haunted region of it He may cast the vexing demon out.

Our intellect, in its search after God, is in unrest, re-echoing the ancient plaint, "Oh that I knew where I might find him! . . . Behold, I go forward, but He is not there ; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him : on the left hand, where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him : He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see Him." There dawns upon us the sublime idea of a Being infinitely wise, and just, and good, author of all and orderer of all, but through the clouds and darkness with which his guidance and government of this world is so densely swathed we begin to lose sight of Him. Looking at Him as revealed alone in the ways of his Providence, we get perplexed as we look around upon a world in which such oppressions, wrongs, injustices are done, where might so often triumphs over right, where sin and misery so fearfully abound, where death comes in to close the short-lived, chequered scene of every earthly life. Faith begins to lose its footing, now believing and now doubting, now all things clear, now all things clouded, restlessly we are tossed as on a troubled sea. What we want is some firm ground for our faith in God to rest on : Jesus Christ supplies that ground in revealing this God to us as our Father, in telling us that such as He, Jesus, was, in love and pity and care and help to all around him, such is the God and Father of us all to the whole human family. In our anxiety to get one true clear sight of that Great Being whose doings we contemplate with such a mixture of awe and of uncertainty, we are ready with Philip to say :—"Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." The answer comes from the lips of Jesus, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip ? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." It is a Father of whose love we have the earthly image in the love of Christ, who rules the world we live in. Can we doubt any longer that wisdom, mercy, justice, and love shall direct the whole train of the administration of human affairs, the whole treatment of each individual of our race.

There is unrest in the conscience. A wounded conscience who can bear ? The sense of guilt as it rises within the breast who can quench ? The dark forebodings that it generates who can clear away ? They tell us our fears are idle ; we try to believe them, and put our foot upon those fears to tread them down, but they spring up afresh beneath our tread. They tell us that God is too merciful—too kind to punish. We try to believe them, knowing that God is a thousandfold milder, more merciful than thought of ours can conceive ; but we have only to look within and around us upon the sufferings that sin inflicts, and the vision of a Divinity that does not, will not punish, vanishes like a dream of the night. Where then can our conscience-troubled spirits find repose, where but in Him who hath taken our sin upon Him, in whom there is redemption for us through his blood, even the forgiveness of all our sins? If we may go to Christ for anything, it is for this forgiveness. If we may trust Him in anything, it is in the bestowal of this gift. If among the things that have been delivered unto Him of the Father, there be one that more clearly and conspicuously than another is held out to be taken at once from his most gracious hand, it is the pardon, the peace, the reconciliation with God, offered to us in Him. If we put these aside, or will not take them as the fruits of our Lord's passion, death, and righteousness, purchased for us at that great cost to Him, gratuitously bestowed on us, then if the higher instincts of our moral and spiritual nature come in any degree to be quickened, what a weary toilsome fruitless task do they set us to execute! These instincts tell us that we are the creatures of another's hand, the dependents on another's bounty, the subjects of another's rule, that to Him our first duties are owing, that against him our greatest offences have been committed, that to stand well with Him is the first necessity of our being. How then shall we remedy the evil of our past ingratitude and disobedience, how shall we bring things right and keep things right between us and God ? Oh ! if all the anxious thought, and weary labours, the prayers, the pains, the self-restraints, the self-mortifications, the offerings at all the altars, the giving to all the priests, the sacrifices—personal, domestic, social, of affections, of property, of life—that have been made by mankind to turn away the apprehended wrath of Heaven, and to work themselves into something like favour with the powers of the invisible world ;—if they could be all brought together and heaped up in one great mass before us, what a mountain pile of toil and suffering would they exhibit, what a gigantic monument to the sense of sin, the power of conscience in the human heart ! With a most mournful eye we look upon that pile as we remember that it has been heaped up needlessly and in vain, that all that was wanted was the ceasing on the part of those engaged in it from the effort to establish a righteousness of their own before God, the ceasing to revert to any such methods to ward off the displeasure or to win the favour of the Most High, the ceasing to repair to such harbours of refuge as churches, altars, priests construct : and the opening simply of the ear to the words of Jesus, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

There is unrest in our affections. Here they foolishly wander, there they bitterly are checked, at times dammed up by manifold obstructions, at times running wildly to waste, ever seeking, never finding full allowed complacent rest. And why ? Because nowhere here on earth can a being or object be found on which we can safely, innocently, abidingly lavish the whole wealth of that affection which the heart con-

tains. For the right placing, the full outdrawing, the perfect and the permanent repose of the heart, we want one to love—above us, so that reverence may mingle with esteem; like us, so that closely andfamiliarly we may embrace—one in whom all conceivable excellences meet and centre, all that the eye covets to admire, that the heart asks to love. We seek for such an one in vain till we hear Jesus saying, Come unto me, and *I* will give you rest. We go, and all, and more than all, we asked for, could think of, we find in Him. Grace and truth blended in perfect harmony, a beauty undimmed by a single blemish, a sympathy constant and entire, a love eternal, unchangeable, which nothing can quench, from which nothing can separate. Here at last, and here only, do we find one wishing to be loved and worthy to be loved with the full devotion of the heart. Restless till it lights on Him, with what a warm embrace when it finds Him does the heart of faith clasp Jesus to its bosom! "What is thy beloved more than another beloved?"—may the watchmen of the city say. The answer is at hand: "My beloved is the chief among ten thousand, he is altogether lovely. I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine—my Lord, my God, my Shepherd, Saviour, Kinsman, Brother, Friend."

There is unrest in the will. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. It aims at, it attempts independence. We would be our own masters, we will not have another to reign over us; and so, instead of the quiet of a settled order, there is confusion and anarchy within. All, indeed, is not left absolutely loose, unreined, unregulated. A yoke of some kind we all are born under, or willingly take on. Some assume the yoke of a single passion of their nature, and if that passion be a strong one, such as covetousness, it is not long ere it turns the man into a slave, making him a mere beast of burden—time for nothing, care for nothing, taste for nothing, joy in nothing but in working for it and under it. And the more work done for it, the more does it impose, its day of labour without any quiet evening tide, its week without a Sabbath. Nor does it mend the matter much if instead of one there be many such yokes about the neck, jostling one another, fretting and galling the wearer by the force and variety of the impulses that drive him in this direction and in that. It is to all mankind as bearers of the one yoke, or the many, that Jesus says—"Take up my yoke, throw off these others, the yoke of pride, of covetousness, of sensuality, of worldliness, of ambition, of self-indulgence,—take on that yoke which consists in devotedness to me, to duty, in a life of self-restraint, in a struggle with all that is evil, a cultivation of all that is beautiful, and good, and holy. A hard yoke you may think this to be, but believe me, my yoke is easy, my burden is light, easier and lighter far than those you are groaning under."

One great reason why we are unconscious of the comparative lightness and easiness of this yoke of the Christian discipleship is that we take it on in the spirit of fear, and of a selfish mercenary hope, instead of with that trust and love and gratitude which are the soft wrappings which, laid beneath it, make it so easy to be borne. It is as those who have been redeemed to God by Christ's most precious blood, whose sins have been all forgiven them for Jesus' sake, whose peace has been made up with God through him; it is in the spirit of child-like confidence, looking up to God as our Father in heaven, and to Himself as having ready in his hand for us the grace and strength we need, that Jesus would have us take up every duty, face every temptation, endure every trial, of the Christian life. But if instead of this it be with a doubtful mind and a divided heart that we put forth the hand to take on the yoke—if we do this, not so much to render a return for a great benefit already received, as to add to our chance of receiving that benefit hereafter—if it be for peace and not from peace, for life and not from life that we are working—what is this but trying without throwing it off to shift the old yoke of self a little, loosen some of its fastenings, and by their help try to attach to us the new yoke of Christ? Is it any wonder that, encumbered thus, there should be little freedom of motion, little capacity for, and little enjoyment of, the work of faith and labour of love? As ever we desire to know how truly easy the yoke of Jesus is, first let us enter into the rest that at once and in full measure He gives to all who come to Him—the rest of forgiveness, peace, acceptance with God. And then, as animated and strengthened by the possession and enjoyment of this rest, let us assume the yoke, that in the bearing of it we may enter into the further rest that there is for us in Him—the rest of a meek and lowly heart, gentle, resigned, contented, patient of wrong, submissive under suffering, a rest not given at once or in full measure to any; to possess which we must be ready to enter into the spirit of those verses of Toplady:—

"Fain would I my Lord pursue,
Be all my Saviour taught;
Do as Jesus bade me do,
And think as Jesus thought.
But 'tis Thou must change my heart,
The perfect gift must come from Thee;
Meek Redeemer, now impart
Thine own humility.

Lord, I cannot, must not rest
Till I thy mind obtain;
Chase presumption from my breast,
And all thy mildness gain.
Give me, Lord, thy gentle heart,
Thy lowly mind my portion be;
Meek Redeemer, now impart
Thine own humility."

WILLIAM HANNA.

MARIE.

A VISIT TO MARIE, A FRENCH HEROINE.

It was a charming afternoon in July when, with my friend Madame Sancourt, I walked up one of the hills on the border of the Lake of Geneva. We walked slowly, not merely because the road was rather steep and the atmosphere warm, but also because, with almost every fresh step, Nature disclosed new beauties to our delighted eyes. It seemed as if the Creator had here brought together all the treasures of his inexhaustible store to bless and beautify this earth of ours. If we desired to admire Nature in the magnificence of her grandeur we had only to wait for the moment when a winding of the path enabled us to look through a gap in the mountain range, towards the south, where Mont Blanc stood at a distance before us, piercing the sky with his snow-clad summit. A few steps more and another winding brought us to an opening, through which we had a panoramic view of the loveliest of valleys, where the evergreen fir groves and the flowery meadows, the broad shades of the hills, and the picturesque villas basking in the afternoon glow, formed as it were a concert of colours, which was like music to the eyes. Then again, turning to the west, the lake spread itself out before our view, its azure crystal contrasting with the everlasting verdure of the hill-slopes, and reflecting the numerous houses, villas, castles, and churches, which adorn its banks, like the fantastic carvings in the frame of some majestic mirror.

Language is too poor fully to express what we thought, felt, and enjoyed. Madame Sancourt had seen these beauties of Nature perhaps a thousand times before, yet she gazed at them as if, like myself, she now saw them for the first time.

"The grass withers and the flowers fade," she said, when at length we turned down a road that led into a village in the valley, "but the ideas of God which they are meant to express are always fresh and new. What sublimity of design, what a sense of the good, the beautiful, the true, must there be in that Mind in which the conceptions of such *tableaux* arose, and what skill and power to compel dead matter thus to realise those conceptions!"

Madame Sancourt was a painter, but she was not one of those artists who, while admiring the beauty of Nature, are blind to the truth which it embodies.

"To see the work is heaven," she said; "to see Him who made it must be the heaven of heavens! Ah!" she added, after a pause; "that was a true word which the Lord spoke when He said, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'"

This was not an expression of the mere sensitiveness common to artists. What I mean is, she did not quote that text merely for the sake of the beauty or sublimity of the thought it conveyed. It was the expression of a grave truth which had engrossed all her thoughts, feelings, and desires. To witness a pure heart, cleansed through faith in Christ, was a greater enjoyment to her than even the sight of the most charming landscape or the grandest masterpiece of art.

We were on our way to partake of such an enjoyment now. We were going to visit blind Marie, an old woman, who lived in the village at the bottom of the hill. This, however, was not Madame Sancourt's first visit. She had known Marie for years, and, weather permitting, she used to spend a few hours with her every Friday afternoon, to read to her and to comfort her in her affliction. And she never came with empty hands either, as witness the little basket which she this time allowed me to carry, and which contained a sweet-smelling nosegay, a dozen of new-laid eggs, and some of the choicest fruits of her garden. What the basket contained in winter time I cannot tell; but love is exhaustless in its contrivances; it always knows the secret of turning water into wine, and gathering roses in a desert.

We entered a neat-looking cottage at the entrance of the village. The door was opened by an old woman, who had a wooden leg. I have seldom seen such an ugly face, but, at the same time, I never saw a face the ugliness of which was so perfectly subdued and overcome by the expression of kind cordial love, which expressed itself through each one of those irregular features. Good old Jeannette! I always remember her with pleasure. She was a dear ugly creature.

"Ah, you have come at last!" she exclaimed, with delight. "I say, madame, it is, indeed, too bad to keep us hanging so long between hope and fear. You know when the clock strikes four, and you have not made your appearance, we get very anxious about you. But it is all right now, and I hope you will stay long this time."

The loquacious woman hobbled away through a passage, which led into a little garden. A venerable-looking blind woman, apparently of about sixty-five, was sitting on a rustic seat, busily engaged in knitting. Nor was she by any means what you would call a beautiful old woman. It was evident from the cast of her features that, by birth, she must have belonged to the poorer class of society. But there was an uncommonly sweet expression noticeable in her weather-beaten face, a solemn calmness, which seemed to have been acquired through many a hard inward struggle.

"Oh, I'm so glad you have come!" she said, as Madame Sancourt impressed a hearty kiss upon her cheek. "I have got a letter from Hadschi, which you must read. It is such a good letter."

"From Hadschi!" Madame Sancourt exclaimed joyfully. "And how is she? Is she doing well?"

"Excellently. But you will learn all about her from her letter? And whom have you brought with you?"

"A friend from England, who upon hearing of your love to Jesus, was desirous of making your acquaintance."

I took Marie's hand, and she responded with a cordial pressure. Jeannette now brought chairs for us, and Marie said,—

Friends from England are always welcome. It was through an English child of God that I was [illegible] the Saviour. But that happened more than thirty years ago, and she is in heaven now; at least, I think she must be, for I have never got [illegible] from her or about her for twenty-five years."

"Were you in England at that time?" I asked.

"No, I never was in England," answered she with a smile; "though I often wondered that I never got there, for I have been wandering about a great deal [illegible] with Louisa Munro, which I shall remember as long as I live."

"Dear Marie has gone through many a strange experience in her lifetime," said Madame Sancourt, gently laying her hand upon that of her blind friend: "and she will be glad to tell you something about the [illegible] with her; will you not, dear?"

"Of course, of course," was the ready answer; "but we must first read Hadschi's letter. I long to hear it read again, especially as there are some expressions in it which Jeannette could not well make out."

Jeannette, who had in the meantime emptied Madame Sancourt's basket in the kitchen and placed the fragrant nosegay in a glass vase, now took her seat beside us.

"Well," she said very merrily, in reference to Marie's last remark, "I venture to say I have learnt to read my good French language perfectly, but Hadschi scribbles down names which only Turks and Moors could pronounce. That *isn't* a language for Christian people."

"But who is Hadschi?" I asked.

"A dear Christian sister at Algiers," said Madame Sancourt, "whom the Lord converted from Mohammedanism to the love of Christ, through the instrumentality of our Marie."

"I will tell you about her by-and-by," Marie said; "and you will love her when you know her story."

The letter was then read. As to style and language, it certainly was a curious document, and I could not wonder at good Jeannette not having been able to decipher every word, for there were many expressions which, but for Marie's explanations, would have been perfectly unintelligible to me. The spirit and purport of the letter, on the other hand, were most excellent and edifying. The writer of it was evidently a true child of God, overflowing with the love of Jesus, through whom she had found forgiveness of all her sins, and in whom she rejoiced as the only and sure foundation of her hope and peace for time and for eternity. It seemed to me from her letter as if she were engaged as a nurse in some hospital. She wrote with great joy of three or four Mussulmans whom she had been the means, in God's hand, of leading to Jesus before their death. But it appeared that she had to suffer a great deal of annoyance and persecution both from the Mohammedans and the Roman Catholic priests, because her Gospel work was making much progress among the people of the district in which she laboured.

"What power of faith!" I said; "and that in a Turkish woman too! She puts many a Christian to shame."

"She does, indeed," said Marie; "and so do the Turks in many respects. They are commonly cried down and spoken of as fanatics, but their fanaticism is owing to their religion, not to their character. They are on the whole a noble, honest, serious people; that which they acknowledge as truth and religion is everything to them. Theirs is not that light-minded flippant spirit, so common, alas! to our nation, which has no scruple in trifling with the highest and most serious concerns of mankind. Whatever the Turks may be, scoffers they are not. They may err in religion, and in their error commit great sins; but it is only because they throw heart and soul into what they believe to be agreeable to God, and conducive to securing their future happiness. They are a thoroughly *believing* people, and if once their faith is directed to the right object, you will find them prepared to sacrifice themselves body and soul for the spread of the knowledge of it. Such, at least, is my dear beloved Hadschi. I never met with a more determined and dangerous opponent so long as she believed that I was an enemy of God. But no sooner did she see her mistake, and learn the truth as it is in Jesus, than she became the most devoted friend and the stanchest ally I ever had in my struggle for the Cross against the Crescent.

"And how did that remarkable change come about?" I asked.

"We were together in the service——"

"Permit me to interrupt you," Madame Sancourt interposed. "Would it give you too much trouble to tell the story of your life to my friend? It will enable him the better to understand how you became acquainted with Hadschi."

"But you have heard it so often," answered Marie; "I am afraid it will be rather tedious to you."

"And if you should tell it for the thousandth time," cried Jeannette, "I am assured madame would listen with the same pleasure as if she were hearing it for the first time. It is just like a Bible story, showing that Jesus knows how to make his enemies his friends, and how He works in the soul of a poor lost sinner."

"Well, then," said Marie, "to begin at the beginning:—"I was born of Roman Catholic parents at a village near Marseilles, and trained up for kitchen work, as my father kept an inn, where many people used to dine. I was thus perfectly instructed in the art of preparing food for the body; but of the food that nourishes the soul I knew next to nothing. I could read and write well, but that there was such a book as the Word of God I knew not. I used to go to mass every Sunday, but what it really meant I could not tell. I said my prayers to the image of Mary, but who Mary was I did not care to know, and nobody sought to tell me. I was a careless, merry-hearted pleasure-loving girl, though from an innate sense of respectability and decency I always kept clear of disorderly conduct. Adversities deprived my father of the means of subsistence, and brought him to the grave. As my mother had died a few years previously, I was left alone in the world at the age of eighteen. I went to Marseilles, and got a situation as cook in a gentleman's house.

"My master was a Greek, who carried on an extensive shipping trade with the Levant. His wife, I believe, was a Jewess. But, indeed, whether either of them had any religion at all I cannot tell, for I never saw them go to church or chapel, nor engage in prayer. My fellow-servants were stanch Catholics, but just as ignorant as I was. Our mistress permitted us to attend worship regularly, but as I had often to cook a sumptuous dinner for a numerous company on Sunday, I frequently stayed away from church, and at length left off church-going altogether. I did so with the less scruple because I observed that my fellow-servants did not become a bit wiser or better for all their church-going and paternosters. Some of them were very bad characters indeed, and these were exactly the most bigoted of the lot. I considered myself far superior to them as to virtue and honesty, and since I did not find that I became less virtuous and honest by leaving off church-going and praying, I saw no reason to resume those habits which I now looked upon as quite useless.

"Still, I did not feel quite at ease with what I called my 'common-sense religion.' Often when alone in my bedroom I would look up to the stars that glittered in the sky above me, and think: 'The people who inhabit those beautiful worlds must be very happy, and a great deal better than any of us. I wonder whether I shall go there after my death? But no,' I would often add, with a sigh, 'I am not good enough for that.' Notwithstanding my high opinion of my virtue and honesty, I could not help feeling that there was something wrong with me. I believed that there was a God who made all things, and I could not deny but that it was right to worship Him and to pray to Him. Sometimes this thought would so haunt me that, in a sort of frenzy, I took to mumbling a hundred *Pater nosters* in rapid succession, till I would fall asleep on my pillow. The next morning I would feel ashamed of this, but still, I thought, it could do no harm at any rate.

"Though I had the use of both my eyes in those days, yet I groped about in greater darkness than surrounds me now. But it pleased the Lord to permit a ray of light to pierce the darkness. Owing to his extensive mercantile connections, my master frequently entertained guests from foreign countries. An English family, who were on their way to Malta, came to the house and stayed with us for several days. The lady's maid, a girl of my own age, of the name of Louisa Munro, slept in my room. She spoke French very well, as she had lived for three years in Paris with the family. I observed that she knelt down and prayed before going to bed, and that she did the same in the morning before leaving her room. What struck me most, however, was her not crossing herself. I wondered what strange religion hers could be. I noticed a little book in which she read a page after her prayer. She left it on the mantel-piece one day, and no sooner had she left the room than I took a glance at it. It was written in English, so I could make nothing of it. But my curiosity was greatly excited, and the next evening when I saw her again read and pray, I asked her what book it was. She answered that it was a New Testament, and when I appeared not to know what that meant, she explained by saying that it was the Word of God, from which we could learn the way of salvation. Then, unlocking her box, she produced a French copy, and made me a present of it.

"This was my first acquaintance with the Bible. As soon as I found a moment's leisure, I took to reading a few pages, in which I met with a great many things I did not understand. And no wonder; for I did with this book just as I used to do with the novels: I turned up the last leaves first, to ascertain whether all ended beautifully. So I got quite confused in the visions of the Apocalypse, and becoming tired of them soon, I laid the book aside with a feeling of disappointment. I thought it was a book full of fables, and wondered how such a sensible girl as Louisa could say that it taught us the way of salvation.

"I often thought of this afterwards. Undoubtedly, the distribution of the Bible cannot be too strongly recommended and promoted, but I believe that, as in every good work, so also in this, zeal should be guided by wisdom. The distribution of the Bible among totally ignorant people should as much as possible be combined with some instructive remarks about the manner in which this book ought to be read, and about its contents. Had Louisa left our house that same day, I believe her having given me the New Testament would have produced an effect upon me quite contrary to what she meant to produce.

"Fortunately she remained long enough to put me in the right way. She showed me in a kind way that the folly did not lie in the book, but with myself, inasmuch as it was always a foolish thing to read the last pages of a book first. She then gave me a simple but very clear and distinct summary of the life of Christ and the foundation of the first churches, interspersing her tale now and then with a passage from the Gospels or the Acts. I was so deeply interested in all I heard that we continued this conversation till day-break.

"'We must go to bed,' she said at last, 'and try to get a little bit of sleep for a couple of hours or so. But try to go to sleep with the sweet thought that Jesus loves you, that He died for you, that He desires to save you from your sins and from this wicked world.'

"All this made a deep impression upon me. Louisa prayed with me the next morning, and entreated me to give myself up as a lost but believing sinner to the only Redeemer. Her words were greatly blessed to my heart. When she left for Malta we parted as sisters in Jesus.

"We kept up a constant correspondence after her departure. My life with my fellow-servants now became very unpleasant. The more I learnt of the Gospel and the more Christ became precious to me, the more I loathed the worldly-minded, gay, and often blasphemous conversation in the kitchen. I tried to open the eyes of my fellow-servants to the awful consequences to their souls which their way of thinking and living could not fail to have, and to lead them to Christ; but their furious enmity against the word of God soon compelled me to hold my peace. I now became an object of hatred and derision, and at length I resolved to look out for another situation. Louisa

wrote me to come to Malta, as she knew a good place for me in an English family who wanted a French cook. No offer could have been more acceptable than this, as it opened up to me the prospect of seeing my good friend again.

"Alas! I was too sanguine in my hopes. I never saw her again; but our joy will be all the greater when we meet in heaven. The ship in which I took passage for Malta was not one of the regular packet-boats, but a small merchant-vessel, the captain of which was an acquaintance of mine, who offered me a free passage. Bad weather, which continued for two days, and at length increased to a furious tempest, drove us altogether out of our course towards the coast of Barbary. A thousand times I was in despair of my life, and my faith in Christ, which had but so recently sprung up in my heart, was severely tested. By the grace of God it came out only the more strengthened and confirmed. I now knew from experience that Jesus, and Jesus alone, is sufficient to enable one to look death in the face, not only without fear, but with joy.

"No sooner had the storm subsided, and preparations begun to be made to regain our lost course, than we found that we had only escaped one danger to fall into another which was not less fearful. A pirate ship made up to us. The resistance of our crew, gallant as it was, proved in vain. Our captain was killed. With the mate and the sailors, who were most of them wounded, I was transferred to the pirate ship, and the next day I was sold as a slave at a place some twenty miles from Algiers.

"Picture to yourself my condition. If ever it was a great mercy that I knew in whom I believed, it was so now. Had this calamity befallen me a few months earlier, I am assured I should have made away with myself. I now encouraged myself in my God, who was my *true* Master, since He had bought me with a much more precious price than silver and gold. I knew that my soul was in his hand, and that men would have no greater power over my body than He would allow.

"My master was a wealthy Turk, and a great landed proprietor. He was more humane than I had ever believed a Turkish despot could be. With a gang of slaves I was sent into the fields, and the work which I had to do in the heat of the burning sun was very hard upon me. I was several times beaten, because the overseer thought I was lazy; but when our master, who now and then inspected us, observed my rather delicate constitution, I was transferred to his pleasure-garden. There was nothing but light, and indeed agreeable work, in store for me here. I had to water the flower-beds, to clean the paths, to bind up the shrubs, and to attend the chief gardener's only child, a nice-looking girl about my own age, of the name of Hadschi. She was an intelligent, brisk, lively person, whose dark shining eyes seemed to throw out fire when she was animated. She was very easily irritated, and would often burst out in rage, especially when contradicted, for her imperiousness knew no limits. But she was also easily calmed down by meek submission, and if spoken to in a gentle way, she would always acknowledge her fault. In short, she was a hot-tempered but thoroughly honest creature.

"The Lord enabled me to behave myself so as to gain the affection and confidence of my young mistress. As we lived at a considerable distance from the town, we were seldom visited by strangers. Hadschi had thus no friend, and scarcely enjoyed any conversation. She felt very lonely, and looked eagerly for a heart into which she might pour out her own. At first she took little notice of me, since she could not understand me, nor I her; but gradually I learnt to speak Arabic, which was the general language of the country, and after two years I was able to express myself as fluently in that tongue as in my own. The more I was able to understand Hadschi's thoughts and to communicate mine to her, the greater was the pleasure she took in my company. She was quite delighted to hear me speak about France, the customs and manners of our people, and the strange things which we had invented to make life comfortable. She at length became so attached to me that she asked her father to allow me to be always with her, and so I was raised to the rank of her confidential friend, from whom she had no secret, and from whom she withheld no benefit which it was in her power to bestow.

"Hitherto I had always avoided speaking to her about religious matters. My conscience would often remonstrate with me on account of this; but I lacked courage to broach the subject. I knew that she was a fanatical Islamite. I had been so fortunate as to keep my New Testament concealed from the eyes of the pirates, and during my trials this precious book was my faithful consoler. Now that I was in comparatively prosperous circumstances, it often became my reprover. When I read such sayings of the Lord as, 'Whosoever shall deny me before men, him shall I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven,' my heart would tremble within me; but other texts, such as 'Do not cast your pearls before swine,' or, 'Be wise as serpents,'" would again tranquillise my disturbed mind. Still, that tranquillity seldom lasted long. Hadschi often spoke of the Koran, from which she would recite such portions as her religion made it imperative upon her to know by heart. She would also three times a day prostrate herself and exclaim, 'God is great, and Mohammed is his prophet!' I witnessed all this in silence; but a voice within me would whisper: 'Why do you allow that poor erring soul to continue in a way which you know to be a way of perdition? Why do you not maintain the honour of the true Saviour with the same faithfulness with which she exalts the false prophet?'

"These accusations of my conscience many a night robbed me of my sleep. I loved Hadschi indeed. I had never loved any one as I loved her; she was so kind, so tender-hearted to me. She allowed me to read her very heart so freely; and, save the errors and absurdities of Islam, all I read in that heart was noble, amiable, and true. I was so attached to her that I felt I could have allowed myself to be burned to save her life. Yet—what a strange mixture of contradictions is the human heart!—to save her soul from everlasting perdition I had no courage.

Not because I dreaded the serious, perhaps fatal, consequences which my efforts might bring on myself, when it became known that I, an impudent slave, a Christian dog, had tried to make her an apostate to the only true religion; but because I felt almost assured that my attempts would not only be in vain, but render her still more fanatical than she was, deprive me for ever of her friendship, and ruin me for life, without anything being gained by it. Indeed, what I dreaded most of all was the depth of misery into which I should be sure to plunge her loving heart, when, through what she would regard as imprudent proselytism, I should have robbed her of the best and only friend she possessed in this world.

"'But,' my conscience would interpose, 'is it right to love her more than Jesus? Has Jesus not a right to claim her? Is it *true* love towards her that bids you keep her separated from Jesus, when He has perhaps brought you hither for the express purpose that you should lead that lost sheep to the only good Shepherd?'

"This fearful struggle made me perfectly miserable. It told upon my health so much that I drooped visibly. My pale cheeks and emaciated form did not escape Hadschi's notice. She anxiously inquired into the cause of it, but I gave her evasive answers. She remonstrated with me on account of my reserve, and sometimes she even besought me with tears to open my heart to her. It was touching to see how she exhausted all her wit to guess the reason of my grief. Was it because I mourned over my absence from my own country and friends? Was it because I regretted the loss of my liberty? Was it because I was separated from a young man to whom she supposed I might be betrothed? She promised me everything that was in her power if I would tell her. Sometimes, too, she burst into anger, and commanded me to divulge the secret. But then, when she saw how she frightened me, she would give way to tears, and fall on my neck and sob.

"At length my conscience became too powerful for me. Now that Hadschi herself besought and bade me tell her what was in my heart, my cowardice and unfaithfulness became the more contemptible in my own eyes. I well remember one sleepless night that I passed. In the morning I came to a firm resolution. I entreated my God to make me faithful, even unto death. Peace then re-entered my long-disturbed soul: I was prepared to drink the bitter cup.

"'My dearly beloved friend,' I said to Hadschi, when the next day she again insisted upon my revealing my secret, 'permit me to tell you a story of what happened in my own country many years ago. Once there was a prince in the land of the Franks who became seriously ill. His physicians were called, and they prepared a draught which he was to take three times a day. Now the prince had a servant who loved him tenderly; this servant was in possession of a very old book of prescriptions, which a holy man had at one time given to one of his ancestors. The remedies which this wonderful book prescribed against all possible diseases, even those which were deemed incurable, had always and in all cases proved perfectly effective. The servant also knew that the prince's physicians were not well instructed men, that in their ignorance they had mixed poisonous herbs with the ingredients of the compound, and that, consequently, the draughts which they had prescribed for the prince would only make him die a slower and crueller death. On the other hand he knew also that he only needed to prepare the remedy which his book prescribed to cure his beloved master at once, provided that he could be persuaded to take it. Yet, in spite of all this, he did not prepare the remedy, neither did he speak a word about it to the poor patient.'

"Here I stopped.

"'For shame, the traitor!' exclaimed Hadschi. 'I hope they bastinadoed him till he died.'

"'Don't be too rash,' I said. 'The poor servant was in a fearful state. He knew that the prince put perfect confidence in his physicians, and regarded every one who spoke a word against them as slanderers. At the same time he was almost assured that the prince would not only refuse to take the remedy which he could have prepared, but would suspect him as a poisoner, cast him into prison, and order him to be strangled. Now what was the poor man to do?'

"Hadschi was silent. 'A dreadful condition,' she said at last with a sigh. 'I really don't know. And what *did* he do?'

"'He at length overcame his fear,' I answered, in a serious voice; 'he spoke out his mind to the prince, come what might. The prince, after some hesitation, believed him: took the remedy, and was cured.'

"'Glorious!' exclaimed she, clapping her hands with delight. 'And what reward did the good man receive? Did the prince make him his chief physician?'

"'No doubt he would have done so,' I replied, 'but——'

"'But?'

"'The enraged physicians made a conspiracy, and poisoned both the prince and he who had saved him.'

"'Horrible!' exclaimed Hadschi, rising and pacing up and down the verandah in which we were sitting. 'And is it a *true* story?' asked she, with child-like curiosity. 'Has it *really* happened?'

"'Well, I cannot tell whether it ever *has* happened,' I answered, with a hesitating voice, 'but it *may* happen still.'

"'Oh, it is a riddle!' cried she, joyfully; 'let me try to guess it!'—and, the better to concentrate her thoughts upon it, she screened her dark sparkling eyes with her fan.

"'You will never find it out,' I said, gently pulling down the fan, and looking her tenderly in the face. 'Let me at once tell you the application: *I* am that poor servant.'

"'*You?*' asked she, with a voice of astonishment. 'And who is the prince?'

"'It is *you*, my dear Hadschi.'

"'But I am not ill,' replied she.

"'Not as to the body, thanks be to Allah, but I believe your soul is in great danger. Oh, do forgive me my boldness, my own dear friend and mistress, but I am only obeying your own behests, and fulfilling your own entreaties. It is this which has of late

made my soul sad, taken the sleep from my eyelids, undermined my health, and made me miserable day and night.'

"'For Heaven's sake what is it?' cried she, in a voice of fearful emotion. 'Is there a conspiracy against me? Are there people who will kill me?'

"This turn of thought was not unnatural. Owing to her hot temper she had made many enemies among her slaves, and she knew that some of them hated her.

"'Don't be alarmed,' I said, 'nothing of the kind is the case as far I know; I told you that I did not believe your body but your soul was in danger.'

"'What then do you mean?' asked she, resuming her usual calmness. 'Do speak out your mind, dear Morja.'

"'Permit me to put one question to you,' I said, in a grave voice. 'Are you certain that Mohammed is able to save you?'

"When this question passed my lips, it was as though an electric shock had gone through her frame. An expression of terror fell like a dark veil upon her face; with a shriek, the piercing, terrifying sound of which I shall never forget, she started up from her seat, and running away as quick as her feet could carry her, she fled from me as she would have fled from a serpent.

"I did not see her again that day, nor did I see her for three subsequent days, during which, by her strict orders, I was confined to my room. Nobody in the house marvelled at this. It was a common thing to see her, in a moment of passion, order a slave to be thrown into prison. It was much more a matter for wonder to the household that I had continued so long without imprisonment, and how it was that I was not cast into the common dungeon, but permitted to remain in my room.

"On the morning of the fourth day I was ordered to come to her divan. She looked sad and severe. I noticed that her eyes were red with weeping.

"'Morja,' said she to me, without beckoning me to sit down next to her, as I had been always used to do, 'do you know that you have forfeited your life by speaking of the Great Prophet to me in the way you did?'

"'I know.'

"Tears filled her eyes.

"'How *could* you do such a thing?' said she. 'What evil have I done to you that you thus insult me?'

"'Evil?' I replied, bursting into tears; 'evil, my beloved mistress! No evil at all, you never did me anything but good. But you remember my parable? Why did the servant speak to the prince against the draught which his physicians had administered to him?'

"There was a pause.

"'You consider our prophet a false one?' she said in a pensive tone. 'I know the Christian dogs call him the false prophet.'

"'Permit me to ask you one question.'

"'Ask, then.'

"'How do you know he is a true one?'

"'By Allah! should I not know that? The priests of God, our Imans, have taught us and our fathers from the beginning of the Hegira. And did not the great prophet, blessed be his name! receive the Koran from the hands of the Angel Gabriel himself?"

"'May I venture again to ask a question, my beloved mistress?'

"'You may.'

"'How do you know that your priests are well instructed? Perhaps they are like ignorant physicians who take poisonous herbs for wholesome medicine. As to the Koran, it contains many truths, but also many untruths. If my beloved mistress knew the story of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, she would herself see that Mohammed cannot be God's prophet, nor make one eternally happy.'

"While I was saying this, I trembled all over, for I expected an outburst of anger such as would crush me. To my great surprise she remained calm, and after a pause, she said:—

"'What is that story of Jesus Christ? Is it beautiful? Is it a true story?'

"'It is as beautiful as it is true.'

"She beckoned to me to take my seat next to her, and bade me tell her the story of the Gospel. I began with the birth of our Saviour and the miraculous events by which it was attended. She listened with the greatest attention. She appeared deeply struck with the unsophisticated simplicity as well as with the divine sublimity of the sacred narrative. She put so many questions to me that we did not proceed farther that morning than the murder of the innocents at Bethlehem. But in the afternoon she sent for me again. She was too anxious to hear the continuation of the story to be able to bear my absence any longer.

"I should weary you were I to give you an account of the conversations which from that day took place between Hadschi and myself about the history of our beloved Saviour. Indeed, we scarcely spoke about anything else from morning till night. The more she became acquainted with the person of Jesus, with the words which He spoke, with the great deeds which He performed, with his unspeakable love and tender mercy towards the lost sinner, with his holy indignation against the hypocrite, the more she became lost in admiration, and the more she desired me to speak of Him. But when I thereupon told her about his crucifixion, his death, and his resurrection, and explained to her *why* He died, showing her that He died for our sins, and also for *her* sins, and that without his blood there was no remission of sins nor salvation possible, a terrible struggle rose in her heart, and she burst into such a violent passion that she again confined me in my room, and refused to see me for many days. I could not think but that all my hopes concerning her conversion were now gone, and that my doom was sealed. I cast myself at the feet of the Saviour, and prayed for her and for myself, for I now expected nothing short of being soon thrown into prison or strangled.

"Nor was this fear unfounded. I learnt at a later period that the conversation which took place between Hadschi and myself about the Christian religion had been overheard by one of the slaves who hated me, and was envious of the favours which I enjoyed. She

reported what she had heard to Hadschi's father, who sharply examined his daughter upon the matter. Hadschi's faith in Islam was even at that time much shaken, but she knew that nothing would be in store either for her or for me short of a cruel death if her father should discover even the slightest hint of what was going on in her heart; she therefore told him that she had only entered upon religious topics with me, to convert me to Mohammedanism. Her father doggedly replied that this was not at all her business; that a dozen lashes on the sole of the foot were a far more effective means to convert a Christian dog than a thousand discourses, and that as soon as a priest should make his appearance, he would send him up to me. I need not tell you what would have been my lot if that plan had been carried out. A fanatical Iman leaves to his victim no other alternative but to submit or to die.

"But Providence prevented Hadschi's father from carrying out his plan. One day, while I was trying to break the deadening monotony of my solitude by humming a hymn in a scarcely audible voice, I heard the report of guns at a distance. I had as early as daybreak observed that an unusual noise and bustle were going on in the grounds. During the morning, however, all had become quiet. I now heard distinctly that a fight was going on. The sounds came nearer and nearer. Suddenly I heard the noise of horses approaching at full speed. They came close to my window, and picture to yourself my transport when the cries: '*Vive la France! Vive le Roi!*' sounded in my ears. My window was only shut in with Venetian blinds. I forced them open, and saw the well-known uniform of our hussars. I stretched out my arms towards them. '*Amis!*' I cried, '*au secours!*' I then swooned.

"I shall not detain you by a detailed description of the great change which now took place in my condition. Our army had taken Algiers, and was engaged in subduing its environs. My master, and Hadschi's father, with nearly all the male population of the place, were killed in the fight. The females were taken prisoners, and conveyed to Algiers. The captain of the hussars, on learning that I was a French woman whom he had been the means of rescuing from slavery, received me with an expression of joy which could not have been greater had I been his own child. He placed me in one of my late master's carriages, and had me escorted to the town by a company of hussars. The commander of the town received me kindly, and left it optional to me either to return to Marseilles with one of the Government ships, or to take charge of the female ward of the hospital, where there were many Mohammedan patients. I chose the latter. I need not tell you that my hope to find out Hadschi, and to be a comfort to her in her affliction, contributed not a little to helping me to this decision.

"I had not much trouble in finding her out. She was one of the patients. Her fearful mental struggles during the last few weeks, and the subsequent events, by which she was made at once an orphan and a prisoner, had told too much upon her system. I found her in the delirium of fever. Among the names which she uttered in her wanderings that of Jesus and mine occurred the most frequently.

"I shall not try to express to you the delight with which she recognised me after the crisis had passed. She recovered after a few weeks, and, what is more, she rose from her sick bed to a new life in Jesus Christ her Saviour. I had no difficulty in prevailing upon the governor to appoint her as my assistant in the hospital. Nor could I have desired a better one, for she soon showed a talent for nursing which I have never seen surpassed.

"The three years we spent together at Algiers I shall never forget. The Spirit of God had entirely broken down her former pride, softened her impetuous temper, and made her another Mary, sitting at the feet of Jesus. In the midst of infidelity and superstition, we two formed a church by ourselves.

"Then came the sad time of parting. Our efforts, however cautious, to lead our patients to Jesus, excited the suspicion at once of the Roman Catholic and Mohammedan priests. Very likely we should have been dismissed some day, had not the hospital, being only a temporary one, been broken up. I was given to understand that I should please the governor by quitting the colony. This was a hint clear enough to make me resolve to go to Marseilles. Hadschi, though perfectly at liberty to go where she chose, yet resolved to stay in her native country. What would have been the use of her going with me to a country the language of which she could not speak? Besides, she was convinced she could labour better for the Lord among her own people than among us. She joined the troops which were going to fight Abd-el-Kader in the mountains of Morocco. The military surgeon gladly accepted her offer to serve as a nurse in the infirmary. After some years she was the means of converting a young French nobleman, who was a patient under her treatment. He married her, and for her sake settled in Algiers as a private gentleman. Here she founded a little hospital for Mohammedans, of which she took the management, her husband paying all the expenses. It is to that good work of hers that the letter refers which Madame Sancourt was so kind as to read to us.

"To return to my own biography. As I had earned a little money at Algiers, I resolved to try to earn my livelihood by keeping an infant school. I hired a small house at Marseilles, in the neighbourhood of the Faubourg de Bayle, and soon had my little schoolroom filled. In the evening I went out to visit the sick poor people, as I still kept up my fancy for nursing. I stayed many a night at their sick beds, and had the joy of seeing my work blessed for the good of many a poor lost suffering soul. My services in this line seem to have been reported in higher circles; at least, I was soon requested to nurse patients in well-to-do families, who, of course, remunerated me for my services. This enabled me to engage my dear friend and sister in the Lord, Jeannette, to keep the infant school in my stead."

"Ah," said Jeannette, with a smile, "but you ought to tell *how* you got me. I was, humanly speaking, a poor, almost dying creature, madame; but for your——"

"Hush, hush!" Marie interposed; "there is no necessity for telling all that here. Suffice it to say that Jeannette kept the school very well, and so I could go out nursing. But one evening, when on my way to a poor patient, my attention was drawn to a girl who was crying. I learnt that she had fled from a disreputable house, and found herself friendless and penniless in the world. I took her to my house and allowed her to stay with us till a respectable situation should be found for her. Her example, it seems, drew the attention of other girls of the same class. At last, within a few months, I had in my house other four who were selected from a dozen that had applied. While Jeannette taught the infants, I instructed these girls in household work, cooking, &c. One of them, of the name of Henriette Bolermes, was the daughter of respectable parents, who were dead. She had not gone very far in the paths of sin, and she manifested such an honest and faithful character that she soon gained my full confidence. The Gospel, with which she became acquainted in our house, was exceedingly blessed to her heart, so that she became a servant of Christ. She was very clever in all sorts of needle work and in household work generally. To her I entrusted the control and management of the house during my absence, when I was out nursing. My house, however, became too small for this work; but my limited means prevented me from looking out for more ample accommodation. Out of this difficulty I was helped through the liberality of a few ladies. I was enabled to hire a tolerably large house, with a large garden. While the infant-school was transferred to the garden-house, the girls were located in the main building under Henriette's supervision. Their number soon increased to ten. After having stayed a twelvemonth or so with me, they were placed as servants in respectable families. Some of them also became nurses. In this way our Heavenly Father graciously enabled me to labour for twenty years in his vineyard. At length, however, my nervous system broke down under the work. Gradually I lost my eye-sight. Medical men advised me to withdraw from the cares and the bustle of my beloved establishment, and to settle at a quiet spot in a mountain district. Jeannette, who had also grown old enough to long for a little rest, followed me to this place, which was sought out for us by our dear friend Madame Sancourt. What I feared, however, has happened. Henriette found herself unequal to the work, which was now entirely left to her care. Besides, she married an *employé* at one of the Government offices, who soon after the marriage was transferred to Toulon. In short, the institution was broken up soon after our departure, but I trust that, defective though it was, like all human work, it may not have been altogether in vain in the Lord."

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I have seen many enchanting pieces of scenery during my journeys through Switzerland, but not one of them ever left such a deep and beneficent impression upon my mind as this story of Marie. Every year, when gliding over the beautiful Lake of Geneva, I felt that I must spend a day and refresh myself again with the sight of this truly good woman. And so I did for four years successively. But the fifth year Madame Sancourt took me to the cemetery. There was a grave, and on it was a simple slab with this inscription: "Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken from her."

ANDREW WHITGIFT.

OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS; OR, METHODS TO DO GOOD.

BY THE EDITOR.

X.—THE BELIEVER'S REWARD.

RAYS of light, whether they proceed from sun, star, or candle, move in perfectly straight lines: yet so inferior are our works to God's, that the steadiest hand cannot draw a perfectly straight line; nor, with all his skill, has man ever been able to invent an instrument capable of doing a thing apparently so simple. And it would seem to be as impossible for men to keep the even line of truth between what appear conflicting doctrines: such as the decrees of God and our free will; such as election by grace and the universal offer of the gospel; such as the justifying faith of Paul and the justifying works of James. For example, the claims of faith, though not wholly denied, have been disparaged by some in order to magnify the importance of good works: while others, going to the opposite extreme, have not sufficiently insisted on these. They have not assigned to good works their proper place, nor with apostolic earnestness urged Christians to be careful to maintain them; lest they should appear to undervalue faith, and encourage sinners in the fatal error of trusting, not to the righteousness of Christ, but to works of righteousness which they themselves have done.

No such apprehensions should hinder a preacher from declaring "the whole counsel of God." Is his topic faith in the righteousness of Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the lost, and only Mediator between God and man? Let him fully set forth that cardinal doctrine; abating and qualifying nothing; giving to this grace the prominence it received at the lips of Paul, when, to the jailor who had sprung into the dungeon, and fallen at his feet, to cry, O sirs! what shall I do to be saved? he replied, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. To no awakened, anxious, alarmed sinner have I any other answer. The question admits of none other. I would not limit the Holy One of Israel, nor venture to say what, in ordinary circumstances, was within, and what without the sphere of Divine power; but, looking at God in the character of a father, and judging of his feelings by my own, I cannot believe that he could have saved men otherwise than by the sacrifice

of his Son. We are, as the Bible says, "shut up to Christ." So, with reverence be it spoken, in a sense was God. Had there been any other way, he would surely have chosen it. If he could, he would surely have spared his Son. Those who have studied his works know that, whether it be to roll a world through space, or only sustain an insect on the wing, God applies the exact amount of power necessary to accomplish his object; that, and no more than that. He wastes nothing; and if the works of creation afford no examples of his unnecessarily expending power or skill, how confident may we be that, in redeeming us, he did not unnecessarily shed the blood of his beloved Son; that, by no sacrifice less precious than the life which Christ offered up on Calvary could man have been saved, and righteous vengeance turned from our guilty heads. Without allowing the fear of its being abused to restrain him, or tone down his statements, the preacher is, therefore, to give Christ and the faith which receives his righteousness, their pre-eminent place. In making Jesus the centre of the whole system, in showing that there is no other name given under heaven whereby men can be saved but his, and how faith, not good works, is the way to Christ, and how Christ, not the Church or Sacraments, is the way to God, the preacher but declares in words what finds its most blest expression in the anthems and actions of the upper sanctuary. There, every harp is strung to Jesus' praise, and saints, descending from their celestial thrones, do homage for the crowns they wear by casting them at his pierced feet.

If good works, on the other hand, form the topic of discourse, the preacher is to be no less faithful in declaring the whole counsel of God respecting them. Man is not wiser than God. It is as much beyond our skill to improve the Gospel by putting things in a better or safer light, as to add beauty to a rose or lustre to the noon-day sun. Therefore, keeping nothing back, modifying and subtracting nothing, but telling the whole truth respecting them, we are to give good works the place which God himself has given them—no higher, yet no lower. And how full of honour and importance that place?—in that, though they do not justify us, they form the evidences of our justification; in that, though they do not awaken God's love to us, they are the welcome expressions of our love to him; in that, though they do not, as rendering an atonement for sin, pacify God, they please him; in that, though wrought by the power of his Spirit, and accepted through the merits of his Son, with their defects all overlooked for Jesus' sake, they shall receive a recompense in the kingdom of heaven.

Whoever, therefore, may be pouring water on a sand-bed, running their horses on a rock and ploughing there with oxen, beating the air and spending their strength for nought, giving their money for that which is not bread and their labour for that which profiteth not—it is not such as, in the words of the apostle, are "careful to maintain good works." Engaging in these, we shall reap if we faint not. No pain suffered, nor service rendered, nor work done for Christ, is lost—the very shame we bear for him shall be transformed into immortal laurels, and every tear shed like His over human sorrow, or hers who bent in penitence at his feet, shall be a pearl in the heavenly crown. The poorer we become for Christ, we shall grow the richer. The more we forget ourselves, the more will he remember us. Even a cup of cold water given to a disciple in the name of a disciple has the promise of a rich reward; while, of all the saints in the kingdom of heaven, they shall shine brightest and sing loudest and enter in fullest measure into the joys of their Lord, whose life has most resembled his. Most blessed they that tread the closest on the steps of one who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; who spent his days going about doing good; and whose life, till it closed in a bloody death, amply fulfilled the promise of its dawn, of his earliest recorded saying, of this reply to Mary, "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me," says St. John, "Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

His works often follow a good man in this world.

Let me illustrate this by an example. An extensive tract of country in one of our distant colonies was occupied many years ago by forests, where the traveller found only the scantiest means of subsistence. It was inaccessible to all but the few savages who roamed its gloomy solitudes. It is no longer so. Beautiful and fruit-bearing trees now occupy the forest glades, and, providing abundance of nutritious food, have opened up the country to the foot of civilised man, and to its savage tribes the blessed influences of the Gospel. It was thus the change was brought about, as I have read or remember the story. Long years ago, there lived there a devout man, one who had left his native land, but not, like many others, the profession of its religion behind. Animated with love to Christ, and an eager desire to save souls, he was wont to leave the settlement and penetrate these forests to carry the Gospel to their wandering tribes. Ever aiming at doing good, nor confining himself, as is the habit of some, to one way of doing it, he sought, Christlike, to benefit the bodies as well as the souls of men. So, on leaving home, he was accustomed, besides his Bible, to carry a store of the stony seeds of those trees that now bless and beautify the country; and though, exposed to perish of famine or fall by the club of the savage, he might never live to see them blossom, ever and anon, as he emerged into a sunny glade, he planted a seed, leaving it to the care of God, the dews and showers of heaven. And now, though his bones have long mouldered into dust, in trees that bear beauty in their blossoms and life in their fruit, his works, done with prayer to God and from love to man, are still following him on earth. While others, who lived to enrich themthemselves and accumulate fortunes that have sunk amid the wreck of time, are forgotten, this good man's memory, like these trees, blossoms in perennial beauty. He has his name inscribed, not on a mouldering tombstone amid emblems of decay, but on the ever-living face of nature and on the hearts of grateful generations that sit under the shadow of his piety and enjoy its fruits.

Even so by labours accomplished in the spiritual

field the Christian may live after he is dead. Leaving behind them works which shall continue for ages to preserve their memory and follow them here, many through their good words, though dead, are yet speaking; through their good works, though dead, are yet working. There is no good work or word, indeed, but contains a germ of immortality, and may produce results God only has a mind to measure. Like the tiny stream which, small and shallow where it leaves its cradle, grows as it goes, till, fed by many tributaries, it at length swells into a river that, sweeping by the lands of many tribes, and, bearing the sails of many nations on its bosom, like the Amazon or Mississippi, makes its floods felt far out from shore—freshening the briny sea, good words have been spoken, and good works done that have grown from small beginnings into incalculable importance. Living through long periods of the world's history, they carry their blessed influences far beyond the land of their birth, even to the ends of the earth. In proof of this let me adduce two remarkable examples, namely, Sabbath Schools and the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Many cities claimed to be the birth-place of Homer, and, with a still more laudable ambition, England and Scotland are rivals for the honour of establishing the first Sunday-school. At the period of the Rebellion, one of the ministers of Brechin, an old cathedral town in Forfarshire, was a Mr. Blair, who left the mountain parish of Lochlee, where I write this paper, to fill that charge. He was a man who made his mark on the place and people; and though he has been dead a hundred years, they still tell stories of him as both a faithful minister of the Gospel, and a stout adherent of the house of Hanover. Tradition relates how on one occasion his courage equally astonished friend and foe. On a Sabbath day, while he was preaching, the doors of the church were violently burst open, and in marched a body of Prince Charles's men; rebels armed to the teeth with target, claymore, dirk, and gun. They ordered Blair to stop. He heeded them not, but thundered on. Whereupon, to the terror of many and agitation of the whole congregation, two officers mounted the pulpit stairs and, each laying a pistol on the cushion to enforce their orders, again they commanded him to stop. Little disposed to yield obedience to any civil authority in the things of God and within his house, and least of all to that of rebels in arms for a Popish prince, the preacher heard them as if he heard them not. He boldly went on with his discourse. They might fire away, but he would neither yield to their threats, nor own their authority. At length the provost, who was Blair's brother-in-law, dreading that they would shoot him dead on the spot, rose from his seat, which was opposite the pulpit, and bade him stop. "No," replied the intrepid preacher, as with his arms he pushed the pistols from the cushion on to the floor, "No; I would not stop though the devil and all his angels were here." Whereupon, as the story goes, the highlandmen, judging it not well, or perhaps safe to proceed to extremities with a man whom they might kill but could not conquer, gathered up their pistols, and walked off, leaving our hero in quiet possession of the field. This is the man to whom I believe those Sunday-schools which cover the Christian world like a vast network, owe their origin. The traveller whose curiosity may lead him to visit that old cathedral, less for its sake than for the old round tower that stands there the graceful monument of an older and purer faith than Popery, will find a marble tablet on the wall to the memory of Blair, where he may read that "*Mr. Blair, about the year* 1760, *instituted a Sabbath evening school, the first it is believed that was opened in Scotland.*"

But whether Blair or Raikes was first inspired with the happy thought, or whether, as has not unfrequently happened in scientific discoveries, each, independently of the other, was led to the same result, in the multitudes of children Sunday-schools have been the means of saving, in the millions they are blessing throughout the Christian world, how do the good works of their founders follow them here? Living to the noblest and most enduring purposes, they indeed have left "their footprints on the sands of time." Seated on a throne which was already shaking beneath him, with a cloud darkening his royal brow, and remorse, like a worm, gnawing at his heart, King Solomon gave utterance to this melancholy soliloquy, "I made me great works—whatever mine eyes desired, I kept not from them—I withheld not my heart from any joy. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do, and behold all was vanity and vexation of spirit. There was no profit under the sun!" With other feelings the founders of Sunday-schools bend from heaven to look on the work of their hands. As they look down from their thrones on the millions of little children gathered, bright and happy, every Sunday, into these schools, and as they listen to catch the hymns of their young voices floating up through the skies to mingle with the songs of angels, and as they see many an opening flower bathed with the dews of early grace, and transplanted from these nurseries of a stormy world to bloom out in the paradise of God, how, were it right to envy any, might the greatest of earth's great ones envy them? Blessed indeed are the dead that die in the Lord; they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them!

The British and Foreign Bible Society supplies another, and not less remarkable, example. Briefly told, this is the story of its origin. A devout Welsh minister who was accustomed to converse familiarly with his flock, meeting a little girl on a Monday morning, asked her to repeat the text of the preceeding day. She could not; and, blushing, to his surprise laid the blame on the snow that lay in heavy wreaths by the hedge-rows and deep on all the hills around. It had prevented her, as she explained, from going to a distant cottage to which she was wont to repair to learn the text from a Bible there. This simple incident led to an important inquiry. The good man found, to his grief and dismay, that many of the families around had no copy of the Word of God. As remarkable for energy as piety, he set off at once for London to get a society formed for the purpose of supplying his poor countrymen with the Scriptures. For this end he appealed to the directors

of the Religious Tract Society; nor in vain. A few of these good men, one of them being William Wilberforce, quietly assembled in an obscure counting-room in one of the densest parts of the city to hear his proposal. They agreed to it; and were about to disperse when, like a sunbeam breaking from the clouds, and streaming through the dusty panes to light up the dingy room, a bright thought flashed into the mind of one of them. He rose to say what asssociates that humble counting-room with the stable of Bethlehem; and redeeming it for ever from obscurity, has made it the honoured birth-place of a society which, the glory of Britain and the world, has sent forth hundreds of millions of Bibles in hundreds of different tongues. "If a Bible society for Wales," he said, "why not a Bible society for the world?" Brief, but most pregnant question! It sounded on their ears like a voice from heaven. It was felt to be the very question He would have put, who embraced the whole world in his arms, and baptised it with his blood. Breathing his spirit, and commending itself to theirs, the proposal was at once, and cordially, assented to. Recalling more than any speech that ever dropped from mortal lips the creating fiat, *Let there be light, and there was light*—that blessed question, that brave proposal of Christian faith has chased away the darkness of many lands, and illumined with the knowledge of saving truth the uttermost parts of the earth. This is the greatest speech on record. Though dead, he yet speaketh who said it. Nor could any, leaving those busy presses that are throwing off Bibles by millions in many different tongues, stand by his grave without feeling that he who sleeps below was distinguished among those of whom it can be said, "their works do follow them." It is the privilege of few to achieve works of corresponding magnitude and usefulness. Such honours have not all God's saints. One star differeth from another star in glory. Yet there is not a humble cottager who is training her child for God; nor servant who, with an eye to his glory, bends to the meanest work; nor widow who, out of her poverty, casts her humble offering into his treasury; nor any, in life's obscurest lot, who are trying to do good, to help the helpless and relieve distress, to heal a wounded heart, to smooth a thorny pillow, to bring a soul to Jesus, to turn a sinner to God, to restore a backslider, or to raise the fallen, but is engaged in a work that, though it may leave no trace on earth, shall follow them through the vale of death to receive a recompense of reward.

His works always follow a good man to heaven.

Many of our countrymen leave home and, undergoing a voluntary exile, take their way to India or other distant climes. Their object is to make a fortune; and the hope that lures them on, often to a life of privations and an early death, is that they shall return to pass the evening of their days in the enjoyment of ease and affluence. According to the store people set on wealth, and show, and sumptuous living, and expensive pleasures, will this conduct be considered wise or foolish. Men may entertain different opinions on that matter, but all, with one consent, will pronounce him a fool who, after making a fortune abroad, leaves it there, to return as poor as he went away; poorer, indeed, with enfeebled health, a shattered constitution, and few friends surviving to welcome the wanderer back, and cheer his dull old age. Asking for what purpose he banished himself, toiled, and wasted his prime and manhood, people would pronounce such conduct to be arrant folly. Yet thousands whom the world esteems wise commit a greater folly: nor is there any walk of life but is thronged with still greater fools—with thousands who toil and struggle, scrape and save, rise up early and lie down late and eat the bread of sorrow, to gain what only adds to the bitterness of that inevitable hour when they must leave all behind. Naked man comes from his mother's womb, and, stripped of all his wealth and honours, naked he returns thither. What is money to the dead; or fame; or fulsome eulogies; or the pomp of a funeral which interests all but him whose cold clay it mocks with empty honours? The plaudits of the world wake no echoes in the tomb; nor can all the glittering objects which so many eagerly, and some exclusively, pursue, either add in the smallest measure to the happiness of the saved, or abate in the least degree the miseries of the lost. All the grandeur and the good things of this world must be left behind: and how do they waste life's golden hours who spend them in pursuing objects they gain but to lose, and possess but for a little to part with for ever? More free of care and sin, much happier, and not more foolish, is yonder group of laughing children, that build castles of sand within the tide mark, or, seated on a sunny bank, crown their fair brows with garlands of wild withering flowers.

The value of all works may be proved by this very simple test—will they follow us? Accompanying us out of this world, will they go with us into the next? That only is of real value to a man which he can carry with him. A touchstone that, which neither gold, nor houses, nor broad acres, nor sounding titles, nor household comforts, can stand! With ruthless hand death strips all alike; nor is it true that one dies poor, and another rich. All die equally poor, the results of death being as impartial as its pains. It is as hard to expire with kings amid silken curtains and on a bed of down, as with beggars in a barn on a pallet of straw; and indeed, I have thought that death, with its filmy eye, and restless head, and panting breath, and pinched, pallid face, looked to the full as terrible in the gilded halls of nobles as in the barest cabins of the poor. "There is one event to all," says the wise man; and the question of true importance touching the dead is not the common one, What have they left?—but this, What have they carried away?

"Blessed are they that do his commandments." Witnesses in their favour, though not the price of his, their works of faith and love and piety shall go up with them to the judgment; and there they shall have the happiness to find that, while God has forgiven all their sins—the greatest of them, he has forgotten none, even the least of their services. He who puts his people's tears into his bottle, writes their good works in his book. "A book of remembrance," the prophet says, "was written before him

for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name; and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, on that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Unanswered as some may have appeared, all the prayers they ever offered, lost as many seemed to be, all the labours they endured, and all the scorn they bore, and all the good fights they fought, and all the fidelity they showed in the cause of Christ, he shall remember and reward. The bread they cast on the waters shall return when Jesus, putting into their hands a golden harp and on their heads a shining crown, bids them welcome to the glory of the skies, saying, Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!

The prospect of this may well raise saints above the fear of death. The dread of it is instinctive, a feeling common to all men—common, as the flight of deer before the hounds, the silence of the groves when thunder peals or the hawk screams in the sky, the efforts of a poor worm to wriggle out of our way, show indeed to all living creatures. In some, no doubt, this instinct is stronger than in others. There have been bad men who could calmly confront death, sleeping like a happy child the night before their execution, and marching to the scaffold with head erect, and cheek unblanched, and step firm as his who brushes the dew from heather or flowery sward. On the other hand, some of God's people, though they had no reason to fear the issue, have shrunk from death with an inconquerable horror, and under its fear have been all their lifetime subject to bondage. Nor do such feelings always spring from a dread of the pain of dying. It is certain that a man shot through the heart or beheaded, dies before he has time to feel; and more certain still that the stroke of lightning is instantaneous, and must be painless—the victim being dead as a stone before he can see the flash which kills him; yet where the good hope through grace is conjoined with a great natural horror of death, no demonstration of that kind will tranquillise the mind amid the peals and flashes of a thunder-storm. Besides this instinctive dread, the ordinary accompaniments of death are such as, apart from the consolations of the Gospel, cast dismal shadows on the valley sin dooms all to travel. Pain is a feature common both to birth and death. It is with groans we leave a world that we enter with a cry: nor has it any sounds so terrible as a man's last gasping breaths, or sight so appalling as his struggles in the arms of death. And even when the curtain falls on the awful scene, and silence succeeds to groans, and the restless form lies in repose, and the expression of pain has passed from the pale placid face, and all is over, how do our hearts recoil from that grave amid whose darkness and corruption loved ones, whose voices we shall no more hear and whose faces we shall no more see, are mouldering into dust? This skeleton form, the dread messenger whom sin has armed with a dart and the great God sends to summon mortals to his judgment-bar, is indeed the King of Terrors.

Does a believer, or rather should a believer, then fear to die? Paul answers the question. See him there, as, longing to depart, he stretches out his wings to go, esteeming it better to be absent from the body and present with the Lord; or on yonder battle-field, where, with his foot on our last enemy and triumph in his tones, he bends down to taunt and to defy him, saying, O, Death, where is thy sting? Thanks be to God, who giveth me the victory through my Lord Jesus Christ!

Fear to die? The Apostle knew in whom he had believed. He was persuaded that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, should be able to separate him from the love of God which was through Jesus Christ. He had a full assurance that the blessed Master whom he had lived, and was about to die, to serve, would receive him to his glorious rest. Never bond-slave longed for emancipation, or pining captive for green fields and home, or soldier weary of war for his discharge, or weather-beaten mariner, as he lay on the helm battling with rude seas and roaring tempests, for a quiet harbour, more than Paul for death; to depart and be with Jesus. And since it is at death the servant, having ended his task, receives his wages; the soldier, having closed his battles, obtains the crown; the pilgrim, having finished his journey, is welcomed to his Father's house, and enters into rest: how much more common were the hopes and peace and triumph of Paul, did Christians labour more diligently to make their calling and election sure. Many more might die offering in the manner of their death the greatest sermon that was ever preached, the grandest spectacle that can be seen on earth. Peace enjoyed amid such terrors and distractions is a spectacle to turn aside the steps of Moses. Here is a bush burning, yet not consumed. It was a sight worth seeing, when the young shepherd stood by the giant's vast form, with his foot planted on his neck, and mothers and maidens, conducting him from the field of a glorious victory, sang his praises to the timbrel and the dance; but it is a spectacle more glorious still to see a dying saint treading death and the devil beneath his feet, in the sublime power of faith conquering all mortal and guilty fears, calmly awaiting the hour of departure, comforting the mourners who weep around his bed, and with a placid smile bidding the world adieu. Amid such scenes faith achieves her grandest triumphs. There, the infidel has felt compelled to do her homage; and has been heard to say, on leaving the field of such a victory, May I die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like his!

Fear to die? There is enough in the prospects which faith opens up to raise a man out of himself, and render him insensible alike to the feeling of pain and the fears of death. Even those feelings which are commonly feeble may, being roused, undergo such change and acquire such power as a mountain brook, that, ordinarily murmuring along its stony channel of little pools and tiny waterfalls, when thunders shake the heavens and roll among the hills, swells into a torrent which, dashing, roaring, foaming along its rugged course, sweeps everything before it. Look, for example, at the bird to whose protecting wings our Lord compares his own fond kindness! See how bravely, though by nature timid, she defends her helpless brood, and ruffles her feathers to

spring in the face of man or beast. The maternal affection, roused by a sense of danger, takes entire possession of her heart, and imparts to it the courage of a lion. Even the love of science—a passion, if as pure, commonly as cold as a wintry sky—has overmastered the fears of death. Archimedes calmly pursued his studies in Syracuse amid the uproar of the assault; nor when a soldier, with murderous weapon and intent, burst into his apartment, asked other favour at his hand but a few more minutes to finish the problem he was engaged in solving. Even less noble and exalted passions may become equally absorbing. A Roman army once fought with such enthusiasm as to be insensible to an earthquake that rocked the ground beneath their feet; and I knew a soldier who, with the foe before him and comrades falling at his side, was raised so much above the sense of pain as never to discover that a ball from the French had shattered his wrist, till he found himself unable to fire off the musket he had levelled at their ranks.

No wonder, therefore, that the prospects of dying saints should sometimes lift them above themselves. A clear eye and a cloudless sky, his home full in view, heaven at hand, through the gate that opens to receive him Jesus seen amid the glories of his Father's throne with a crown ready to place on his servant's brows, these are sufficient to account for the comfort and courage with which many have not merely met, but welcomed their dying day—to account, without calling in miraculous agency, for what we read in old books, how some, going to martyrdom with dauntless mien and face radiant as on a marriage day, have felt no pain at the burning stake, and sung out their life amid the roar of fire. Let a dying man enjoy a clear view of his interest in Christ, and an unclouded prospect of the rest and reward that remaineth for His people, and the last should be the happiest hours of his life. Of such a life it may well be said, "the end is better than the beginning." Thus one of our Scottish martyrs, standing on the ladder from which they were to throw him off, assured the weeping spectators that he had never gone up to his pulpit to preach with so little fear as he had mounted that ladder to die—to him it was a perch from which his spirit, wearied of a world full of sin and sorrows, was spreading out its joyful wings for the flight to heaven. Another, addressing his weeping mother and sisters, who had entered his cell for a last visit on the morning of his execution, said, "Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. Could I have ever thought that the fear of suffering and death could be so taken from me. Lord!" he exclaimed, "Thou hast brought me within two hours of eternity, and this is no matter of terror to me more than if I rose to go to lie down on a bed of roses: now that I am so near the end of time, I desire to bless the Lord: death is to me as a bed to the weary! Yonder," he remarked on hearing the drums beat for his execution, "yonder is my welcome call to the marriage. The Bridegroom is coming. I am ready!" Assured, as he said, by God of his salvation, with these sublime words he left the world to pass within the veil—"Farewell, beloved fellow-sufferers and followers of the Lamb. Farewell, night-wanderings for Christ and all sublunary things. Farewell, conflicts with a body of sin and death. Welcome, scaffold for precious Christ. Welcome, heavenly Jerusalem. Welcome, innumerable company of angels. Welcome, crown of glory. Welcome, above all, thou blessed Trinity and one God. O Eternal One, I commit my soul unto thy eternal rest." What a glorious sunset of a stormy day? What a commentary that scene on these grand words of Paul—"DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY. O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING? O GRAVE, WHERE IS THY VICTORY? THE STING OF DEATH IS SIN: AND THE STRENGTH OF SIN IS THE LAW. BUT THANKS BE TO GOD, WHICH GIVETH US THE VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. THEREFORE, MY BELOVED BRETHREN, BE YE STEDFAST, IMMOVABLE, ALWAYS ABOUNDING IN THE WORK OF THE LORD, FORASMUCH AS YE KNOW THAT YOUR LABOUR IS NOT IN VAIN IN THE LORD."

LAZARUS.

IT is natural that a profound interest should cling to Lazarus. He alone went among the shadows of death, and passed behind the grave, and came back to take his place among men. The greatest miracle on record was wrought upon him. He was the innocent cause of Christ's arrest. He was Christ's friend, singled out from the rest, as much as Mary the Lord's mother or John the beloved. And thus many interests meet in him—the mystery of the unseen world, of which, if he dared, he could speak; the mystery of that friendship by which Jesus laid hold of him, and which was firm and tender enough to bring the Saviour to tears; the mystery of that place allotted to him in the life of Christ, by which he became linked with the close of its terrible drama, and was the proximate cause of the death of Him that loved him; and the mystery of a stupendous miracle, in which the kingdom of death was visibly vanquished and broken. And yet there is this singular feature of his story—that there is scarcely a man of whom we could be told less. His story occupies an entire chapter—the twentieth part of one Gospel; and elsewhere he is at least once introduced: but all we know of him seems to be that he was sick and died. The details of the Magdalen's life are slight; yet there are incidents full of significance, and the story is carried on from point to point. But Lazarus seems introduced simply for the miracle's sake, and beyond what is necessary to understand that, we learn nothing of the man, nothing of his personal history, meet with him at the supreme moment when sickness passes into death, and part from him at the supreme moment when the tomb yields him back to life. He is overshadowed by wonder. He stands out for a moment with a mar-

vellous distinctness, and disappears in awe. A veil seems purposely flung over him. He abides and keeps his place in history, not by his own personality, but as a trophy of the power of God—one more example, if more were needed, of the height of that solitary Life that was then in the world; so high above all others that beside it even the best of men recedes into a subordinate place, and becomes only an illustration of Him. This is the main impression, and it is one which stamps Jesus of Nazareth with a divine majesty—which lifts Him above the mere rabbi, and centre of a group, and great man—which shows that not only men dwarf beside his mystic grandeur—for that would be true enough of any hero—but that when they come near Him all the play and power and profound interest of their own lives are of value only as they set Him forth, that the most solemn and tragic passages of their own history were but illustrations to Him, and of which I will only say, in passing, that it is an idea which, if Jesus were no more than the greatest of mankind, would be simply blasphemous,—which the wildest hero-worship would not venture to have conceived. Yet there is no absorption by Jesus of others into himself; beside Him the part they play may seem little, but their characters remain distinct, nay, come out by his illumination into more vivid distinctness. The traits we have of Lazarus, though subordinate to the character of Christ, abundantly reveal him. There is no confused blending of his character with another. The veil that is flung over him repels curiosity, yet itdoes not hide what he was.

I.

Half-an-hour's walk from Jerusalem by the gate over the brow of Olivet lay the little village of Bethany—so near that, in our western cities, it would have been a suburb, yet, lying among its olive-gardens beyond the din of the streets and out of sight, it became a favourite resort of the Lord. One house opened its friendly doors to Him who often had not where to lay his head; one family received Him as its special friend. Many a night He spent under this hospitable roof; many an evening He withdrew from the staring crowd and the weary round of questions, and the incessant strain of watching against scribes and priests, and refreshed Himself with the country quiet and love of this faithful household. Every one in the village knew Him, and every one knew Him as their friend. The household, as we find it, consisted of a brother and two sisters. We know more of the women, who seem to have been older, and Lazarus is introduced simply as their brother; but of their previous history we know nothing. Many circumstances show that they were people of station: the consideration paid to them in the village, the friends they had among the Pharisees, their entertainments, the costly box with which Mary anointed the Saviour, their ownership of a family burying-place. Lazarus was apparently the youngest. We may pass over the ingenious guesses by which his father has been identified with Simon the leper, and he himself with the rich young man who went away sorrowful from Christ. He was probably wealthy, and belonged to the party of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea; and shared its aspirations. We know nothing decisive as to his character, as it is not directly described; there is no special trait that throws light upon it; we see it and read it in the opinion of others. Characters of that kind are often rarely beautiful; they produce the profoundest impression on those who know them, but they do not bear description—by some subtle law they elude portraiture. The enthusiasm they produce cannot be communicated beyond the circle of intimate friends. There are no special qualities to distinguish them. The impression they make can only be understood by knowing them. And we know Lazarus by the respect of his friends, by the touching grief of his sisters, by the love of Jesus. We see him in these—we do not otherwise know him—as a mirror may reflect with perfect clearness objects that do not otherwise meet the eye. They are a tribute paid to worth, to a winning, affectionate, and upright character. One of them especially reveals much. Besides Lazarus, there are but two men and two women whom Jesus is said to have loved: the young Ruler and John the Apostle, Martha and Mary. Something of what we know of them we may expect to find in him. Ingenuousness, high aims, moral earnestness, an unsatisfied yearning for rest, characterized the ruler. Insight, warm generous feelings, an abounding love, a deep passionate trust, characterized the Apostle. In Paul we have both combined, and have besides a man of the class to which Lazarus probably belonged. Like him, his days may have been

> "spent
> In blameless peace and study of our law,
> And frequent prayers: and all our Rabbis taught
> Who sat in Moses' seat, I learnt and did."

An earnest meditative priest-spirit, a temper like his sister Mary, would but harmonize with what is told us of his life. There must have been a moral beauty and simplicity of character to draw to him the esteem and love of Christ. And it was more even than esteem, for there was a natural affection, a friend's love, a drawing of heart to heart; and that is not readily conceivable with one who had plunged deeply into the sins of the world, or on whom Christ had merely wrought some marvellous work. Silently, in the repose of that gentle house, we may conceive Christ's words and his Divine aspect sinking into the young Pharisee's heart, and how at last He became to him not merely friend but teacher and Messiah. Silently, we may conceive the change wrought out in spite of the murmurs and disdain of his companions, much ridicule of young Scribes, and scoffing of Sadducees, and narrow-minded orthodox denunciations of new ways and anxious admonitions of venerable aged men who clung to the traditions of the fathers. And when, with self-surrender of his simple ardent nature, he came to Christ, we may barely conceive of the tie which bound them, a friendship so exquisitely pure, a confidence and reliance that in the stronger are so exquisitely touching.

If anything could realize to men the true and perfect humanity of Christ, it would be such a story as this. We have here one who feels with us; who does not place Himself above the needs of a human life; who, having showed Himself with the deep affec-

tion of a man, now in manhood shows the yearning and delight of friendship. The sense of wonder, of mystery, of Divine awe, spring up naturally about Him, they veil Him with an infinite majesty; but this is a touch of real life that makes the whole world kin, that prevents Him ascending from our thoughts in the clouds of his glory, and binds Him to us by common and familiar and most precious ties. For not only is Lazarus represented as claiming the friendship of Jesus, but Jesus as claiming his; nor are we led so much to think of friendly acts, as of the inner bond of friendship and its hidden flow of fellowship.

Such friendship as that was perhaps only possible while Christ was on earth. It needed the circumstances of his life and his visible presence. But if it would be impossible to reproduce it—if it would be a shallow view of Christ to see Him only in the exact form of his human ministry—there are those who may find in Him what Lazarus found; those to whom He reveals himself, as one friend unbosoms his heart to another; who see Him less in official relations and sacrificial act than in personal communion; who, knowing Him as their Saviour and adoring Him as their God, approach Him by the strength of his sympathy; who recognise in Him, though with mystery, the like power of attraction; and feel to Him the like drawing of the heart that friends have ever felt to friends. The qualities of that nature have lost nothing since they laid hold of Lazarus; nor are they less conspicuous, but more; nor do they fail to meet the soul as they met his, and that in its loftiest and truest moments. In this sense also is Jesus lifted up that He may draw men unto Him. In this sense we may not always recognise Him. We may be blinded by passion, or transient lust, or self-interest, or the god of this world. In the busy march that modern life requires, we may have left ourselves no leisure to think of other friends than those that gather round us and march with us. But that Friend is there, and He may be found, aside from the stir, in thoughtful moments, by thoughtful natures. Those who live in quiet Bethanys may know Him best, and this friendship may grow up with all the strength of meditative earnestness. Yet, if it is not given to every man to be a Lazarus or a John, nor to every woman to be a Mary, it is given to every Christian to have a friend in Jesus. He himself called the disciples his friends, and He is set out as the friend that sticketh closer than a brother. There are other relations that we bear to Jesus than between a Redeemer and the redeemed. On the way to our redemption He took up our humanity and allied us, as men, to Himself; and such ties as men recognise among themselves, they find established between them and Him. We not only come to Him with thanksgiving, loyalty, and obedience, but for fellowship. The friend whom we consult in some family emergency, or with whom we take sweet counsel, on whom we fall back for succour, to whom we hasten for sympathy, with whom we share our thoughts, on whose love we count—it is Jesus. Whatever a friend can do, He is open to do. No one else can come so near, can give us such confidence in his wisdom and judgment, can so penetrate through our perplexities; no one else will estimate us with the same righteous tolerance; with no one else can there be the same frank unreserved expression of thought, the same opening of a troubled and hesitating heart. Nothing that affects us is indifferent to Him; He watches with the keenest interest our tastes and pursuits; his perception of our position is unerringly accurate, and quick, and delicate. Lack of sympathy, dread of ridicule, misgiving about whether or not we shall be understood, are enough to make us keep our counsel and fight our way alone. Some change of expression, some unwitting discord with our mood, some unskilfulness in taking up our meaning, have often crushed back the cry or story that was springing to our lips. A friend may be very genuine, yet not very sensitive; ready with his help, yet clumsy; honest and warm-hearted, but not able to comprehend our difficulties; and by what he is not, he leaves us—we can all tell how sadly—to ourselves. The friendship of Christ is in this and in every way perfect. Prayer will bring the Friend at any moment to our side. Nay, He seems to be marching with us through our life, so exact is his knowledge of our circumstances, and so often has He helped us before we had sought Him. And to have Jesus, means that dream of a perfect friend that haunts us in the days of our youth come true; that ideal, that with cooler thought and more wisdom we learn to think impossible, more than fulfilled: it means this, and over and above, all that is deep and divine in the Son of God, all that is peculiar in the Sacrifice of the Cross to those for whom it was offered. Lazarus must have claimed it by faith, and claimed it with a peculiar energy and self-surrender. It is an exquisite picture that John leaves on our minds: the calm days of intimate communion in the little hamlet; converse on the law and the prophets till the heart burned within; a revelation of the mind, and all the graciousness of Jesus, where he was free from restraint and all the fretting of a crowd; his sympathy with the movements of the household and the young Jew, who kindles into interest, yields himself up in simple and entire trust, and leans upon his Divine friend, is the companion of his walks, sits with Him under the shade of the fig-tree in the court or on the house-top while the sun goes down and glows upon Jerusalem, hears from his own lips of his wonderful plan, shares his sorrow and indignation, insensibly comforts and cheers Him, follows Him with wistful sympathy, or enters into his thoughts with a ready spirit, even when they baffle his comprehension.

II.

The Gospel introduces Lazarus as the known and recognised friend of Jesus. With characteristic subordination of all to Him, it takes up the story where we would naturally leave it. To John the life of Lazarus is of no importance save in its relation to Christ, and all we learn of it is by the light flung from some chance word in the narrative, or some expression wrung by grief from a group of mourners. The first that we hear of the friend of Jesus is that he was sick and died. His life was probably uneventful, and flowed away as hundreds of lives do, without notice, or break of its smooth current.

Then the sharp quick fever came and smote him down. It seemed like yesterday that Jesus had been with them on his way to Jerusalem; that they had sat at his feet, and Martha had served Him. A sudden popular tumult that threatened him in the streets of the capital drove him from it to the fords of the Jordan, and thus He remained among the memories that clung to the scene of John's baptism. He was within reach, but the fever makes swift work, and before the messenger had brought Him news that Lazarus was sick, the two sisters had watched their brother die. We can fancy the hush and awe of that stricken home, the desolate lonely grief, the orphans left more helpless than ever, the interment anxiously hurried over, and then the reaction when there was no more to do, and the mind took in all that had occurred, and the sorrow made its way leisurely by every road to their heart. Careful watching by the bed, jealous hungry love, skill of physicians, their own helplessness, had availed nothing. Jesus loved him and was his friend—that also had availed nothing. They seem at first not to have realised that he could die. Jesus would hasten to them, and surely in his presence death could not touch their brother. Those who have watched the dying can tell best how they may have watched and listened, turned from the face to watch the nearest point of road, and from the road back to find the sick man weaker, counted the minutes, begged the physicians for delay, denied to themselves that their brother was worse, and then visibly seen that he was sinking. Now their own life seemed to tremble in the balance of his, and yet the fever stole on by hours and minutes, and the pulse grew fainter, and all the last flickering hopes went out. Lazarus was dead, and there was no sign of Jesus. The sorrow spread through the village, neighbours gossiped kindly and sadly over the family; they may have whispered it was a judgment, but their whispers would run into praise of the unripe life and stories of the boy that had grown up among them: friends and kindred came from the city with their sympathy and common-places; the bier was got ready and they laid him sorrowfully in the tomb, and set the stone against it, and things seemed to go on as before, only Lazarus was dead, and there was no sign of Jesus. Jesus had never left the Jordan. He knew more than the messenger, for He knew that Lazarus' sickness was over; yet He did not remain, because He knew it would be of no use. He could have saved his friend. He could have healed him by a word. It was not lack of sympathy with human sorrow, nor indifference to human affection. The delay was deliberate and with a purpose, into which everything about Him was made to work. A greater miracle was to be wrought than healing. The glory of God was to be seen. Jesus was to advance to his death by the brightest splendour of his power. Yet while He lingered by the fords of the Jordan, the sisters' hearts were sinking, as each weary day crept after the other, and left them to the same disappointment.

This friend of Jesus had no immunity from sickness and death; and though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, they had their own share of trial. The evangelist lingers over the family sorrow till we feel how deep and terrible it was—till it paints itself before us like pictures on the wall: the anxious faces, the dead rigid body, the bitter tears, the mourners, and the vacant joyless chambers; there is no mistaking its intensity, there is no misreading its lesson. It is of the nature of the chequered human life to be pierced with sorrow. Jesus did not exempt himself. He does not exempt his friends. We must take the world as we find it, its grief and joy together; and as the world is, we cannot have the one without the other. Strip the trials off our earthly life, and we become unearthly; they are only the shadows of its blessings. When men point to a Christian overwhelmed by affliction, and hint that after all he has gained nothing by his faith, they make a mistake. That was a gain he never sought and never was promised. He was distinctly told that he would be left in the world and not taken out of it; that his life would be exposed to entanglement, his means to embarrassment, his body to disease. It is a weary task, no doubt, to which we are drawn, and we see the innocent lost and stricken down, and we feel that we can hate the sin that has spread its toils over all that men loved and valued; but a way out of the tangle we cannot find, till death finds it for us. And if it were possible to separate our human life from the infinite thread of circumstances that bind it to the rest—certainly a miracle of the vastest kind—it would not be worth the having; denuded of pain but also of pleasure, without sorrow and without the bliss that makes sorrow deep, unrent by bitter partings and not re-blessed by the joy of union—a vacant and negative and selfish existence, that would be harder to bear than all the crush of trial.

And so when Christians shrink from the heavier blows of life, and think if Jesus had been there it had not come: the presence of sorrow does not argue the absence of Christ, or that his love has cooled, or that He would needs interfere to spare a life, no matter how dear, or how dependent we are on it. It argues that we are in this world, and bound up with its misery, and that unless we pass out of this world we cannot escape its mutability and pain. And this chapter argues that lives may be stricken down, and loves severed, and the happiest homes darkened, while the sufferers are dear to Jesus, and He watches them and knows that they suffer. Let us keep this well in mind, so that in the day of our trial we may not shirk it, but meet it with faith, and grace, and strength, look it in the face, and look it down.

And there is this also, of which Lazarus' death speaks to us. At Bethany we look over the field of human life; at the foot of Jordan we are let look into the mystery of the Divine procedure—that is, we have the same incidents, as they are seen by men and as they are seen by God. The two sisters watching the precious hours slip away wonder that Christ delays; and through the miserable day of the interment, and the lonely days after, they wonder on. To them it is simply unaccountable delay, by which every hope is destroyed, and their agony prolonged. Jesus does not come—gives no reason—sends no message. They know precisely how long the journey will take; they have probably heard that there is no impediment to

it; they have always believed that love made haste. We see just what they saw of trial; like them, we feel how it presses us at the time, and do not look beyond. We have asked for help; we have sent our embassy of prayer, and the trial crushes on—crushes the heart and the spirit, crushes the health. What we are apt to think is, that misfortune has been added to sorrow, that we are simply plunging down from depth to depth of trial. Looking at life, it is not possible to discover more. But in Christ's words we have glimpses into the Divine procedure. What at Bethany bred only woe and wonder was really the necessary step to a great work and favour of God. It was by the delay that that work was rendered possible. Behind that mystery of silence, beyond the woe and wonder of men, Jesus was disposing events to a most gracious end. Even to the disciples that were about Him He let fall only a slow hint or two,—very pregnant to those who had ears to hear, unintelligible to those who had not. But those words, as we interpret them by the events that followed, recall enough to us. They are like broken lights falling on the fields through a clouded autumn sky, when at a hundred points the shafts of light shoot down upon the little nooks of corn and kindle them into gold. They light up for us the field of the work of God. The delay may be only of wisdom or of love, or it may be to indicate God's wisdom and glory. It was for God's glory here; yet it comprehends the boon that Martha would have asked had she dared, and the spiritual gain of her brother. Though it should be only for God, let us be content. There are higher ends to serve than our happiness. But it may be for our sakes. While we look at the things that are seen, let us not forget the things that are not seen.

III.

Lazarus now dead, there would seem so much less interest in Bethany. The strain of suspense is over, and every one has accepted the logic of facts. But this history of Lazarus is so constructed, that our interest in him begins with his last sickness, and increases after his funeral. Dropping mysterious hints of sleep and waking, of a death that yet was not death, of a crisis of faith, Jesus advanced from the Jordan. He said plainly, "Lazarus is dead;" yet He spoke of the dead man as living: "Let us go to him." And when he reached the village, it was towards the grave that he turned, and not towards the house. It was apparently by some watchers at the grave that the news of his coming was brought to Martha. It was in the neighbourhood of the grave that they learnt it was the fourth day since the burial. It was to that quiet outskirt, so sad and dear to her now, that Martha hastily went out to meet Him. The words that sprang to her lips came all the more naturally from the associations of the place. The fields and trees of that Jericho road recalled to her the happiest days we have: the merry children that knew no care, and plucked the spring flowers, and watched the reapers tie the sheaves. One of these children lay still, below the flowers and the bearded wheat, and would lie there till the last day. The grave was scarcely closed. That funeral procession would have been a hideous dream, but for that weary longing at her heart

> "for the touch of a vanished hand,
> And the sound of a voice that is still."

Quivering yet to the wrench and agony of death, she met here, on familiar and now sacred ground, the dearest friend he had. The brother was gone from them both. That was her first thought; and then sprang out of these solemn memories that wondrous dialogue that John records of death and resurrection, of that day and the last day, and out of it again the sublime but as yet visionary thought of One who was Himself life and resurrection, and who stood before her as the friend of Lazarus and the Son of God. Awe-stricken, though not comprehending the revelation that she heard; comforted by words that she vaguely felt rather than understood, Martha hurried back for her sister. Mary, more fixed and absorbed in grief, and taking little part in the home things, had heard nothing of the Master's coming. She sat still in the house, and many friends sat with her to comfort her—a comfort of ceremony and politeness that she could have spared. The heart in deep trouble yearns to be alone; or if a friend will come it must be the friend we choose, and not the mere visitor of courtesy, with vapid and worn-out common-place and religious maxims that are run over by rote. Shrunk into unbroken silence, and scarce conscious of the consolation busily intruded, Mary started at the secret message, and rose up quickly to find Jesus. It was the way to the grave, and the group of friends followed, saying, "She goeth to the grave to weep there." She too felt the thrill of seeing the face that was most linked with his, she cannot resist the flood of strong pent-up thoughts, and breaks down in passionate tears. The mourners catch the infectious weeping. There is not a dry eye in the group. The piteous sobs pierced to the heart of Jesus. Here is the fruit of that sin that marred his world—the care it has brought upon his creatures. It is thus it wastes and destroys, poisons human life, and drains it of enjoyment. It is not a group, but a world of mourners that He sees. It is not the sobbing of a few women that He hears, but the wail that rises from every land. Sin confronts Him armed with death and the grave, rich with the spoil of souls. There is the enemy that He has come to destroy, and He rises up against it with a fixed and holy indignation, groaning in spirit, troubled. He, too, thrills with sympathy. If Mary weeps for a brother, He weeps for a friend.

They cluster round the grave. And now Jesus assumes his true place. He comes, as Calvin says, not as a spectator, but as a hero. He is not there by the sad feeling that draws us to the graveyard. The rest were there only to weep; Jesus is there to conquer. Every word becomes a command. Yet in the energy of that decisive moment, everything is done in order. There is no superfluous energy. It is God's way to work by human means wherever they will answer. He supplements; He does not supersede. He does not order the stone to fall from its place: the bystanders may take it away. Martha is perplexed. The face will

be changed now. She dreads the shock. She shrinks from penetrating into the death-chamber. With a gentle and kindly rebuke, Jesus passes on. They see Him lift up his eyes; they hear Him pray to his Father. Then the clear majestic words burst upon the startled crowd, "Lazarus, come forth!" And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes. What grouping round that rock-hewn vault! The two sisters worn with grief, sorrowing with a dull heavy sorrow, perplexed with the statement of Christ, watching, half wondering, half in doubt, anxious that whatever it was, it was all over. The crowd of friends, swelled by the stragglers of the village, arrested by the common grief; mere spectators, however, leisurely noting every change of expression, curiously scanning the Master, whispering their own conclusions; the broken group of the disciples, troubled with the earnestness of the situation, looking on the Pharisees that had come out from Jerusalem, and remembering that they had said, "We will also die with Thee;" baffled by the words of Christ, yet with vague presentiment of what He meant, as they heard his words to Martha and his prayer to God. And in the centre Jesus himself, fronting those dread but invisible foes He had come into the world to conquer; all that was human in Him touched by irrepressible emotion, even to tears, all that was divine flashing out in his majestic and victorious words. And the dead man, as he moved feebly and uncertainly out, entangled and ghastly with the cerements of the tomb, wonderingly gazing on Him whose voice had penetrated into the eternal shades, and with no sign of corruption.

What various effects on those bystanders! "A hundred voices broke forth in cries of amazement, a hundred hands were stretched forth to the everlasting heavens, hundreds sank down upon their knees, hundreds smote upon their breasts, hundreds stood as if petrified." That a notable miracle had been wrought there was no denying, it was wrought in open day, before a crowd gathered together by accident, yet embracing people of station and enemies of Christ, on a man perfectly well known, loved and honoured, a member of an ancient family. Even in modern times, Spinoza is reported to have said that if he could be convinced of the reality of the resurrection of Lazarus, he would dash to pieces his entire system and embrace without reluctance the ordinary faith of the Christian. If that be the effect produced by the bare and scant recital at an interval of seventeen centuries, and upon one of the acutest of men, what must it have been upon those who stood by and saw each incident, and followed the risen man home! The Pharisees were alive to their danger. A miracle like this happening in what was almost a suburb of the Holy City, and attended by so many involuntary witnesses, would be spread about with inconceivable rapidity. From that time the fate of Jesus was sealed. The highest act of his friendship was to cost Him his life, and Lazarus was to be the unwilling but immediate cause of the crucifixion of his Saviour. So even with Him the threads of human life are twisted together until God unravel them.

But there were those who felt only joy.

> "From every house the neighbours met,
> The streets were filled with joyful sound;
> A solemn gladness even crowned
> The purple brow of Olivet."

W. F. Stevenson.

A VISIT TO THE CHRISTIANS OF ELBA.

FIRST OF TWO PAPERS.

"A broken vessel," damaged by the wear and tear of life, I fled for refuge in the fall of the year to the balmy shores of the Mediterranean. How much the loneliness of exile, and the weariness of sickness were relieved by the untiring care of the most unselfish and Christian family I have ever met with, I may not say. Suffice it, that to Mr. and Mrs. W—— I owe more, under God, than to the marvellous climate of Cannes; so that through them the land has become enshrined among my dearest and most grateful memories.

As soon as in the present spring the swallow was twittering its first song under my window, I rose to depart, heart-sad in departure, to join a friend at Nice on a visit to Elba—the seat of empire for a few brief days of a man whose shadow once darkened the world, and whose whisper shook the nations with affright.

In that lone isle, so interesting from this incident, and known besides only by name to the world, a few trembling fishermen had listened in secret, and by stealth, to the Word of God, and by it had become banded into brotherhood, in spite of the fiery wave of persecution which had surged against their homes.

To see this marvel of our laggard days, to see men who had honesty and courage to sacrifice interest to conscience, and mammon to Christ, was the motive that was speeding on my friend to their shores, as well as to bid the trembling knees wax strong, and give the right-hand of fellowship to men who were as sheep among devouring wolves.

It was to associate me with such a mission that my friend drew me to his side, and with the same view I invite the readers to become our companions in travel.

Assuming then the pilgrim's staff on the summons of my friend, I bent my way along the crescent Golfe de Juan, whose nearer shores, everywhere blest by the touch of fertility, rise terrace beyond terrace upwards, till craggy rocks and savage mountains contrast in wildest grandeur with the sloping paradise below.

I paused—and who does not pause entranced on reaching the high ground over Antibos to take in the fairy show that circles round by Nice to where the distant bluff of Bordighera is shadowed out in faint relief against the liquid sky! What varied beauty bursts on the ravished sight! Cities and towns; villas and castles; headland beyond headland crowned

with lighthouses to guide the wandering vessel into sheltering harbours; hills covered with evergreen foliage, or gay garden-terraces undulate above. Upward the eye still ranges, till dark mountain forms boulder up the barrier Alps, peak above peak, and ridge beyond ridge, till their virgin snows sparkle in the face of heaven. One could gaze for ever; so I felt, till the secret whisper reached my heart, "What dost thou here? Arise and depart, for this is not thy rest." So I sprang to my feet, nor lingered more till I grasped my friend's hand in Nice. What a change I saw in all around me there!

"In happier days and calmer hours"

I had known Nice as a modest resting-place, where one might breathe from the harass of life amid the hush and sublimity of nature. Now it lay before me a meretricious Paris. Happily I had little time to compare the present with the past. We did but linger to greet two ladies, whose heart was in our work, and whose praise should be in all the churches, ere we committed ourselves, Providence our guide, to the purpose of our journey.

I, my friend, and his nephew, embarked the following morning on board the "Espresso" for Genoa. Our passengers were supposed to be all on board; the hour of starting past, and the boiler, roaring out its volumes and screaming in fitful passion, seemed to be bursting with impatience, and yet our moorings held us immovable to the shore. The riddle was soon solved. I saw at the end of the pier a bevy of ladies, amid a chaos of boxes, leisurely arranging their method of departure, ere they condescended to become our companions in travel. The courteous captain only smiled and bowed when these gentle loiterers stept finally on board. After battling with the boatmen, and assuring themselves leisurely of the safe delivery of all the many odds and ends of their travelling gear, they allowed the vessel to sway from the port and launch into the deep. It is needless to say that our long-expected new-comers were daughters of Albion—

"Six jolly souls, and all agog,
To dash through thick and thin"—

six unprotected females, accoutred to the teeth with modern appliances for woman's independent, adventurous travel. They needed neither man-servant nor maid-servant. They were themselves prepared for all, and equal to every fate. One unrecognised courtesy on my part, when the motion of the vessel was quickening disturbing emotions in their gentle breasts, closed further approach; and so for the rest of the journey we exchanged no word, though sprung from the same island home. They occasionally crossed our path as we journeyed on. My last sight was of the eldest battling manfully her way through the excited railway throng at Pisa; so that, unless in the meantime shot down by some lawless brigand-band, or borne to some mountain cave to grace a bandit's lair, I have good hope they may reach woman's only proper sphere at last—*home and its duties.*

Our passengers were a medley of all nations, crowding for interest, pleasure, or duty, to fair Italy. Heaps upon heaps of baggage and merchandise cumbered the decks, showing what an active hold commerce had already taken of a nation which but yesterday was unknown to the world. As I looked up I saw its young flag fluttering against the deep blue sky in all the joyousness of fresh, untried life. Around us lay the azure sea, glassy and still, as though the breath of tempest had never ruffled its beauty. But what a coast burst upon us as our keel clove onward through the sparkling waves! From Cape Roux behind, tracing its romantic crags against a sky unshaded by a cloud, onward to Noli, descending with its barrier-headland into the sea, beauty and grandeur unfolded their charms in very wantonness of hue and form. Picturesque towns lay fringing the blue sea between sheltering promontories. Perched on high on wooded knolls, or crouching under precipitous rocks, hamlets and villages lay nestled round shining spires, and looking down secure upon the world of waters. And far above all that bears the form or stamp of breathing life, there where the eagle builds its nest, amid clouds and mists, crags and waterfalls, you faintly descry the white hermitage or convent, those fancied abodes of peace, where men forswear the struggles and duties of life to gain an indolent access to heaven. Over and above all tower those buttresses of the skies, the thunder-riven Alps, sparkling in eternal glaciers and snows. But—

"Who can paint like Nature?
Can the imagination boast hues like hers?"

He who would know the varied and matchless beauties of the Riviera must come and see, and then confess, while rapture swells his heart, that "Manifold, O Lord, are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all! The earth is full of thy riches."

We put into Porto San Maurizio for passengers and merchandize. The appearance of the town from the sea is charming; its houses, bright and fair, rise in terraces up the steep sides of a Mamelon-cape, overhanging a well protected port. Here lay several ships of burthen, so that as this is moreover the halting-place for steamers between Nice and Genoa, one would conclude it to be an important outlet for inland traffic. A number of boats lay scattered about, awaiting our arrival, full of living freight and cargo, for our already too heavily-burthened vessel. In an instant all was bustle and confusion, boats driving against one another, to the terror of their passengers, —men shouting and screaming above the din of the escaping steam. Many a ludicrous scene occurred in the general anxiety, as the boats neared the ship, to secure their luggage and clutch the rope by the ladder. Tossed and tumbled about, one over the other, all were alarmed, and some were angry, but each too anxious for life and his household gods to dispute in earnest with his fellow. With all "it was an agony, but now forgot" the moment their foot stood firm on the welcome deck. As I hung over the ship's side, sharing in the general excitement, I descried among the struggling boats a young Englishman with his youthful bride and her maid. He was anxious as the rest, not, however for any part of his triple self, but for a gun-case, which, slanting along the gunwale as

the boat heaved and lurched, was slipping from his spasmodic grasp into the sea. His face was most ludicrous, as, half sad, half comical, he watched his escaping treasure. "But what," said I to myself, "can induce an Englishman to make this his point of embarkation?" But who ever found an Englishman following a beaten track, or acting as other people do? He has license for any peculiarity, the odder the better. And so I welcomed his honest Saxon face on board. His wife sat, as English wives only can, motionless, silent, and apart. Her maid was English too, only speaking when spoken to, obeying (but in her own time and way) when bidden, and never expecting word or look of consideration or sympathy from her mistress—at least, before others. Her master, whose wits, I judged, were generally all astray, seemed suddenly bewildered on discovering that he had left something he valued behind him in the boat.

He began running first one way, then another, now gesticulating and shouting to the boatmen drifting away in the wake of the vessel, and now appealing to the captain just as the word "*Avanti*" (forward) dropped from his lips, and the obedient paddles were already beating the waters aside. He could make use, however, of what is always an Englishman's consolation in trouble. He could grumble and complain. "The Italian boatmen were all knaves without exception, and these the worst of all; they had tried to cheat him in the fare, and failing in that, had now secured their end by robbery. The captain was the most unobliging of all his craft, or he would even now put back, that he might recover his property and bring the knaves to reason. However, he would have his revenge. Three of his friends were on their way to embark at the same port, he would direct them now to another channel, so that the 'administration' should have no benefit from them. It would serve them right to show them up in the *Times*, it would." I approached him with condolence and counsel. His loss, however, was too great for either. And what was this terrible loss, that had shaken the whole man from his equanimity, and placed him beyond sympathy? "Tell it not in Gath!" reader, it was a small collection of ferns! But our vessel is now on her way, and so we must leave him in his grief to "Time the comforter." This was, however, the severest moment of his trial, for just then the wretched boatmen were shaking his treasure against the sky in mocking triumph.

Clearing the point of Noli, we stretched across the gulf for Genoa. As the coast bayed inward from us it lost nothing of its matchless charms. Continuous towns, little white nests of human life, still chequered the shores, and mountains rose high above to where Alps on Alps closed at last the passage of the skies. It is usual to say that the granduer of the Corniche terminates at Mentone. By road perhaps this is true, but sailing along the shore, where the broader foreground gives greater breadth and depth to the landscape, you find scenes continually opening, as grand as any that enraptures the land-traveller between Nice and Mentone. But when, out at sea, midway between Noli and Genoa, the eye ranges round to Porto Fino, comparison there is none. The lower shores nestle found the dark blue sea the picture of fairest beauty, while over all crowd mountain-forms sublime, Alps and Appenines, like the waves of an ocean storm against the dark-blue heaven.

But on with the boat! Alas! unfavouring winds arise, and the scanty brushwood fuel is unequal to the heavy draught of our vessel, labouring now through rebellious waves. The coast is thought of no more, as the shades of evening close around, and the long promised "haven, where we would be," is scarcely yet in sight. The poor captain, teased by the continual cry of, "When shall we be there?" points to the lighthouse glimmering in the far distance, and has only one response for all, "*Eccolo, Signor! Abbia pazienza!*" ("There it is, sir; have patience"). We gained the port at last, but too late to see the pride of place of Genoa la Superba, one of the most glorious sights imaginable, when you enter from the sea by daylight. However, though we distinguished nothing of the forms and hues of things, it was a wondrous sight even then, as we approached the modern Tyre. There lay the gay city, rising from a crowded shore up the steep sides of hills, and covering them for miles with streets, convents, palaces, and villas, which, lighted up at that hour, and mingled with the star-spangled sky above, seemed like a celestial city—a realised abode of man at last in intercourse with Heaven. Alas! that daylight should dissipate your dreams, for then you enter at least into a part of her own proverb, that Genoa is "*un paese senz' alberi ed uomini senza fede*" (a country without trees and men without honour).

The moment we entered the Mole we were surrounded by boats waiting for the travellers, like carrion birds for their prey. Happily the landlord of the "Quatre Nations" aware of our coming, received us at once into his own boat, and bore off us and our baggage in peace and safety to the redoubtable Dogana (custom-house). Alas for those who, strangers and unaided, had, guided by the farthing rushlight on the deck, to recover their luggage and stumble their way down the ladder into the clutches of the harpies in the boats below, if they did not meantime, in the lurchings of the boat, miss footing and slip into the sea, to become the prey of the gentler monsters of the deep! To reach the shore we had to make our way through the confusion and uproar of men-of-war's crews and soldiers hastening on board their respective ships for the last muster-roll.

For as at this time all Italy was impatient for war, she had centered here her iron-clads, ready to rush upon the Austrians. After a vexatious search by candle-light at the Dogana we became free men, and in the comforts of our hotel felt something of the touch of home, and dreamed away in peace the night, till daylight, when church-bells, that plague of Italy, bade defiance to all endeavours after sleep. And so we rose to study Genoa in its galleries, palaces, and churches, ere we resumed our march by the glorious Riviera to Spezia.

We left Genoa by the old gate of S. Martino d'Albaro, under shadow of the Virgin enshrined in a niche above. How "wholly the city is given to

idolatry" may be seen by her image, complacently sitting crowned with stars, and with the legend of its devotion at her feet—"Posuerunt me custodems" ("Me have they placed as guardian"). Alas! if they have no better keeping than her, "the watchman waketh but in vain."

The old fortifications, once so strong, and deemed impregnable, are now being tumbled down as useless by the hand of modern science, and in their place streets of palaces rise on every side, while forts, bastions, and casemates, more adapted to modern warfare, crown the beautiful hills, which on the road-side girdle the city round. Our road lies through most enchanting scenery. On one side tower the Apennines majestically, line above line, while on the other a coast studded with towns, villas, and gardens bays round the blue tideless sea. Another charm in the landscape is the air of ease and industrial comfort everywhere visible in the towns and villages, through which you are continually passing. The lordly mansion with its hanging gardens, pavilions and terraces, seems not more comfortable than the humble abode of the artisan by its side, where the busy shuttle is plied. As if to give the last touch to beauty, the morning broke cloudless, and the face of the deep sea below was checkered over, far and wide, with vessels spreading their white wings to catch the freshening breeze. From Rota, the highest point in our ascent, we took our last farewell of Genoa and its beautifully indented coast. From the old lighthouse that rises proudly over its harbour hither to Capo Porto Fino, the villages and country seats by which we passed seem one continuous city. Hence we drive through a gloomy tunnel to open at once upon a scene rivalling that through which we had passed from Genoa with wondering joy—the bay as smiling, though the range is more bounded. Here Capo Fino projecting far into the sea shuts out the distant shore, along which we had coasted from Nice, and precipitous breaks back the waves with abrupt rocks. Yonder, before us, the bluff of Sestri, covered with majestic pines, gracefully descends to check the chafing waves. Inward the Mediterranean presses between, laving smiling towns and villages that rise along the circling shores, while behind deep valleys open under the savage brow of the cloud-capped Apennines. The sun was already streaming his last rays upon the bay when we reached our hotel. Our eccentric fellow-traveller, the knight of the ferns, had arrived before us. He was so busily engaged at the time in a random search after another lost treasure that he had scarcely leisure to greet us. By the greatest good fortune, he had only a few hours before succeeded in getting possession of duplicate specimens of the ferns he had been so cruelly deprived of at San Maurizio, and now these too had unaccountably disappeared! From this severer blow of unrelenting fate it was my good fortune to relieve him, for on going into my room there on the sofa lay the precious objects of all his anxious care! When I sallied forth in the early morning, and saw before the houses the glorious sea rippling upon the softest sand, and behind, one of the grandest valleys of the Apennines opening full upon me, I wondered that such a spot should not be as much resorted to as any of the fairest which allure our restless tourists from their homes.

The moment we turned our backs upon Sestri, we changed at once both earth and sky. We had no longer a smiling coast below, or above an atmosphere trembling with joy. We rose over the steep sides of the bare Apennines higher and higher, while gulfs of valleys deeper and deeper lay below us, rendered more sombre and sublime because only seen through fitful breaks of a dense fog, which sometimes made the light of mid-day resemble sober twilight. Our driver bade us rejoice in a lesser evil. We might have had, as often happens, a wind to render our passage difficult or impossible. He had driven upon the road for forty years, and so was full of old experiences and superstitious "saws." On passing under a solitary hermitage, perched amid the clouds on the top of a mountain, he recounted, head uncovered, devoutly crossing himself the while, how that the Madonna of this spot regularly year by year on the eve of her festival, operates a miracle on a few olive trees piously enclosed in consequence before her shrine. As I cared little for saintly legends, I tried to bring him to those substantial traditions of brigand exploits, which, within my own memory, belonged of right to this pass. Either, however, his recollection failed, except in connection with saintly puerilities, or the establishment of patrol stations at regular intervals along the road had so operated that even the memory of highway-violence had died out. In his eyes the two ruling terrors of this pass were high winds in stormy weather, and hungry wolves in winter.

"But are there bears?" I asked.

"Dio me ne guardi!" ("God preserve me from them!") was his prompt reply, almost springing from his seat, and giving his horses a nervous lash, as though growling Bruin was already at his heels.

We descended to Borghetto, a wretched, brigand-looking haunt even now, but charmingly situated at the junction of valleys where mountain torrents unite into a river, along whose banks we made our way. The prospect smiles again—fertile hills and valleys, picturesque churches and villages, open all around. We rose toward even-tide over the last spur of the Apennines, and welcomed the bay of Spezia, running deep inland under protecting batteries, and terminating in a vast and quiet haven, where ships of any burthen find safe anchorage. A busy town lines the shore. At the time of our arrival the streets were crowded with sailors, and the whole place in the fever of wild excitement attendant upon expected war. Several iron-clads were anchored across the gulf, between which and the arsenals dwarf steamers were in continual passage, giving life to the bay, heightened, too, by men-of-war gigs and pleasure boats crossing one another's tracks in every direction. At that moment the batteries were booming an answering salute to two Prussian men-of-war, which had just entered the harbour with Prince Wladimir on board. Much of the general excitement of this moment was to be attributed to this event. For as the rumour ran, that Prussia had concluded an offensive and defensive treaty with Italy, it could not but follow such a union that the Alps and the

sea would be secured to Italy as her natural barrier against the active will of Austria, and even the unfavouring will of France.

During the brief stay which I made in Spezia, I was rejoiced to find that endeavours were being made to evangelize the natives. I wish I could say as much with regard to our Christian duty in connection with the hundreds of English workmen who are employed there and in the neighbourhood. But, alas! while we are sensitively alive to the importance of protecting our commercial and political interests wherever we can place a consular agent, we are very unwilling to show any sympathy with our faith where Romanism prevails. As this is not an accident confined to a locality, but a principle adopted by our Government, and as "whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" belongs alike to God's just retribution to nations and to men, I look to the future with sadness.

"Alas! for my country."

At Spezia we reached the territory of the great destroyer of natural beauty—the tyrant Railway. By his will we may now, lightning-winged, fly by the romantic rocks of Carrara, the smiling Pisan hills, and the flat, luxuriant plains through which the Arno winds its passage to the sea. And still the tyrant, in ceaseless swoop, hurries us breathless on till we repose at last in the quiet town of Piombino, and safely rest among its old feudal battlements and towers. Here, in the silence of general decay, even the echo of the restless world is hushed and silence unbroken, save by the railway screams, which even here, seven miles off, scared my midnight slumbers.

Although we had reached a quiet resting-place, we had not, however, landed in Goshen; Piombino's one only inn (less select than Mivart's!) had no couch of repose, and nothing for food save good bread and an old cock, whose scream till now had challenged for years the bell of the neighbouring clock-tower—the only other public voice in the place. As we sat prisoners of hope in the large public-room, we were subjected to the wondering eyes of continual incomers throughout the evening. There they abode fixed, staring, and silent, as though fascinated. I thought it an odd expression of hospitality, but as their demeanour was otherwise courteous and respectful, I left them to the enjoyment of their gaze. I had been followed by the same respectful curiosity, when, soon after our arrival, I had descended to the little port and then rambled among the fortifications that rise and bend along the rocky shore. Wherever I turned, a gazing but respectful throng followed in my rear. As I could not be alone, I returned to the inn to find the like admiration there.

After having subjected the cravings of the inner man to the wretched accommodation of the place; I was foreshadowing a night of suffering on rush-bottomed-chairs, or on a wooden table in the public room among my gazing friends, when the worthy landlady appeared with the news, every word of which was music to my ear, that two of the magnates of the place would shelter us for the night. My friend's lot and mine fell to an old soldier, *en retraite*. in whose house I found, to my surprise, quarters such as should satisfy the most fastidious. The only thing I regretted in my room was, that I could nowhere turn without my Protestant eyes being offended. Here St. Barbara was tossing up in the air with a battlemented castle, fortalice, and donjon all complete, light as a shuttlecock. There St. Lucia, a lovely maiden gorgeously arrayed, presented you with her own bright eyes served up on a dish. As to the Virgin Mary, there were no less than sixteen modifications of herself and attributes, according to the infallible dogmas of the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church. Imagine, if, as I lay in bed, I chanced with the faintest light to open my eyes, what a mystery of the lie at once beset my thoughts; for thought will follow sight. However, beyond the removal of these objects of Romish idolatry, I had nothing to desire in my room save a ladder to rise to my bed, for there lay mattress on mattress, piled like Pelion on Ossa. Our passage through the streets to our resting-place was quite an ovation. An admiring crowd pressed at a respectful distance behind, while the landlady and her bright-eyed daughters lighted the way before us with those picturesque triple-wicked lamps which have become household gods in Italy, since the fatal night of Pompeii's ruin, when mothers bore them shrieking before their children to light their hopeless way.

As we rose to our rooms the whole household was marshalled out, the soldier to the front, bowing and scraping to do us honour. All this was so marvellous we might well rub our eyes to be assured we were not dreaming, and our boyhood's fables of enchanted castles sober realities after all. Our servant the following morning unriddled the enigma. The whole town was seized with the idea that my friend, moving, alas! on crutches, was one of Garibaldi's wounded Generals; his nephew, Garibaldi's gallant son; and I, the great hero himself! All was now explained, to our great amusement.

Early the following day the place was all astir at news of our departure. A crowd lined the pier, and hung over the walls above as we descended to embark for Elba. The moment we set foot on board every hand was raised to greet us; and we pushed out into the channel, leaving as much good-will and respect behind us as though the modern Cincinnatus himself had arrived from rocky Caprera equal to the exigencies of his country, now menaced with war.

The wind favoured our starting. The fortress-girt peninsula soon lessened behind us, and bayed round to the picturesque promontory of Castiglione. As soon, however, as we reached the midway lighthouse-rock of Palmajuola, its capricious breath rose and fell, and shifted to every point of the compass, so that it was only by continual tacks that we anchored at last in the busy harbour of Rio Marina. Although Elba had stretched its full island-length to our sight the moment we embarked, it was not until we cleared the lighthouse rock, darkening between, that we caught sight of Rio. Our first view of its situation, although extremely pretty, rather disappointed us. It lies in a less romantic part of the coast than Lungone or Ferraio, and its harbour is little more than an inbaying curve under high hills, between which a lively stream babbles its way downwards to the harbour.

But what it loses in the picturesque, it gains in commerce. The nearer hills breasting the sea are so many giant stores of iron, needing no labour of mining but lying ready to the hand of man. To draught this off to a large number of ships and lighters in the harbour is the constant employment of streams of half-starved donkeys, and "men more savage far than they."

The spare red forms of the men, naked to the waist, screaming and hurrying along under their light burthen, would make you fear you were reaching the lair of some lawless Red-Indian tribe. Everything was tinged with the rusty hue of the ore. The sea itself was like blood. Among the lofty blocks of houses, clustered together at the mouth of a narrow valley, and heaped up one over the other, you look in vain for what is such a pleasing feature in the Italian landscape—white churches with tall belfries, and houses with open galleries over the dark blue sea, and beneath a sky as blue. The appearance of our craft, so unusual there, soon attracted general attention. All the idlers of the place, as well as the Red Indian-looking facchini (porters) rushed down to our landing, and gave us a less gracious greeting than had welcomed our arrival and departure at Piombino. However, we adventured on shore, and making our way through the savage crowd, begrimed with the ore-dust, were joined in a few minutes by a gentlemanly looking person, bearing the human face divine. This was the good pastor of the Protestants. Under his guidance our party was divided among the "brethren," as they call themselves. My friend and his nephew were sheltered by the pastor, our servant by Cignoni, the patriarch of the brotherhood, and I fell to the lot of his brave coadjutor and first brother-convert, Quattrini. By the time we had fairly settled into our quarters the shades of evening gathered round us, not, however, until my friend had traversed every inch of the young gospel territory, and we had mutually thanked God for our safety past, and had committed to Him our purposes in faith and with courage for days to come.

(To be continued.)

BLACKETT BOTCHERBY.

FOUND AMONG THE PAPERS OF A YOUNG MAN.

THERE was great excitement at Ems on the 12th of August, 18—, for the Empress of Russia had arrived, and the kings of Prussia and of Saxony were expected that same day. The street in which my hotel was situated was crowded with people who had flowed together from Coblentz and Mayence, and the other places in the neighbourhood, large and small, to gaze at the glory of crowned heads. There was a continuous buzz and hum under my window, so that I should almost have fancied myself sitting in my office at the works, had not the merry tunes of the music band, stationed before the empress's hotel, and the loud hurras of the people, reminded me that I was not on the bank of the Thames amidst my industrious work-people, but on the bank of the Lahn amidst a crowd of idlers who, as it seemed had come for no other purpose but to waste their time and to spend their money.

I never cared very much about such manifestations of princely splendour and popular curiosity. Least of all did I do so now that I found myself engaged in a sad work, which contrasted harshly with the gay tones and tunes outside. I was looking over the papers of my cousin, Mr. Alfred Hamerton, whom I had conveyed to his last resting-place a few day before. Poor Alfred! He had not yet completed his twenty-eighth year, and if ever a young man seemed to have a long life in prospect it was he. His constitution appeared to be of iron, and he had an annual income of two thousand pounds, which promised to prove a safeguard against soul-depressing cares. But where is there a constitution which, though ever so strong, uncontrolled passion cannot destroy? or a position in life so independent that sin cannot turn it into slavery? My good father often used to say: "The best diet and the best system of economy are to be found in the Gospel." This truth was frequently repeated in Alfred's hearing; but alas! he forgot it as often as he heard it.

Not that he was an out-and-out profligate, or what is called a vicious character. If you could have got him by himself, away from the temptations of a pleasure-loving and a pleasure-making world—say at your quiet house down in the country, to stay with you for a month—you would not only have found him a well-behaved, amiable young fellow, but a generous, kind-hearted friend, who would open his mind to everything noble and beautiful and good. In a confidential chat he would have confessed his follies, and acknowledged his weakness in resisting temptation; he would have admired the noble self-control of the faithful Christian, and assured you of his sincere resolution henceforth to alter his life and become a useful member of society. In such moments as these you might, without very much difficulty, have obtained from him a couple of sovereigns for a poor family, or a ten-pound note for some charitable purpose. But he would no sooner have left you than he would yield to the siren lure of pleasure, as you would have found could you, under the charm of the ring of Gyges, have followed him. It was the same in every place—where people assemble for spending their fortune in pleasure,—whether in London, Paris, Hamburg, or Rome. He passed the greater part of his time in England however, as he was a bad linguist, and, besides, was very fond of boating, hunting, and racing.

In the last year of his life he had repaired to the Continent, chiefly for the sake of his health, which had suffered much under his too frequent excesses. He had been recommended to go to the waters of Ems. After he had come of age I had, at his own request, taken charge of collecting his income and

forwarding it to him, and I was of course constantly in correspondence with him. In his last letter, which was written a fortnight before his death, he said that he was progressing favourably, and was almost as robust as ever again. The sad astonishment can scarcely be imagined with which a few days later I received a telegram, urging me to go to Ems at once, as he was seriously ill. Alas! I found him in his last struggle. He had fought a duel with a Spanish nobleman, and had been shot in the breast. I came just in time to receive from his hand the keys of his boxes, and to learn his desire concerning his papers. He requested me to go over them all, to keep such as I should deem it necessary to preserve, and to burn the rest.

And so I was looking over those papers,—a confused collection of letters, accounts, bills, promissory notes, and scraps of poetry mostly in the erotic style,—which had been collected during a period of six years, and put into a large leather bag without any sort of order. It was evident enough that he had cherished the intention of arranging the mass, but had never settled down to it, though it would hardly have taken him more than a couple of hours, since his correspondence had not been very great, and most of the bills were waste paper. But he had been careless, slovenly, procrastinating, very seldom being led by a sense of duty, and always yielding to the impression of the moment. And it was sad work to read the contents of most of the letters, and to notice to what most of the bills referred. While on the one hand they bore ample testimony to his having been anything but a churlish, selfish fellow, yet they all bore witness at the same time to the fact that he had only lived to please and to worship his own beloved self. It was evident he had always, and often in the most liberal way, been disposed to make others happy, but with the intention, at the same time, that he himself should enjoy the greater part of the pleasure. Of that love which is willing to deny itself and to suffer in order to make others happy, he seems to have known very little indeed. There were a few of the promissory notes for sums he had lent and which had never been repaid, but the amounts were comparatively small. On the other hand, there were many bills which he had paid after standing over for four and five years, and among the letters there were some from shopkeepers and tradespeople urgently requesting him in the most humble tone to favour them with payment. I could not help wondering why he had preserved such documents among his papers, but it soon appeared plain enough that he was one of those who never tear up a letter, though they have not the slightest intention of reading it again. Indeed the collection presented a remarkable photograph of his character. It exhibited a great many good principles dormant or in embryo, but not one of them in due and healthful development. The very preservation of the documents showed a sense of thrift, but their confused and neglected condition proved that that sense had invariably died out at each attempt to carry it into practice. Some sense of order was testified to by the fact of all his expenditure being noted down, even to the trifle of a sixpence paid to a porter; but the practical result again was completely lost in his disorder, for his notes were written partly in memorandum-books and partly on scraps of paper, old envelopes, steamboat-bills, &c. There were undeniable signs of literary taste, for some of the pieces of poetry and prose compositions were worth reading from a merely literary point of view; but not one of them was finished. His higher inclinations had each time been suffocated by his passion for pleasure. Nay, I even picked up a few sheets purporting to be the introduction to a religious poem in the Miltonian style; and certainly, if their form was less poetical than that of "Paradise Lost," their sentiments were not less biblical. I also found bills containing considerable sums paid for music and musical instruments and for instruction in that department of art. He must have been a performer on the piano, the violoncello, and the cornet-à-piston; and yet, though I had often met him at drawing-room parties, where everybody was invited to try his or her talents, I never even so much as heard him confess that he played any instrument at all. The booksellers' bills were also numerous and heavy. They contained the titles of books which seemed to indicate that their reader must have been a person of great information and much taste. I found all those books in the library at his residence at Richmond, but, with only a few exceptions, they were uncut.

In short, poor Alfred had been one of that privileged yet unhappy class of young men who, as necessity does not compel them to work, think that they need not work at all, and that their money renders them independent even of God, because it makes them independent of men. The solemn sentence uttered by the Divine Judge in Paradise, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," was certainly a severe one; but experience has shown, at the same time, that it also implied wisdom and beneficence. And none of us can deem himself exempt from that rule, without in one way or other severely injuring both himself and society. The possession of money may of course be either a blessing or a curse; but it is most decidedly the latter where it causes man to become an idler, and to live only for his own personal enjoyment. Even though his idleness should only consist in what is called harmless frivolity, and though his enjoyment should limit itself to what are called innocent pleasures, yet such a man's life is a real loss to himself, to society, and to the kingdom of God. And this, not because of any evil positively *committed*, but because of so much good which he is expected, nay bound, to do, but has left undone. And we creatures of flesh and blood, who judge only from what impresses our senses, are prone to overlook and to think lightly of what we call our sins of omission; but it would be as well for us to keep in mind that our Lord pronounced the same awful verdict upon the slothful servant who *omitted* to use his one talent well, as He will pronounce on the coming day of judgment upon the "doers of iniquity," whom He shall cast into a place where there shall be "wailing and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. xiii. 41—42.)

That my poor cousin Alfred had in this way fearfully wasted his precious life became fully clear to me

when I had finished the examination of his papers. Having assorted and arranged those papers according to their dates, I found myself in the possession of pretty complete diary of his life from the time he had come of age till his death, a period of nearly seven years. One of the documents which first attracted my attention was a letter of my own, which I had written to him when he was in Paris. A piece cut from the *Times*, giving a description of the fearful Hartley coal-pit accident, was enclosed. As at that time I had about £500 in hand to his credit, I advised him to permit me to send a donation of £50 to the bereaved widows and orphans. In his next letter he declined to do this, at the same time requesting me to send him £300 by return of post. I was rather surprised at that request, as I had sent him £500 only a fortnight before. I now, however, learnt the cause of it. Among the letters was one from a Mr. Prime, written a day or two before mine, in which, in a very familiar style, he asked Alfred for a loan of £300; and accordingly I found among the bills his promissory note, bearing the date of the day subsequent to that on which I had sent Alfred the money. Now, I had known that loose but highly-talented, witty, and handsome parasite only too well, and had always regretted that Alfred had made him his bosom friend. The promissory note was waste paper, for Mr. Prime eloped a few days later with a banker's wife, and has never been heard of since.

There was another letter which struck me in a peculiar way. It was from the clergyman of the parish in which Alfred's father had resided till his death. It referred to the widow and family of his father's gardener. It told a sad and touching story. It reminded Alfred of the two eldest boys of that poor woman, who when children had shared his pleasures and sports. Sickness had reduced her to such straitened circumstances that she could no longer support her numerous family. Her eldest son had obtained a situation by which he would have been fully able to have maintained her and his brothers and sisters; but he lost his life by an accident, and so the sorely-visited mother was wholly deprived of her support. Her second son, however, a nice and capable young man of twenty-two, would be able to support her if he could obtain £200 to buy the good-will of a respectable business which was on sale. The clergyman had formed a scheme by which, if he found eight persons who would each give £25, the thing might be done. He had been so successful as to find seven, and now requested Alfred to be the eighth.

After having read this letter I looked into Alfred's memorandum-book about that date, but could find no such sum put down among his expenditure. But I found he had paid a sum of £35 10*s.* 9*d.* a few days after the receipt of that letter for a dinner-party which he was compelled to give in consequence of having lost a bet.

This reminded me of a somewhat similar case that had taken place four years ago. There was a distant relative of Alfred's, who had a wife and four children. The eldest boy was a fine lad, gifted with uncommon intellectual capacities, and, on account of his amiable character and noble principles, the favourite of all who knew him. As far as I could judge, William was a truly Christian young man, who had given his heart to the Saviour, and exercised a blessed influence upon other young men with whom he was intimate. As his father, who was an officer on half-pay, could not afford to give him an education much above that of the trading class, he was apprenticed to a bookseller and bookbinder; but, though William satisfied his master pretty well, he was often found fault with for giving more attention to the inside of the books than to their outside. Indeed whenever he could spare a moment's time he was found reading. By the aid of a friend who was a little acquainted with the old classics he had brought himself on so far as to be able to read Homer and Virgil. His father would sometimes send me some of his little essays, which ran mostly on religious topics, and they always astonished me by the power of thought and the beauty of style which they exhibited. It may be imagined what a sad trial it was for the good man to find himself unable to gratify his son's earnest wish to go to the university and study for the ministry. Nor was there any one among his friends who did not think it a pity that such a highly-gifted and well-principled young man was compelled to bury his talents in the dust of a bookbinder's shop. One day, Alfred happened to stay with me for a couple of days, and I availed myself of a favourable moment to bring the matter under his notice. I showed him what a blessing he might confer not only upon that good family, but also upon the Church and society at large, by giving £100 say for three years, in which case I would pledge myself to find the remainder of the required sum. He promised to think over the matter and to let me know his resolution. As one week after another passed away without his answer coming, I wrote to him. He refused, on the ground of "having so many claims upon his purse just now, that he saw himself obliged to retrench his expenditure for the time being." So I had to look out for some other channel through which William might obtain the desired help, and after much writing and fighting I at length succeeded in my object through the liberality of several friends.

Now that I had a full insight into Alfred's books, or rather scraps and slips, I could not repress my curiosity to know what in the world those "many claims upon his purse" could be, which had prevented him from doing that good work. Alas! I had not long to seek. It appeared from his notes and the bills of that year that he had paid £250 to the tobacconist, £350 to the wine merchant, and about £200 to his musical teachers for teaching him what he never even intended to learn.

I might lengthen the sad list by other instances drawn from the papers then lying before me. But there was one letter which struck me more than all. It was from Mr. Coleridge, his teacher, who had continued his adviser and friend till the last day of his minority. It was written on the occasion of his having received a letter from Alfred after his last illness, when, having risen from a sick-bed which had threatened to become his death-bed, he was about to start for Ems. It ran as follows:—

"My dear Alfred,—Your letter of the 16th of

last month came duly to hand, and has in one sense given me much pleasure, though in another it greatly distressed me. I am glad to learn that your health is improving, but I am sorry to find that you 'hope to be able soon to return to your usual course of life.' Permit me, as your sincere and cordial friend, to say that this is exactly the thing which I had hoped you would not do. You know, dear friend, that nobody ever loved you more or better than I, and God knows I love you truly still. I have my defects, as every human being has, but, as far as I can recollect, I have not been deficient in trying to show you the only way that can lead you towards true happiness, and I have not withheld anything from you that it was in my power to give, that you might be well equipped for your journey through this world towards your everlasting destiny. How often have I prayed with you and for you that God, who in his infinite love has bestowed on you so many and so valuable privileges, might in his grace enable you to become a useful member of society and a true member of the Church of Christ! How zealously and with how much delight have I studied with and for you to provide you with the knowledge of all such sciences as I supposed it would be necessary or desirable for you to know, that you might be able to carry about a rich store on which to draw freely for the benefit of many who would be in need of your co-operation, your advice, and your help! You must remember how often, when I sat down with you to chat confidentially, I would say, 'Dear Alf., when you come of age, you will be in the possession of a considerable income, not one-fifth of which will be required for your support. Remember the great responsibility which, along with the possession of that money, will devolve upon you. Money is power. If used well, it will be a source of joy both to God and men; if used badly, it will bring God's displeasure upon you, and not only injure your neighbours but ruin yourself, if not for this life, at least for the life to come. If you understand this well, you will soon find that a glorious life is already opened up for you here below. No condition on earth can be more desirable than that of a young man who, through the grace of God, not only has the heart to do good, but also the means to do it. Money is not only power, but also time. Through your independent position in society you will have time for doing many a good work, such as can only be done by persons who are not under the necessity of toiling all the day for their bread. The moment you come of age, great temptation will be presented to you to abuse your independence and liberty by devoting your precious life to mere self-enjoyment, if not self-indulgence. Your money will, as it were, receive a voice, and say to you: "You are young and strong, and the whole world is lying before you; there is no necessity for you to bury yourself in a close dark office, or to bend your back under the burden of dull and tedious drudgery. You are a free man and have nobody to care for but yourself; don't be such a fool as to place yourself under any obligation. Keep aloof from all restricting engagements, and be your own lord and master; spread out your wings and soar aloft, and fly away withersoever you please; *we*, your friends and servants, *we*, your sovereigns and bank-notes, will carry you through the world after your own heart's pleasure, and when one day you have enjoyed yourself to the full, and long for a change, for some settlement, very well, you will then have plenty of time to consider, and you will be able to make your arrangements to your convenience.'"

"You know that I often spoke to you in this way, dear boy, and, alas! I have not only found that my picture of the temptations you would meet was correct, but that you have also realised my fear that you would be too weak to stand against its alluring power. Nearly seven years have now elapsed since that day when, in the company of your best friends, we celebrated the happy event of your majority. I know I have no right to ask you how you have spent that large and precious portion of your life. But, as your truly loving friend, I think I have a right to remind you that one day the great Judge, who has given you that life, will ask you how you have spent it. As far as I can judge, my dear Alfred,—and *do* not suppose that I am writing this in an angry mood; God knows how deeply my loving heart is grieved while I am thinking of you!—as far as I can judge, these seven years have been *wasted*. They are like a land of good soil, but totally barren, because it has not been cultivated. If the great Husbandman were to come now to reap fruits from your life's tree, would He find there anything save shrivelled leaves, which may have pleased *you*, but are of no profit to any one else? If He were to ask you the question, 'What have you done with the time which I have allotted to you? What have you done with your money, with your talents and capacities?' what would your answer be but this—'I have eaten, and drunk, and slept; I have hunted, and fished, and boated; I have played and gambled; I have travelled about, and attended concerts, and balls, and theatres; I have enjoyed myself, and—that is all I have done.'

"Ah! dear Alfred, is that answer worthy, I do not say of a Christian created in Christ Jesus unto good works, but of a rational being created for something higher here on earth than the pastimes of monkeys in the forest, which jump and skip from one tree to another?

"And how much good could you have done in these past years! I know it was not your plan, in the first days after you had come of age, to spend your life in idleness. I remember you told me confidentially that it was your intention to go into some suitable business by-and-by, as you perceived that it would have a bad influence upon your character to continue without any fixed occupation. But I also remember how I urged you to set out in search of such a business at once, and not to rest till you had found one. I knew that the longer you delayed it the more you would get into the habit of lounging and loitering about in idleness, till at length you would feel disinclined to come to some settlement. I seriously warned you against that fatal spirit of procrastination. I spoke to you about the beneficial effect of voluntary submission to a certain rule, by imposing that rule upon ourselves by our own free will. Our nature is not so constituted that we can live happily by doing only

what we *desire* to do. There ought to be things which we *must* do, and the more regular those obligatory things are in their claims, the more regular and orderly becomes our life. A man who exempts himself from any obligation whatever, cannot fail to become a burdensome object to himself and a nuisance to society. Such a man is on the way to commit spiritual suicide. He sends his mind adrift on the vast ocean of vague generalities, till at length it becomes hopelessly feeble. There is such a thing as 'a will of God,' which every one of us, whether rich or poor, is bound to obey; and every one should therefore conscientiously inquire what God's will is in his particular case. Alas! I am afraid, dear Alfred, that you are under the delusion of supposing that your money relieves you from that obligation. But can you really believe that God gave you your wealth to enable you to eat without working?

"But I must again repeat, How much good could you have done in these past years! You had every year at least from £1000 to £1500 at your disposal, which you could have spent for good purposes without the slightest inconvenience to yourself. I do not mean that you should have given away that sum in mere alms. You know I often said that an alms-giver is a beggar-breeder. But there are so many good, excellent people who would rather beg than starve, and who work hard day and night to support themselves and their families respectably. From circumstances not under their control they are constantly in danger of breaking down under the heavy burden of daily cares. How many is there of this sort, even among your acquaintances, to whom you could have given a kindly lift! What a joy you could have caused in the heart of many a good man or respectable widow, and what a blessing could you have brought to many a struggling family, by merely posting a ten or twenty pound note, the absence of which you would never have felt, except as a cause of blessed joy to yourself! I remember I spoke to you when at Brighton, four or five years ago, about John Dalton's case, who, as you knew, was reduced in worldly circumstances. Fifty pounds from your friendly hand would have rescued that good man and his family from the brink of the pit into which, alas! they have sunk. He died from grief and exhaustion, and his widow, after a year's hopeless struggle, went with her children into the workhouse. When I heard the sad story I could not help sighing, 'Oh, Alfred, how *could* you have refused to help that man!'

"When the news reached me that your health was bad, I felt very sorry, though I must confess I was not surprised. All I had heard about your way of living had made me wonder long since that your constitution, strong though it was, did not break down. But when I learnt that you were improving, I hoped and prayed that you might now show that you had gathered wisdom from the serious lesson God had taught you. Oh, my dearest Alfred! I entreat you, let that lesson not have been taught to you in vain. You are still a young man, and a long life may be yet in store for you. Let it prove a *new* life. Let the past be buried for ever; appear amongst us as a new man risen from a grave in which you for seven years have been lying—dead to us, dead to yourself, dead to God! Remember that Christ shed his blood for you, that you are not your own but his, that it is unto Him and not unto yourself that you are to live. He has so much good and glorious work for you to do! I beseech you, begin to do it now, and henceforth, you will experience what a blessing, what a happiness, what a delight it is to be a faithful and active servant of that amiable and adorable Master! If there is any love towards Him in your heart, nay, if there is any true love towards your own soul in you, you *cannot* possibly 'return to your usual course of life.' It has pleased God in his merciful long-suffering to raise you from a sick-bed, which might have become your death-bed. Do hear his tender, warning voice: 'Behold, thou art made whole. Sin no more, lest a worst thing come unto thee.'"

In this way the letter proceeded. I could not read it without emotion. Alas, why did that unhappy young man never listen to the words of that true and noble friend! The letter was dated the 9th of June. On the 9th of August, Alfred was a corpse. Only two months! How fearful is God in his judgment, when his long-suffering is at an end!

CONSIDER.

WHAT say Autumn's hoary woods,
Her leaf-beds dank where fever broods?
"Child of created man! we are as thou;
Thou art as we.
Who lists may see
In us the change to which his strength must bow.
All made from earth, all nourished from the mould,
Alike short time we live, alike so soon grow old."

What say Winter's icebound springs,
Her blackened flowers where sad thought clings?
"Child of created man! we are as thou;
Thou art as we.
Death claspeth thee,
The chill of a dread hand to lay thee low.
Grave-powers that hold the earth our gaolers are:
The sound we make is still; the place we fill is bare."

What says Springtime's lifeful sheen,
Her well-gemmed sward, her buds of green?
"Child of created man! we are as thou;
Thou art as we.
That which shall be
Lies ready in thine heart to spring and grow.
Frost chains are burst that held our life enthralled;
The new sun's loving might our being has recalled."

What say Summer's glorious days,
Her teeming fields, her wealth of praise?
"Child of created man! we are as thou;
Thou art as we.
Eternity
A praiseful vast of life to thee shall show.
Made for God's glory, while our time remains,
We — emblems of the blest — lift Godward ceaseless strains."

What then, Christian, says thy faith?
Our Lord is Lord of Hell and Death.
"Child of created man! He was as thou,
That thou—as He—
Might victor be
O'er all that brings decay on things below.
Let His Truth work. To thee, too, power is given
Autumn and Winter past to spring to light in Heaven."

G. V. H.

NOTES FOR READERS OUT OF THE WAY.

Even in this island, over which the Angel of Peace has so long spread his wings, and where the sight of bloodshed has been all but unknown for generations, there was scarcely a heart that, when the long-dreaded war actually began in Germany and Italy, did not echo the lament of Jeremiah,—"My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart: my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the noise of the trumpet, the alarm of war." If on the one hand, our hearts sunk at the prospect of the whole of Europe being wrapped in the fiercest flames of war, and at our utter inability to prevent so frightful a catastrophe; on the other, we could not but commit the issues to the great Ruler of the nations the more earnestly that we felt that no power but His could restrain the floods, or make the collisions of war work out the ends of mercy. It was sad to think that in the middle of the nineteenth century, civilised nations should be unable to adjust their differences without recourse to the barbarous and cruel struggles of war; and prayer rose with the greater fervour that it would please God, if war was to be, to confine its area, to shorten its duration, and to make it subservient to the highest good of the nations. The utterly unexpected turn of events, only ten days after the first shot was fired, when the mediation of Napoleon was offered, and an armistice proposed, showed how true it is that "the king's heart is in the hands of the Lord as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will." Whatever may be the issue,—whether permanent peace is really near, or a fierce conflict is yet to rage,—the encouragement to prayer derived from what has already happened should not be lost sight of. Whatever in itself is evil is to be deprecated by the Christian, and of all things that belong to this category, war surely has a foremost place. Yet even in praying against war, it is not to be forgotten by us that the Almighty may see cause to use that catastrophe in its worst form for the punishment of men's sins; but should that alternative be realised, all the greater is the need to pray, that so dread a chastisement may not be inflicted without carrying in its bosom and leaving behind it the highest blessings of mercy and love.

It is very certain that the hopes of the Papal party were bound up with the success of the Austrians. In the anticipated triumph of the Austrian armies, they saw the coming humiliation of Italian liberalism, the restoration of the dispossessed Italian princes, and the recovery of the territories which had been torn from the Pope. Among the happy scenes of the future, one that doubtless occupied a prominent place in the view of some was, the arrestment of the work of Protestant propagandism, the expulsion of Waldensian missionaries and evangelists, the closing of Protestant schools and meetings, and possibly the repetition over the peninsula of the riot and murders of Barletta. In one hour, in one moment, all was changed. A single telegram announcing the defeat and flight of the grand army under Benedek turned all faces to blackness, and verified the old saying, "Man proposes, but God disposes." It is remarkable, too, how the calculations of the most sagacious were entirely falsified by the events of ten days. At first, it was elaborately proved that the war must be protracted and obstinate, and that it would be long before the balance would incline to either side. After the battle of Sadowa, and the offered mediation of the French Emperor, the cry was, that the war was over. Conjecture leapt from one extreme to the opposite. It used to be said of the American war and the results in which it issued, that there never had been a great movement so visibly controlled and ordered by the hand of Providence. The issue of events in Europe may cause the remark to be transferred to the Old World. Even in the earliest stages of the present movement, it was made plain, as the *Spectator* strikingly remarked, that "God governs as well as reigns." Plots contrived by unscrupulous men for the aggrandisement of dynasties and the concentration of power, may yet be made subservient to the advancement of human liberty and progress, and to the furtherance of the glorious Gospel.

While the cannon has been sending forth its volleys in Italy and Bohemia, England has been the scene of conflicts of another kind. Of the change of ministry that has taken place, we say nothing here, because its bearing on religious interests is too remote and indefinite to bring it within our scope. But the contest about ritualism has attained an importance and magnitude that seem to carry us back to the struggles of the seventeenth century. In those days, however, the question was, whether those who would not conform to the use of certain vestments and ceremonies were to be tolerated; at present, the question is, whether indulgence is to be given to those who are introducing vestments and ritualistic ceremonies

hitherto made use of only in the Popish Church. The question has been debated in the House of Lords; deputations, with petitions signed by thousands, have brought the matter earnestly under the notice of the two archbishops; and it has been eagerly discussed both in the upper and lower Houses of Convocation of the Province of Canterbury. In the lower House it was introduced in the form of a report by Dr. Goodwin, Dean of Ely, the chairman of a committee appointed at a previous meeting. In proof of the deliberate consideration which the committee had given the subject it was stated, that besides the time devoted to it privately by the members individually, no less than eighty hours had been consumed in their joint deliberations. The six topics discussed in the report were—The Use of Special Vestments in celebrating the Communion; the Use of Altar-lights; Incense; Elevation of the Elements after Consecration; Encouragement of non-communicants to remain during Celebration of Communion; and the Use of Wafer-bread. On the first three, the committee were of opinion that they were neither contrary to the law, nor required by it; on the other three, their judgment was, that they were contrary to the constitution and practice of the Church of England. At the same time, no recommendation was given to submit the questions to a legal tribunal. In the lower House of Convocation, it was moved by the Dean of Ely, that the House adopt the report as a temperate statement on the subject of ritual practice in the Church of England, and as calculated to assist in allaying anxieties and clearing doubts. It was also moved, that steps be taken to ascertain the legality of the practices reported on. The former motion was carried by a large majority. The general feeling seemed to be, that the moral influence of public sentiment would be more efficient than legal decisions, even if the latter could be obtained, in putting down the prevalent ritualistic tendency, which was generally felt to be alike childish and mischievous.

Another topic that occupied much of the attention of the Convocation was, the Episcopate of Natal. Certain questions had been submitted to Convocation by the Bishop of Capetown, who desired the opinion of the Houses for his guidance. In effect, it was answered that the Church of England is in communion with the Bishop of Capetown, but the Houses declined to say whether they were in communion with Dr. Colenso. They also held that the churchmen in Natal were entitled to elect a new bishop, and if they did so would still be in communion with the Church of England, if he were canonically ordained, and did not claim the title of Bishop of Natal. But they did not give any recommendation of such a course. The debates in both Houses were animated, but as the whole question was entangled with technical difficulties and doubts, the points that underwent discussion were not very definite. The interest of the discussions turned chiefly on the expression of sentiment by individual speakers. The Dean of Westminster elaborately went into the grounds on which Dr. Gray had pronounced sentence of excommunication against Dr. Colenso; and holding these grounds to be untenable, refused to regard Dr. Colenso as duly deposed from his office. To a large extent, he homologated his views; and he challenged his brethren not to direct their condemnation against one who was distant and friendless, and leave untouched such as himself because he was well-befriended and at hand.

During the meetings of the upper House of Convocation, the Bishop of Oxford presented to it a copy of a book, entitled "The Church and the World, or Essays upon the Questions of the Day." The Bishop of Salisbury expressed his admiration of the book. From this and other circumstances, it has acquired considerable notoriety. It is written by several writers, and is regarded as a manifesto of the extreme Ritualistic party, much as "Essays and Reviews" was of the extreme Broad Church. More strictly, the present volume might have been called "Essays and a Biography," for one of the papers is the autobiography of a lady who describes her life for thirty years in the English Church—she having begun as an Evangelical, swung to the opposite extreme, and been saved from being a pervert to Rome by the decree of the Synod of Exeter in the Gorham case! The judgment passed in the book on Broad Churchism, in its general, and especially its missionary influence, is very unfavourable. Of all sections of the Church, the Broad Churchman is regarded as the least missionary. He is more a man of the study than of the parish, ill-fitted to grapple with the terrible sufferings of awakened sinners and dying men. As for women and children, Broad Churchism is declared to be singularly ill-adapted for them. If Dr. Littledale, in his "Missionary Aspects of Ritualism," thus speaks out against the Broad Church, the lady attacks not less keenly the presumed faults of Evangelicals. Intellect, she says, is no longer found among them, and worldliness has sapped their earnestness. Bitter invective has taken the place of hard work, and conventional has succeeded to actual self-denial. A man may pamper himself and amass money, if only he does not go to the theatre. A woman may dress in the height of the fashion, play croquet, and flirt, if only she does not dance. While Broad Church and Evangelical are thus going all wrong, the Church of Rome is improving. It has far more than formerly "of the spirituality and fervour that changes ordinary Christianity into the first stage of saintliness. Prayer increases, and the direct and remarkable answers it receives almost justify the belief that before very long such answers will assume a more directly supernatural character." According to the old adage, "*Fas est et ab hoste doceri*," one may get good even from an enemy; and to those who are well instructed in the great foundations of their faith, even such strictures as those we have noticed may not be without some use.

A strenuous effort is about to be made to secure the letter-carriers over the country the enjoyment of the day of rest. A copy of the following letter has been sent to 11,000 clergymen and ministers in England and Wales by the Working Men's Lords'-day Rest Association:—"On behalf of 20,000 Post-office officials who are employed in the provinces on Sundays,

we beg to solicit your co-operation in measures designed to bring about the discontinuance of the Sunday delivery of letters. In London, with its vast commerce and 3,000,000 inhabitants, and numerous other towns and villages in England and Scotland, there is no Sunday delivery of letters, and there is no good reason why the same rule should not be carried out in every town and village in the empire. But we cannot hope that the Sunday delivery of letters will be stopped until the public express their willingness to give the postmen the Sunday rest, by requesting that their own letters may not be delivered on Sundays. When this has been extensively done we trust that the way will be prepared for abolishing the Sunday deliveries entirely. We therefore hope that you will co-operate in the efforts now being made to induce persons throughout the country to sign the enclosed request for the non-delivery of their letters on Sundays. A return of the number of persons who have signed such request will be moved for in Parliament; we hope, therefore, that you will use your influence with your congregation and friends, to induce them to sign requests for their own letters not to be delivered on Sundays."

Whatever be the faults of the age, a disposition to shut the eyes to the condition of the poorer classes cannot be included in the number. Some interesting papers have appeared lately in the *Quiver* and in the *Evening Star*—devoted to some of those hotbeds of poverty and wretchedness of which London contains so many. It would be absolutely heartbreaking to read these narratives if one did not cherish the hope that they may serve to give an impulse to the agencies of Christian regeneration that are trying to grapple with such terrible evils. Whether it be "Kent Street, Borough," that is mirrored in the *Quiver*, or "Jack Ketch's Warren, Clerkenwell," that is explored in the *Star*, it is the same tale of overcrowding, filth, and misery, in the midst of which industry sometimes strives by incredible exertions to keep the wolf from the door, but more commonly yields the sceptre to drunkenness, theft, and debauchery. On the other hand, it is cheering to find that even in such dark recesses Christian light can penetrate, and Christian love prevail. We have before us an interesting little volume,—well adapted for the encouragement of all who are labouring in such districts—entitled "Chequer Alley: A Story of Successful Christian Work." It tells how, five-and-twenty years ago, Miss Macarthy, an intelligent Christian woman, earning her daily bread with her own hands, being suddenly filled with a sense of her obligations to the pardoning grace and love of God in Christ, began to visit a wild district called Chequer Alley—an irregular avenue leading from Bunhill Row to Whitecross Street, a haunt of crime and carelessness, peopled by creatures so sunk that it was difficult to recognise in them anything like mind. Through her quiet, devoted personal efforts, and the labours of others whom she was enabled to get interested in the district, a remarkable revival of religion occurred; a bright oasis was reclaimed in this dark desert, and added to the garden of the Lord. The discouragements at first were fearful, and anything like an attempt to hold a meeting, or to expound divine truth was met with such mockery, noise, and blasphemy, that ordinary workers would have been not only discouraged but appalled. The first great impression was made after a service in a room hired for the purpose, when Miss Macarthy and one or two female coadjutors asked the women to remain, that from their own experience they might tell them what was the meaning of conversion. They told them how they had been pierced by a sense of sin, and how, as they truthfully and confidingly looked to Jesus as their Saviour, and surrendered themselves to Him, the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto them; and how, in a sense which they could not explain, their fellowship was now with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. The ladies then knelt down to pray; a strange sense of awe came over every mind. Strange sobbings and suppressed breathings began to be heard, and when the prayer ceased, twenty persons seemed stricken in heart, as on the Day of Pentecost, and were asking. "What must I do to be saved?" This was the commencement of the work of renovation. With the help and encouragement which the Wesleyan Church supplies, this group of converts were carried on in the divine life, and enabled to show that they had not received the grace of God in vain. The children, who were gathered into schools, were at first extremely troublesome, as such children often are. Once the teacher was fairly nonplussed. Every means of producing order failed. Every appeal to the children left them as boisterous as ever. In very despair the teacher involuntarily sunk on her knees to the floor, and began to implore the interposition of God himself—"Lord, whose I am and whom I serve, wilt thou be pleased to put forth Thy power on behalf of Thy helpless handmaid, and for the honour of Thy name?" While thus pleading the storm suddenly subsided; and retaining the attitude of prayer, she began to supplicate with increased fervour the bestowment then and there of the converting grace of God. There was perfect silence while she thus prayed; and not many moments after, she felt two little arms entwined round her neck, and heard, in broken accents, "Oh, teacher! I'se so wicked! Teacher, teacher, we will be good, we will be good!" Ever since the school has been a pattern of good conduct. Individual instances not a few have occurred, of a striking change of character and life; and though yet far from being a paradise, even the physical aspect of the district has undergone a change.

As the records of the month do not contain much that is very fresh or striking in connection with continental or mission fields, we shall devote the remainder of this paper to brief notices of a few of the religious publications that have lately appeared.

Dr. Merle D'Aubigné has just issued in English the fourth volume of his "Reformation in Europe in the time of Calvin." The contents of the volume are somewhat miscellaneous. The first part details the efforts of England to cast off the Papacy during the five years from 1529 to 1534; the scene then passes to Geneva, where a most animated contest is recorded

that took place about the same period; and the last part is devoted to the early Reformation in Italy. In the portion relating to the Reformation in England, Dr. Merle D'Aubigné deals with the subject which has been recently treated by Mr. Froude. But while acknowledging the value of his volumes, he does not agree in his estimate of the character of Henry VIII. While he believes that Henry rendered great services to England as a king, he is not inclined, so far as his private character is concerned, to consider him a model prince, and his victims as criminals. He thinks that England requires now more than ever to study the Fathers of the Reformation in their writings, and to be animated by their spirit. The strange imaginations that are leading men astray towards scepticism and superstition are very insidious and terrible; but there is much comfort in the consideration that at no time has evangelical Christianity been more widely extended than in our days. "It has been asserted," he says, "that the Reformation entered England by a backdoor. Not so; it was the true door that was opened by the Christian brethren (who associated together to read to the people the Word of God.) Idly do men speak of Henry's passions, the intrigues of his courtiers, the parade of his ambassadors, the skill of his ministers, the complaisance of his clergy, and the vacillations of parliament; above all else there was something else, something better, in the thirst exhibited in this island for the Word of God, and the internal transformation accomplished in the convictions of a great number of its inhabitants. This it was that worked such a powerful revolution in British society." The origin of the English Church is thus described:—"Two opposing elements, the reforming literature of the people, and the almost absolute power of the king, combined in England to accomplish the *legal* reformation. In that singular island, these two rival forces were often seen acting together; the liberalism of the nation gaining certain victories, the despotism of the prince gaining others; king and people agreeing to make mutual concessions. In the midst of these compromises, the little evangelical flock, which had no voice in such matters, religiously preserved the treasure entrusted to it—the Word of God, truth, liberty, and Christian virtue. From all these elements sprang the Church of England. A strange Church some call it. Strange indeed, for there is none which corresponds so imperfectly in theory with the ideal of the Church, and perhaps none whose members work out with more power and grandeur the ends for which Christ has formed his kingdom."

In the field of Scriptural exposition, Dr. Candlish's forty-six lectures on the First Epistle of St. John furnish a favourable specimen of minute and elaborate explanation of the teaching of Holy Scripture, in the homiletical form. The character of St. John's writings seems remarkably suited to the penetrating and subtle intellect of Dr. Candlish, although, possibly, his very excess of acuteness may produce instances of failure as well as of success. The grand subjects of the epistle he believes to be: Fellowship with God in light; Fellowship with God in righteousness and righteous love; Fellowship with God triumphant over the World and its Prince. The volume abounds in passages of great fervour and deep spiritual insight; and if at times the elaboration, alike of thought and expression, seems excessive, and the heights to which the author soars are beyond the level of ordinary experience, the earnest reader will feel repaid by his many powerful delineations of the ways and workings of the human heart on the one hand, and the glorious grace of God on the other.

"The Critical English Testament," edited by Messrs. Blackley and Hawes, rests on the basis of the admirable Gnomon of Bengel, supplemented by notes from eminent critics both of this country and of Germany, showing the precise results of modern criticism and exegesis. The work of Bengel must have had remarkable merits to maintain its high place in public esteem for more than a hundred and twenty years; in the present issue the English reader will find all that is valuable in that great work, united with the most important contributions of modern critics towards the exposition of the sacred text. This compact and well printed volume contains the four Gospels, and will be followed by other two. It will be of much service to many English students of the New Testament.

"The Prophet Jonah: his Character and Mission to Nineveh," by the Rev. Hugh Martin, of Edinburgh, is an acute and able exposition of that interesting book of Scripture, and is marked by rare freshness and power. Two of the chapters having appeared in this Magazine, our readers may judge for themselves of the value and excellence of the completed work.

"Characteristics of Christ's Teaching, drawn from the Sermon on the Mount," by C. J. Vaughan, D.D., of Doncaster, presents the lessons of the greatest of sermons with all that tenderness, purity, and grace, which invariably mark the writings of Dr. Vaughan.

If we mention, among other expository books recently published, Dr. Rowland Williams' "Hebrew Prophets, Translated afresh from the Original," it is with a very different intention from that of commending the work of so unsound a writer; but rather to call attention to the great want of trustworthy commentaries on this very important portion of the Old Testament. In regard to the minor prophets, in particular, it is remarkable that while Dr. Pusey on the one hand, and Dr. Williams on the other, have recently devoted themselves to their elucidation, no recent divine of the Evangelical school has thrown much light on their many obscurities. Excepting the book of Jonah, they are almost virgin soil to such commentators; and it is very certain that to the majority of readers the minor prophets, as a whole, are little known. Most readers are content to recognise a nugget or a gem at the distance of half a chapter or so; as for understanding the scope of the writers, and getting the whole placed in a light that will make each verse a part of one harmonious whole, that is an achievement of which very few ever dream.

Dr. McCosh, of Belfast, in his reply to Mr. Mill's book on Sir William Hamilton's philosophy, has made another important contribution to the manifestation of the harmony of true philosophy and revelation.

The treatise, too metaphysical to be appreciated by the popular reader, is fitted to tell powerfully in the circle for which it is designed. Somewhat similar in design, but wider in its scope and more popular in its treatment, is Dr. Rigg's massive volume of "Essays for the Times." The author expresses his hope that it may assist in bringing Christian thinkers to an agreement on some of the pressing questions of the day. It deals with theology, philosophy, social progress, and popular education; but all the papers are directly concerned with the question of human progress, and they all recognise Christianity as furnishing the laws and the life out of which the progress of the world is continually to unfold itself. It is not often that a writer is to be found combining earnest spiritual sympathies and longings, with such breadth of culture and comprehensiveness of view, such varied learning, and such soundness of judgment, as are found in Dr. Rigg. We believe the volume to be eminently wholesome and valuable. Another man of eminence in the Wesleyan Church has given to the world a new treatise on Buddhism: "The Legends and Theories of the Buddhists, compared with History and Science. By R. Spence Hardy, Hon. M. R. I. S." As Mr. Spence Hardy has spent great part of his life in the region of Buddhism, he has had ample opportunity for gaining that acquaintance with the system which, in the judgment of such an eminent *savant* as M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire, makes his books storehouses of learning on the subject. The tendency that has shown itself among sceptical men at home to look with favour on Buddhism as a rival of Christianity, is opportunely met by the exposure in this, and the other works of Mr. Hardy, of the real nature and tendency of the system.

Turning to the field of general religious literature, our attention is arrested by a remarkable article in the *Contemporary Review* on "Recent Nonconformist Sermons." The sermons selected for review are those of Dr. Raleigh, Mr. Dale, Professor Reynolds, and the late Mr. Hull, of Lynn. Of all these preachers (some of them frequent contributors to this Magazine), the reviewer speaks with very high commendation, and his estimate is the more important that he writes as a Churchman and from a Churchman's point of view. Though the ground be somewhat delicate, we cannot think that we are trespassing beyond our proper limits in referring to the tone of Christian generosity in which the writer speaks of his Nonconformist brethren. Protesting against the arrogance that would despise, and the contempt that would ignore, any services not rendered within the pale of the Church, he says that the authors of such sermons are not men whom any portion of a Christian society ought to allow itself to treat with neglect. If men are to be known by their fruits, then the fruits which these volumes present reveal men that are not to be lightly esteemed or set aside. "And if it be thought that sound and wholesome words cannot properly be called *fruits*, let us examine the *fruits* of those words, and see whether we rightly estimate the work which those Churches are doing amongst us which lie outside the pale of Episcopacy. What spectacle in the history of nations has ever been nobler than the patience and loyalty of the great middle class of this country? And while we would not for one moment depreciate the blessed influence over that class of the Church and her parochial system, we have also a right to claim at least a considerable share of the influences which have made them what they are to the teaching of Nonconformist schools and pulpits. What would they have been had that teaching been in the direction of discontent and disloyalty? And then let it be remembered that these teachers are for the most part working in neglect and disrepute, as far as any recognition of their work by Churchmen is concerned." All honour to those who do not shrink from avowing these generous sentiments, strange though it be that there should be anything remarkable in the fact of their being expressed.

"Views of Faith. By Rev. A. L. R. Foote, author of 'Incidents in the Life of Our Saviour,'" is a book of great excellence and utility, the product of a mind alike devout, scriptural, and original, nowise bound to traditions as such, looking round on Scripture and on mankind with a free and fearless expression, yet most loyal to the grand doctrines of the Evangelical faith. "Easter-tide Sermons, preached before the University of Cambridge, by Henry Alford, D.D., Dean of Canterbury," may be said to have for their object the establishment and enforcement of the *reality* of the risen Saviour's existence as the Shepherd of his sheep, and of the fellowship of his people with Him; they are plain, earnest pleadings for living and confiding communion with Christ. "Lending a Hand; or, Help for the Working Classes. By the author of 'Doing and Suffering,'" is a useful compilation of facts and suggestions towards the solution of some of the vexed social questions of the day. "The Life of John Welch, by the late Rev. James Young," is a careful compilation of such facts as can now be got at in the history of one eminent in his day for prayerful earnestness, and well-known as the son-in-law of John Knox. "Scenes and Characters of a Scottish Pastorate, by J. R. McGavin, D.D., Dundee," is an interesting record of ministerial experiences, that would have been still more valuable if the style had been simpler. Among other books that have come under our notice, we can but direct attention to a volume of "Miscellaneous Discourses, by the Rev. Gavin Carlyle, M.A., editor of the 'Collected Writings of Edward Irving,'" indicating the excellent quality of the ministrations by which the author has built up a London congregation; and "The Lord's Portion stored on the Lord's Day, a Handbook of Sacred Finance, by John Ross, Hackney," whose views on the subject of Christian liberality, summed up in this little volume, have done much to make "giving" not only more abundant and more regular, but for that very cause, more cheerful also.

Drawn by W. Small. Engraved by Swain.

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ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BY THE VICAR.

XXXII.

As I sat in my study in the twilight of that same day, the door was hurriedly opened, and Judy entered. She looked about the room with a quick glance to see that we were alone, then caught my hand in both of hers, and burst out crying.

"Why, Judy!" I said, "what *is* the matter?"

But the sobs would not allow her to answer. I was too frightened to put any more questions, and so stood silent—my chest feeling like an empty tomb that waited for death to fill it. At length with a strong effort she checked the succession of her sobs, and spoke.

"They are killing Auntie. She looks like a ghost already," said the child, again bursting into tears.

"Tell me, Judy, what *can* I do for her?"

"You must find out, Mr. Walton. If you loved her as much as I do, you would find out what to do."

"But she will not let me do anything for her."

"Yes, she will. She says you promised to help her some day."

"Did she send you, then?"

"No. She did not send me."

"Then how—what—what can I do?"

"Oh, you exact people! you must have everything square and in print before you move. If it had been me now, wouldn't I have been off like a shot! Do get your hat, Mr. Walton."

"Come, then, Judy. I will go at once.—Shall I see her?"

And every vein throbbed at the thought of rescuing her from her persecutors, though I had not yet the smallest idea how it was to be effected.

"We will talk about that as we go," said Judy, authoritatively.

In a moment more we were in the open air. It was a still night, with an odour of damp earth, and a hint of green buds in it. A pale half-moon hung in the sky, now and then hidden by the clouds that swept across it, for there was wind in the heavens, though upon earth all was still. I offered Judy my arm, but she took my hand, and we walked on without a word till we had got through the village and out upon the road.

"Now, Judy," I said at last; "tell me what they are doing to your aunt."

"I don't know what they are doing. But I am sure she will die."

"Is she ill?"

"She is as white as a sheet, and will not leave her room. Grannie must have frightened her dreadfully. Everybody is frightened at her but me, and I begin to be frightened too. And what will become of Auntie then?"

"But what can her mother do to her?"

"I don't know. I think it is her determination to have her own way that makes Auntie afraid she will get it somehow; and she says now she will rather die than marry Captain Everard. Then there is no one allowed to wait on her but Sarah, and I know the very sight of her is enough to turn Auntie sick almost. What has become of Jane I don't know. I haven't seen her all day, and the servants are whispering together more than usual. Auntie can't eat what Sarah brings her, I am sure; else I should almost fancy she was starving herself to death to keep clear of that Captain Everard."

"Is he still at the Hall?"

"Yes. But I don't think it is altogether his fault. Grannie won't let him go. I don't believe he knows how determined Auntie is not to marry him. Only, to be sure, though Grannie never lets her have more than five shillings in her pocket at a time, she will be worth something when she is married."

"Nothing can make her worth more than she is, Judy," I said, perhaps with some discontent in my tone.

"That's as you and I think, Mr. Walton; not as Grannie and the Captain think at all. I daresay he would not care much more than Grannie whether she was willing or not, so long as she married him."

"But, Judy, we must have some plan laid before we reach the Hall; else my coming will be of no use."

"Of course. I know how much I can do, and you must arrange the rest with her. I will take you to the little room up-stairs—we call it the Octagon. That you know is just under Auntie's room. They will be at dinner—the Captain and Grannie. I will leave you there, and tell Auntie that you want to see her."

"But, Judy——"

"Don't you want to see her, Mr. Walton?"

"Yes, I do; more than you can think."

"Then I will tell her so."

"But will she come to me?"

"I don't know. We have to find that out."

"Very well, I leave myself in your hands."

I was now perfectly collected. All my dubitation and distress were gone, for I had something to do, although what I could not yet tell. That she did not love Captain Everard was plain, and that she had as yet resisted her mother was also plain, though it was not equally certain that she would, if left at her mercy, go on to resist her. This was what I hoped to strengthen her to do. I saw nothing more within my reach as yet. But from what I knew of Miss Oldcastle, I saw plainly enough that no greater good could be done for her than this enabling to resistance. Self-assertion was so foreign to her nature, that it needed a sense of duty to rouse her even to self-defence. As I have said before, she was clad in the mail of endurance, but was utterly without weapons.

And there was a danger of her conduct and then of her mind giving way at last, from the gradual inroads of weakness upon the thews which she left unexercised. In respect of this, I prayed heartily that I might help her.

Judy and I scarcely spoke to each other from the moment we entered the gate till I found myself at a side door which I had never observed till now. It was fastened, and Judy told me to wait till she went in and opened it. The moon was now quite obscured, and I was under no apprehension of discovery. While I stood there I could not help thinking of Dr. Duncan's story, and reflecting that the daughter was now returning the kindness shown to the mother.

I had not to wait long before the door opened behind me noiselessly, and I stepped into the dark house. Judy took me by the hand, and led me along a passage, and then up a stair into the little drawing-room. There was no light. She led me to a seat at the further end, and opening a door close beside me, left me in the dark.

There I sat so long that I fell into a fit of musing, broken ever by startled expectation. Castle after castle I built up; castle after castle fell to pieces in my hands. Still she did not come. At length I got so restless and excited that only the darkness kept me from starting up and pacing the room. Still she did not come, and partly from weakness, partly from hope deferred, I found myself beginning to tremble all over. Nor could I control myself. As the trembling increased, I grew alarmed lest I should become unable to carry out all that might be necessary.

Suddenly from out of the dark a hand settled on my arm. I looked up and could just see the whiteness of a face. Before I could speak, a voice said brokenly, in a half-whisper:—

"*Will* you save me, Mr. Walton? But you're trembling; you are ill; you ought not to have come to me. I will get you something."

And she moved to go, but I held her. All my trembling was gone in a moment. Her words, so careful of me even in her deep misery, went to my heart and gave me strength. The suppressed feelings of many months rushed to my lips. What I said I do not know, but I know that I told her I loved her. And I know that she did not draw her hand from mine when I said so.

But ere I ceased came a revulsion of feeling.

"Forgive me," I said; "I am selfishness itself to speak to you thus now, to take advantage of your misery to make you listen to mine. But, at least, it will make you sure that if all I am, all I have will save you——"

"But I am saved already," she interposed, "if you love me, for I love you."

And for some moments there were no words to speak. I stood holding her hand, conscious only of God and her. At last I said:

"There is no time now but for action. Nor do I see anything but to come with me at once. Will you come home to my sister? Or I will take you wherever you please."

"I will go with you anywhere you think best. Only take me away."

"Put on your bonnet, then, and a warm cloak, and we will settle all about it as we go."

She had scarcely left the room when Mrs. Oldcastle came to the door.

"No lights here!" she said. "Sarah, bring candles, and tell Captain Everard, when he will join us, to come to the octagon room. Where can that little Judy be? The child gets more and more troublesome, I do think. I must take her in hand."

I had been in great perplexity how to let her know that I was there; for to announce yourself to a lady by a voice out of the darkness of her boudoir, or to wait for candles to discover you where she thought she was quite alone—neither is a pleasant way of presenting yourself to her consciousness. But I was helped out of the beginning into the middle of my difficulties, once more by that blessed little Judy. I did not know she was in the room till I heard her voice. Nor do I yet know how much she had heard of the conversation between her aunt and myself; for although I sometimes see her look roguish even now that she is a middle-aged woman with many children, when anything is said which might be supposed to have a possible reference to that night, I have never cared to ask her.

"Here I am, Grannie," said her voice. "But I won't be taken in hand by you or anyone else. I tell you that. So mind. And Mr. Walton is here, too, and Aunt Ethelwyn is going out with him for a long walk."

"What do you mean, you silly child?"

"I mean what I say," and, "Miss Judy speaks the truth," fell together from her lips and mine.

"Mr. Walton," began Mrs. Oldcastle, indignantly, "it is scarcely like a gentleman to come where you are not wanted——"

Here Judy interrupted her.

"I beg your pardon, Grannie, Mr. Walton *was* wanted—very much wanted. I went and fetched him."

But Mrs. Oldcastle went on.

"——and to be sitting in my room in the dark too!"

"That couldn't be helped, Grannie. Here comes Sarah with candles."

"Sarah," said Mrs. Oldcastle, "ask Captain Everard to be kind enough to step this way."

"Yes, ma'am," answered Sarah, with an untranslatable look at me as she set down the candles.

We could now see each other. Knowing words to be but idle breath, I would not complicate matters by speech, but stood silent, regarding Mrs. Oldcastle. She on her part did not flinch, but returned my look with one both haughty and contemptuous. In a few moments, Captain Everard entered, bowed slightly, and looked to Mrs. Oldcastle as if for an explanation. Whereupon she spoke, but to me.

"Mr. Walton," she said, "will you explain to Captain Everard to what we owe the *unexpected* pleasure of a visit from you?"

"Captain Everard has no claim to any explanation from me. To you, Mrs. Oldcastle, I would have answered, had you asked me, that I was waiting for Miss Oldcastle."

"Pray inform Miss Oldcastle, Judy, that Mr. Walton insists upon seeing her at once."

"That is quite unnecessary. Miss Oldcastle will be here presently."

Mrs. Oldcastle turned slightly livid with wrath. She was always white, as I have said: the change I can describe only by the word I have used, indicating a bluish darkening of the whiteness. She walked towards the door beside me. I stepped between her and it.

"Pardon me, Mrs. Oldcastle. That is the way to Miss Oldcastle's room. I am here to protect her."

Without saying a word she turned and looked at Captain Everard. He advanced with a long stride of determination. But ere he reached me, the door behind me opened, and Miss Oldcastle appeared in her bonnet and shawl, carrying a small bag in her hand. Seeing how things were, the moment she entered she put her hand on my arm, and stood fronting the enemy with me. Judy was on my right, her eyes flashing, and her cheek as red as a peony, evidently prepared to do battle *à toute outrance* for her friends.

"Miss Oldcastle, go to your room instantly, I *command* you," said her mother; and she approached as if to remove her hand from my arm. I put my other arm between her and her daughter.

"No, Mrs. Oldcastle," I said. "You have lost all a mother's rights by ceasing to behave like a mother. Miss Oldcastle will never more do anything in obedience to your *commands*, whatever she may do in compliance with your wishes."

"Allow me to remark," said Captain Everard, with attempted nonchalance, "that that is strange doctrine for your cloth."

"So much the worse for my cloth then," I answered, "and the better for yours if it leads you to act more honourably."

Still keeping himself entrenched in the affectation of a supercilious indifference, he smiled haughtily, and gave a look of dramatic appeal to Mrs. Oldcastle.

"At least," said that lady, "do not disgrace yourself, Ethelwyn, by leaving the house in this unaccountable manner at night and on foot. If you *will* leave the protection of your mother's roof, wait at least till to-morrow."

"I would rather spend the night in the open air than pass another under your roof, mother. You have been a strange mother to me—and Dorothy too!"

"At least, do not put your character in question by going in this unmaidenly fashion. People will talk to your prejudice—and Mr. Walton's too."

Ethelwyn smiled.—She was now as collected as I was, seeming to have cast off all her weakness. My heart was uplifted more than I can say.—She knew her mother too well to be caught by the change in her tone.

I had not hitherto interrupted her once when she took the answer upon herself, for she was not one to be checked when she chose to speak. But now she answered nothing, only looked at me, and I understood her, of course.

"They will hardly have time to do so, I trust, before it will be out of their power. It rests with Miss Oldcastle herself to say when that shall be."

As if she had never suspected that such was the result of her scheming, Mrs. Oldcastle's demeanour changed utterly. The form of her visage was altered. She made a spring at her daughter, and seized her by the arm.

"Then I forbid it," she screamed; "and I *will* be obeyed. I stand on my rights. Go to your room, you minx."

"There is no law human or divine to prevent her from marrying whom she will. How old are you, Ethelwyn?"

I thought it better to seem even cooler than I was.

"Twenty-seven," answered Miss Oldcastle.

"Is it possible you can be so foolish, Mrs. Oldcastle, as to think you have the slightest hold on your daughter's freedom? Let her arm go."

But she kept her grasp.

"You hurt me, mother," said Miss Oldcastle.

"Hurt you? you smooth-faced hypocrite! I will hurt you then!"

But I took Mrs. Oldcastle's arm in my hand, and she let go her hold.

"How dare you touch a woman?" she said.

"Because she has so far ceased to be a woman as to torture her own daughter."

Here Captain Everard stepped forward, saying,—

"The riot-act ought to be read, I think. It is time for the military to interfere."

"Well put, Captain Everard," I said. "Our side will disperse if you will only leave room for us to go."

"Possibly *I* may have something to say in the matter."

"Say on."

"This lady has jilted me."

"Have you, Ethelwyn?"

"I have not."

"Then, Captain Everard, you lie."

"You dare to tell me so?"

And he strode a pace nearer.

"It needs no daring. I know you too well; and so does another who trusted you and found you false as hell."

"You presume on your cloth, but——" he said, lifting his hand.

"You may strike me, presuming on my cloth," I answered; "and I will not return your blow. Insult me as you will, and I will bear it. Call me coward, and I will say nothing. But lay one hand on me to prevent me from doing my duty, and I knock you down—or find you more of a man than I take you for."

It was either conscience or something not so good that made a coward of him. He turned on his heel.

"I really am not sufficiently interested in the affair to oppose you. You may take the girl for me. Both your cloth and the presence of ladies protect your insolence. I do not like brawling where one cannot fight. You shall hear from me before long, Mr. Walton."

"No, Captain Everard, I shall not hear from you. You know you dare not write to me. I know that of you which, even on the code of the duellist, would justify any gentleman in refusing to meet you. Stand out of my way!"

I advanced with Miss Oldcastle on my arm. He drew back; and we left the room.

As we reached the door, Judy bounded after us, threw her arms round her aunt's neck, then round mine, kissing us both, and returned to her place on the sofa. Mrs. Oldcastle gave a scream, and sunk fainting on a chair. It was a last effort to detain her daughter and gain time. Miss Oldcastle would have returned, but I would not permit her.

"No," I said; "she will be better without you. Judy, ring the bell for Sarah."

"How dare you give orders in my house?" exclaimed Mrs. Oldcastle, sitting bolt upright in the chair, and shaking her fist at us. Then assuming the heroic, she added, "From this moment she is no daughter of mine. Nor can you touch one farthing of her money, sir. You have married a beggar after all."

"Thy money perish with thee!" I said, and repented the moment I had said it. It sounded like an imprecation, and I know I had no correspondent feeling; for, after all, she was the mother of my Ethelwyn. But the allusion to money made me so indignant, that the words burst from me ere I could consider their import.

The cool wind greeted us like the breath of God, as we left the house and closed the door behind us. The moon was shining from the edge of a vaporous mountain, which gradually drew away from her, leaving her alone in the midst of a lake of blue. But we had not got many paces from the house when Miss Oldcastle began to tremble violently, and could scarcely get along with all the help I could give her. Nor, for the space of six weeks did one word pass between us about the painful occurrences of that evening.

When we managed at last to reach the vicarage, I gave her in charge to my sister, with instructions to help her to bed at once, while I went for Dr. Duncan.

XXXIII.

I FOUND the old man seated at his dinner, which he left immediately when he heard that Miss Oldcastle needed his help. In a few words I told him, as we went, the story of what had befallen at the Hall, to which he listened with the interest of a boy reading a romance, asking twenty questions about the particulars which I hurried over. Then he shook me warmly by the hand, saying:—

"You have fairly won her, Walton, and I am as glad of it as I could be of anything I can think of. She is well worth all you must have suffered. This will at length remove the curse from that wretched family. You have saved her from perhaps even a worse fate than her sister's."

"I fear she will be ill, though," I said, "after all that she has gone through."

But I did not even suspect how ill she would be.

As soon as I heard Dr. Duncan's opinion of her, which was not very definite, a great fear seized upon me that I was destined to lose her after all. This fear, however, terrible as it was, did not torture me like the fear that had preceded it. I could oftener feel able to say, "Thy will be done" than I could before.

Dr. Duncan was hardly out of the house when Old Rogers arrived, and was shown into the study. He looked excited. I allowed him to tell out his story, which was his daughter's of course, without interruption. He ended by saying:—

"Now, sir, you really must do summat. This won't do in a Christian country. We aint aboard ship here with a nor'-easter a-walkin' the quarter-deck."

"There's no occasion, my dear old fellow, to do anything."

He was taken aback.

"Well, I don't understand you, Mr. Walton. You're the last man I'd have expected to hear argufy for faith without works. It's right to trust in God; but if you don't stand to your halliards, your craft 'll miss stays, and your faith 'll be blown out of the bolt-ropes in the turn of a marlinspike."

I suspect there was some confusion in the figure, but the old man's meaning was plain enough. Nor would I keep him in a moment more of suspense.

"Miss Oldcastle is in the house, Old Rogers," I said.

"What house, sir?" returned the old man, his gray eyes opening wider as he spoke.

"This house, to be sure."

I shall never forget the look the old man cast upwards, or the reality given to it by the ordinarily odd sailor-fashion of pulling his forelock, as he returned inward thanks to the Father of all for his kindness to his friend. And never in my now wide circle of readers shall I find one, the most educated and responsive, who will listen to my story with a more gracious interest than that old man showed as I recounted to him the adventures of the evening. There were few to whom I could have told them: to Old Rogers I felt that it was right and natural and dignified to tell the story even of my love's victory.

How then am I able to tell it to the world as now? I can easily explain the seeming inconsistency. It is not merely that I am speaking, as I have said before, from behind a screen, or as clothed in the coat of darkness of an anonymous writer; but I find that, as I come nearer and nearer to the invisible world, all my brothers and sisters grow dearer and dearer to me; I feel towards them more and more as the children of my Father in heaven; and although some of them are good children and some naughty children, some very lovable and some hard to love, yet I never feel that they are below me, or unfit to listen to the story even of my love, if they only care to listen; and if they do not care, there is no harm done, except they read it. Even should they, and then scoff at what seemed and seems to me the precious story, I have these defences: first, that it was not for them that I cast forth my precious pearls, for precious to me is the significance of every fact in my history—not that it is mine, for I have been only as clay in the hands of the potter, but that it is God's, who made my history as it seemed and was good to Him; and second, that even should they trample them under their feet, they cannot well get at me to rend me. And more, the nearer I come to the region beyond, the more I feel that in that land a man needs not shrink from uttering his deepest thoughts, inasmuch as he that understands them not will not therefore revile him.—"But you are

not there yet. You are in the land in which the brother speaketh evil of that which he understandeth not."—True, friend; too true. But I only do as Dr. Donne did in writing that poem in his sickness, when he thought he was near to the world of which we speak: I rehearse now, that I may find it easier then.

"Since I am coming to that holy room,
Where, with the choir of saints for evermore,
I shall be made thy music, as I come,
I tune the instrument here at the door;
And what I must do then, think here before."

When Rogers had thanked God, he rose, took my hand, and said:—

"Mr. Walton, you *will* preach now. I thank God for the good we shall all get from the trouble you have gone through."

"I ought to be the better for it," I answered.

"You *will* be the better for it," he returned. "I believe I've allus been the better for any trouble as ever I had to go through with. I couldn't quite say the same for every bit of good luck I had; leastways, I consider trouble the best luck a man can have. And I wish you a good night, sir. Thank God! again."

"But, Rogers, you don't mean it would be good for us to have bad luck always, do you? You shouldn't be pleased at what's come to me now, in that case."

"No, sir; sartinly not."

"How can you say then that bad luck is the best luck?"

"I mean the bad luck that comes to us—not the bad luck that doesn't come. But you're right, sir. Good luck or bad luck's both best when *He* sends 'em, as He allus does. In fac', sir, there is no bad luck but what comes out o' the man hisself. The rest's all good."

But whether it was the consequence of a reaction from the mental strain I had suffered, or the depressing effect of Miss Oldcastle's illness coming so close upon the joy of winning her; or that I was more careless and less anxious to do my duty than I ought to have been—I greatly fear that Old Rogers must have been painfully disappointed in the sermons which I did preach for several of the following Sundays. He never even hinted at such a fact, but I felt it much myself. A man has often to be humbled through failure, especially after success. I do not clearly know how my failures worked upon me; but I think a man may sometimes get spiritual good without being conscious of the point of its arrival, or being able to trace the process by which it was wrought in him. I believe that my failures did work some humility in me, and a certain carelessness of outward success even in spiritual matters, so far as the success affected me, provided only the will of God was done in the dishonour of my weakness. And I think, but I am not sure, that soon after I approached this condition of mind, I began to preach better. But still I found for some time that however much the subject of my sermon interested me in my study or in the church or vestry on the Saturday evening; nay, even although my heart was full of fervour during the prayers and lessons; no sooner had I begun to speak than the glow died out of the sky of my thoughts; a dull clearness of the intellectual faculties took its place; and I was painfully aware that what I could speak without being moved myself was not the most likely utterance to move the feelings of those who only listened. Still a man may occasionally be used by the Spirit of God as the inglorious "trumpet of a prophecy" instead of being inspired with the life of the word, and hence speaking out of a full heart in testimony of that which he hath known and seen.

I hardly remember when or how I came upon the plan, but now, as often as I find myself in such a condition, I turn away from any attempt to produce a sermon; and, taking up one of the sayings of our Lord which He himself has said "are spirit and are life," I labour simply to make the people see in it what I see in it; and when I find that thus my own heart is warmed, I am justified in the hope that the hearts of some at least of my hearers are thereby warmed likewise.

But no doubt the fact that the life of Miss Oldcastle seemed to tremble in the balance, had something to do with those results of which I may have already said too much. My design had been to go at once to London and make preparation for as early a wedding as she would consent to; but the very day after I brought her home, life and not marriage was the question. Dr. Duncan looked very grave, and although he gave me all the encouragement he could, all his encouragement did not amount to much. There was such a lack of vitality about her! The treatment to which she had been for so long a time subjected had depressed her till life was nearly quenched from lack of hope. Nor did the sudden change seem able to restore the healthy action of what the old physicians called the animal spirits. Possibly the strong reaction paralysed their channels, and thus prevented her gladness from reaching her physical nature so as to operate on its health. Her whole complaint appeared in excessive weakness. Finding that she fainted after every little excitement, I left her for four weeks entirely to my sister and Dr. Duncan, during which time she never saw me; and it was long before I could venture to stay in her room more than a minute or two. But as the summer approached she began to show signs of reviving life, and by the end of May was able to be wheeled into the garden in a chair.

During her aunt's illness, Judy came often to the vicarage. But Miss Oldcastle was unable to see her any more than myself without the painful consequence which I have mentioned. So the dear child always came to me in the study, and through her endless vivacity infected me with some of her hope. For she had no fears whatever about her aunt's recovery.

I had had some painful apprehensions as to the treatment Judy herself might meet with from her grandmother, and had been doubtful whether I ought not to have carried her off as well as her aunt; but the first time she came, which was the next day, she set my mind at rest on that subject.

"But does your grannie know where you are come?" I had asked her.

"So well, Mr. Walton," she replied, "that there was no occasion to tell her. Why shouldn't I rebel as well as Aunt Wynnie, I wonder?" she added, looking archness itself.

"How does she bear it?"

"Bear what, Mr. Walton?"

"The loss of your aunt."

"You don't think Grannie cares about that, do you? She's vexed enough at the loss of Captain Everard. —Do you know, I think he had too much wine yesterday, or he wouldn't have made quite such a fool of himself."

"I fear he hadn't had quite enough to give him courage, Judy. I daresay he was brave enough once, but a bad conscience soon destroys a man's courage."

"Why do you call it a bad conscience, Mr. Walton? I should have thought that a bad conscience was one that would let a girl go on anyhow and say nothing about it to make her uncomfortable."

"You are quite right, Judy; that is the worst kind of conscience, certainly. But tell me, how does Mrs. Oldcastle bear it?"

"You asked me that already."

Somehow Judy's words always seem more pert upon paper than they did upon her lips. Her *naïveté*, the twinkling light in her eyes, and the smile flitting about her mouth, always modified greatly the expression of her words.

"—Grannie never says a word about you or Auntie either."

"But you said she was vexed: how do you know that?"

"Because ever since the Captain went away this morning, she won't speak a word to Sarah even."

"Are you not afraid of her locking you up some day or other?"

"Not a bit of it. Grannie won't touch me. And you shouldn't tempt me to run away from her like Auntie. I won't. Grannie is a naughty old lady, and I don't believe anybody loves her but me—not Sarah, I'm certain. Therefore I can't leave her, and I won't leave her, Mr. Walton, whatever you may say about her."

"Indeed, I don't want you to leave her, Judy."

And Judy did not leave her as long as she lived. And the old lady's love to that child was at least one redeeming point in her fierce character. No one can tell how much good it may have done her before she died—though but a few years passed before her soul was required of her. Before that time came, however, a quarrel took place between her and Sarah, which quarrel I incline to regard as a hopeful sign. And to this day Judy has never heard how her old grannie treated her mother. When she learns it now from these pages I think she will be glad that she did not know it before her death.

The old lady would see neither doctor nor parson; nor would she hear of sending for her daughter. The only sign of softening that she gave was that once she folded her grand-daughter in her arms and wept long and bitterly. Perhaps the thought of her dying child came back upon her, along with the reflection that the only friend she had was the child of that marriage which she had persecuted to dissolution.

XXXIV.

My reader will perceive that this part of my story is drawing to a close. It embraces but a brief period of my life, and I have plenty more behind not altogether unworthy of record. But the portions of any man's life most generally interesting are those in which, while the outward history is most stirring, it derives its chief significance from accompanying conflict within. It is not the rapid change of events, or the unusual concourse of circumstances that alone can interest the thoughtful mind; while, on the other hand, internal change and tumult can be ill set forth to the reader, save they be accompanied and in part, at least, occasioned by outward event capable of embodying and elucidating the things that are of themselves unseen. For man's life ought to be a whole; and not to mention the spiritual necessities of our nature—to leave the fact alone that a man is a mere thing of shreds and patches until his heart is united, as the Psalmist says, to fear the name of God—to leave these considerations aside, I say, no man's life is fit for representation as a work of art save in proportion as there has been a significant relation between his outer and inner life, a visible outcome of some sort of harmony between them. Therefore I chose the portion in which I had suffered most, and in which the outward occurrences of my own life had been most interesting, for the fullest representation; while I reserve for a more occasional and fragmentary record many things in the way of experience, thought, observation, and facts in the history both of myself and individuals of my flock, which admit of, and indeed require, a more individual treatment than would be altogether suitable to a continuous story. But before I close this part of my communications with those whom I count my friends, for till they assure me of the contrary I mean to flatter myself with considering my readers generally as such, I must gather up the ends of my thread, and dispose them in such a manner that they shall neither hang too loose, nor yet refuse length enough for what my friend Rogers would call *splicing*.

It was yet summer when Miss Oldcastle and I were married. It was to me a day awful in its gladness. She was now quite well, and no shadow hung upon her half-moon forehead. We went for a fortnight into Wales, and then returned to the vicarage and the duties of the parish, in which my wife was quite ready to assist me.

Perhaps it would help the wives of some clergymen out of some difficulties, and be their protection against some reproaches, if they would at once take the position with regard to the parishioners which Mrs. Walton took, namely, that of their servant, but not in her own right—in her husband's. She saw, and told them so, that the best thing she could do for them was to help me, that she held no office whatever in the parish, and they must apply to me when anything went amiss. Had she not constantly refused to be "a judge or a divider," she would have been constantly troubled with disputes too paltry to be referred to me, and which were the sooner forgotten that the litigants were not drawn on further and further into the desert of dispute by the mirage of a justice

that could quench no thirst. Only when any such affair was brought before me, did she use her good offices to bring about a right feeling between the contending parties, generally next-door neighbours, and mostly women, who, being at home all day, found their rights clash in a manner that seldom happened with those that worked in the fields. Whatever her counsel could do, however, had full scope through me, who earnestly sought it. And whatever she gave the poor, she gave as a private person, out of her own pocket. She never administered the communion-offering—that is, after finding out, as she soon did, that it was a source of endless dispute between some of the recipients, who regarded it as their common property, and were never satisfied with what they received. This is the case in many country parishes, I fear. As soon as I came to know it, I simply told the recipients that, although the communion-offering belonged to them, yet the distribution of it rested entirely with me; and that I would distribute it neither according to their fancied merits nor the degree of friendship I felt for them, but according to the best judgment I could form as to their necessities; and if any of them thought these were underrated, they were quite at liberty to make a fresh representation of them to me; but that I, who knew more about their neighbours than it was likely they did, and was not prejudiced by the personal regards which they could hardly fail to be influenced by, was more likely than they were to arrive at an equitable distribution of the money—upon my principles if not on theirs. And at the same time I tried to show them that a very great part of the disputes in the world came from our having a very keen feeling of our own troubles, and a very dull feeling of our neighbour's; for if the case was reversed, and our neighbour's condition became ours, ten to one our judgment would be reversed likewise. And I think some of them got some sense out of what I said. But I ever found the great difficulty in my dealing with my people to be the preservation of the authority which was needful for service; for when the elder serve the younger—and in many cases it is not age that determines seniority—they must not forget that without which the service they offer will fail to be received as such by those to whom it is offered. At the same time they must ever take heed that their claim to authority be founded on the truth, and not on ecclesiastical or social position. Their standing in the church accredits their offer of service: the service itself can only be accredited by the Truth and the Lord of Truth, who is the servant of all.

But it cost both me and my wife some time and some suffering before we learned how to deport ourselves in these respects.

In the same manner she avoided the too near, because unprofitable, approaches of a portion of the richer part of the community. For from her probable position in time to come, rather than her position in time past, many of the fashionable people in the county began to call upon her—in no small degree to her annoyance, simply from the fact that she and they had so little in common. So, while she performed all towards them that etiquette demanded, she excused herself from the closer intimacy which some of them courted, on the ground of the many duties which naturally fell to the parson's wife in a country-parish like ours; and I am sure that long before we had gained the footing we now have, we had begun to reap the benefits of this mode of regarding our duty in the parish as one, springing from the same source, and tending to the same end. The parson's wife who takes to herself authority in virtue of her position, and the parson's wife who disclaims all connection with the professional work of her husband, are equally out of place in being parsons' wives. The one who refuses to serve denies her greatest privilege; the one who will be a mistress receives the greater condemnation. When the wife is one with her husband, and the husband is worthy, the position will soon reveal itself.

But there cannot be many clergymen's wives amongst my readers; and I may have occupied more space than reasonable with this "large discourse." I apologize, and, there is room to fear, go on to do the same again.

As I write I am seated in that little octagonal room overlooking the quarry, with its green lining of trees, and its deep central well. It is my study now. My wife is not yet too old to prefer the little room in which she thought and suffered so much, to any other, although the stair that leads to it is high and steep. Nor do I object to her preference because there is no ready way to reach it save through this: I see her the oftener. And although I do not like any one to look over my shoulder while I write—it disconcerts me somehow—yet the moment the sheet is finished and flung on the heap, it is her property, as the print, reader, is yours. I hear her step overhead now. She is opening her window. Now I hear her door close; and now her foot is on the stair.

"Come in, love. I have just finished another sheet. There it is. What shall I end the book with? What shall I tell the friends with whom I have been conversing so often and so long for the last thing ere for a little while I bid them good-bye?"

And Ethelwyn bends her smooth forehead—for she has a smooth forehead still, although the hair that crowns it is almost white—over the last few sheets; and while she reads, I will tell my readers one of the good things that come of being married. It is, that there is one face upon which the changes come without your seeing them; or rather, there is one face which you can still see the same through all the shadows which years have gathered and heaped upon it. No, stay; I have got a better way of putting it still: there is one face whose final beauty you can see the more clearly as the bloom of youth departs, and the loveliness of wisdom and the beauty of holiness take its place; for in it you behold all that you loved before, veiled, it is true, but glowing with added brilliance under the veil ("Stop one moment, my dear") from which it will one day shine out like the moon from under a cloud, when a stream of the upper air floats it from off her face.

"Now, Ethelwyn, I am ready. What shall I write about next?"

"I don't think you have told them anywhere about Tom."

"No more I have. I meant to do so. But I am ashamed of it."

"The more reason to tell it."

"You are quite right. I will go on with it at once. But you must not stand there behind me. When I was a child, I could always confess best when I hid my face with my hands."

"Besides," said Ethelwyn, without seeming to hear what I said, "I do not want to have people saying that the vicar has made himself out so good that nobody can believe in him."

"That would be a great fault in my book, Ethelwyn. What does it come from in me? Let me see. I do not think I want to appear better than I am; but it sounds hypocritical to make merely general confessions, and it is indecorous to make particular ones. Besides, I doubt if it is good to write much about bad things even in the way of confession——"

"Well, well, never mind justifying it," said Ethelwyn. "*I* don't want any justification. But here is a chance for you. The story, will, I think, do good and not harm. You had better tell it, I do think. So if you are inclined, I will go away at once, and let you go on without interruption. You will have it finished before dinner, and Tom is coming, and you can tell him what you have done."

So, reader, now my wife has left me, I will begin. It shall not be a long story.

As soon as my wife and I had settled down at home, and I had begun to arrange my work again, it came to my mind that for a long time I had been doing very little for Tom Weir. I could not blame myself much for this, and I was pretty sure neither he nor his father blamed me at all; but I now saw that it was time we should recommence something definite in the way of study. When he came to my house the next morning, and I proceeded to acquaint myself with what he had been doing, I found to my great pleasure that he had made very considerable progress both in Latin and Mathematics, and I resolved that I would now push him a little. I found this only brought out his mettle; and his progress, as it seemed to me, was extraordinary. Nor was this all. There were such growing signs of goodness in addition to the uprightness which had first led to our acquaintance, that although I carefully abstained from making the suggestion to him, I was more than pleased when I discovered, from some remark he made, that he would gladly give himself to the service of the Church. At the same time I felt compelled to be the more cautious in anything I said, from the fact that the prospect of the social elevation which would be involved in the change might be a temptation to him, as no doubt it has been to many a man of humble birth. However, as I continued to observe him closely, my conviction was deepened that he was rarely fitted for ministering to his fellows; and soon it came to speech between his father and me, when I found that Thomas, so far from being unfavourably inclined to the proposal, was prepared to spend the few savings of his careful life upon his education. To this, however, I could not listen, because there was his daughter Mary, who was very delicate, and his grandchild too, for whom he ought to make what little provision he could. I therefore took the matter in my own hands, and by means of a judicious combination of experience and what money I could spare, I managed, at less expense than most parents suppose to be unavoidable, to maintain my young friend at Oxford till such time as he gained a fellowship. I felt justified in doing so in part from the fact that some day or other Mrs. Walton would inherit the Oldcastle property, as well as come into possession of certain monies of her own, now in the trust of her mother and two gentlemen in London, which would be nearly sufficient to free the estate from incumbrance, although she could not touch it as long as her mother lived and chose to refuse her the use of it, at least without a law-suit, with which neither of us was inclined to have anything to do. But I did not lose a penny by the affair. For of the very first money Tom received after he had got his fellowship, he brought the half to me, and continued to do so until he had repaid me every shilling I had spent upon him. As soon as he was in deacon's orders, he came to assist me for a while as curate, and I found him a great help and comfort. He occupied the large room over his father's shop which had been his grandfather's: he had been dead for some years.

I was now engaged on a work which I had been contemplating for many years, upon the development of the love of Nature as shown in the earliest literature of the Jews and Greeks, through that of the Romans, Italians, and other nations, with the Anglo-Saxon for a fresh starting-point, into its latest forms in Gray, Thomson, Cowper, Crabbe, Wordsworth, Keats, and Tennyson; and Tom supplied me with much of the time which I bestowed upon this object, and I was really grateful to him. But, in looking back, and trying to account to myself for the snare into which I fell, I see plainly enough that I thought too much of what I had done for Tom, and too little of the honour God had done me in allowing me to help Tom. I took the high-daïs-throne over him, not consciously I believe, but still with a contemptible condescension, not of manner but of heart, so delicately refined by the innate sophistry of my selfishness, that the better nature in me called it only fatherly friendship, and did not recognize it as that abominable thing so favoured of all those that especially worship themselves. But I abuse my fault instead of confessing it.

One evening, a gentle tap came to my door, and Tom entered. He looked pale and anxious, and there was an uncertainty about his motions which I could not understand.

"What is the matter, Tom?" I asked.

"I wanted to say something to you, sir," answered Tom.

"Say on," I returned, cheerily.

"It is not so easy to say, sir," rejoined Tom, with a faint smile. "Miss Walton, sir——"

"Well, what of her? There's nothing happened to her. She was here a few minutes ago—though, now I think of it——"

Here a suspicion of the truth flashed on me, and struck me dumb. I am now covered with shame to

think how, when the thing approached myself on that side, it swept away for the moment all my fine theories about the equality of men in Christ their Head. Could Tom Weir, whose father was a joiner, who had been a lad in a London shop himself, dare to think of marrying my sister? Instead of thinking of what he really was, my regard rested upon this and that stage through which he had passed to reach his present condition. In fact, I regarded him rather as of my making than of God's.

Perhaps it might do something to modify the scorn of all classes for those beneath them, to consider that, by regarding others thus, they justify those above them in looking down upon them in their turn. In London shops, I am credibly informed, the young women who serve in the show-rooms, or behind the counters, are called *ladies*, and talk of the girls who make up the articles for sale as *persons*. To the learned professions, however, the distinction between the shop-women and milliners is, from their superior height, unrecognizable; while doctors and lawyers are again, I doubt not, massed by countesses and other blue-blooded realities, with the literary lions who roar at *soirées* and kettle-drums, or even with chiropodists and violin-players! But I am growing scornful at scorn, and forget that I too have been scornful. Brothers, sisters, all good men and true women, let the Master seat us where He will. Until he says, "Come up higher," let us sit at the foot of the board, or stand behind, honoured in waiting upon his guests. All that kind of thing is worth nothing in the kingdom; and nothing will be remembered of us but the Master's judgment.

I have known a good churchwoman who would be sweet as a sister to the abject poor, but offensively condescending to a shopkeeper or a dissenter, exactly as if he was a Pariah, and she a Brahmin. I have known good people who were noble and generous towards their so-called inferiors and full of the rights of the race—until it touched their own family, and just no longer. Yea I, who had talked like this for years, at once, when Tom Weir wanted to marry my sister, lost my faith in the broad lines of human distinction, judged according to appearances in which I did not even believe, and judged not righteous judgment.

"For," reasoned the World in me, "is it not too bad to drag your wife in for such an alliance? Has she not lowered herself enough already? Has she not married far below her accredited position in society? Will she not feel injured by your family if she see it capable of forming such a connexion?"

What answer I returned to Tom I hardly know. I remember that the poor fellow's face fell, and that he murmured something which I did not heed. And then I found myself walking in the garden under the great cedar, having stepped out of the window almost unconsciously, and left Tom standing there alone. It was very good of him even to forgive me.

Wandering about in the garden, my wife saw me from her window, and met me as I turned a corner in the shrubbery.

And now I am going to have my revenge upon her in a way she does not expect, for making me tell the story: I will tell her share in it.

"What is the matter with you, Henry?" she asked.

"Oh, not much," I answered. "Only that Weir has been making me rather uncomfortable."

"What has he been doing?" she inquired, in some alarm. "It is not possible he has done anything wrong."

My wife trusted him as much as I did.

"No—o—o," I answered. "Not anything exactly wrong."

"It must be very nearly wrong, Henry, to make you look so miserable."

I began to feel ashamed already.

"He has been falling in love with Martha," I said; "and when I put one thing to another, I fear he may have made her in love with him too."

My wife laughed merrily.

"What a wicked curate!"

"Well, but you know it is not exactly agreeable."

"Why?"

"You know why well enough."

"At least, I am not going to take it for granted. Is he not a good man?"

"Yes."

"Is he not a well-educated man?"

"As well as myself—for his years."

"Is he not clever?"

"One of the cleverest fellows I ever met."

"Is he not a gentleman?"

"I have not a fault to find with his manners."

"Nor with his habits?"

"No."

"Nor with his ways of thinking?"

"No.—But, Ethelwyn, you know what I mean quite well. His family, you know."

"Well, is his father not a respectable man?"

"Oh, yes, certainly. Thoroughly respectable."

"He wouldn't borrow money of his tailor instead of paying for his clothes, would he?"

"Certainly not."

"And if he were to die to-day he would carry no debts to heaven with him?"

"I believe not."

"Does he bear false witness against his neighbour?"

"No. He scorns a lie as much as any man I ever knew."

"Which of the Commandments is it in particular that he breaks, then?"

"None that I know of; excepting that no one can keep them yet that is only human. He tries to keep every one of them, I do believe."

"Well, I think Tom very fortunate in having such a father. I wish my mother had been as good."

"That is all true, and yet——"

"And yet, suppose a young man you liked had had a fashionable father who had ruined half a score of tradespeople by his extravagance—would you object to him because of his family?"

"Perhaps not."

"Then, with you, position outweighs honesty—in fathers, at least."

To this I was not ready with an answer, and my wife went on.

"It might be reasonable if you did though, from fear lest he should turn out like his father.—But do

you know why I would not accept your offer of taking my name when I should succeed to the property?"

"You said you liked mine better."

"So I did. But I did not tell you that I was ashamed that my good husband should take a name which for centuries had been borne by hard-hearted, worldly-minded people, who, to speak the truth of my ancestors to my husband, were neither gentle nor honest, nor high-minded."

"Still, Ethelwyn, you know there is something in it, though it is not so easy to say what. And you avoid that. I suppose Martha has been talking you over to her side."

"Harry," my wife said, with a shade of solemnity, "I am almost ashamed of you for the first time. And I will punish you by telling you the truth. Do you think I had nothing of that sort to get over when I began to find that I was thinking a little more about you than was quite convenient under the circumstances? Your manners, dear Harry, though irreproachable, just had not the tone that I had been accustomed to. There was a diffidence about you also that did not at first advance you in my regard."

"Yes, yes," I answered, a little piqued, "I dare say. I have no doubt you thought me a boor."

"Dear Harry!"

"I beg your pardon, wifie. I know you didn't. But it is quite bad enough to have brought you down to my level, without sinking you still lower."

"Now there you are wrong, Harry. And that is what I want to show you. I found that my love to you would not be satisfied with making an exception in your favour. I must see what force there really was in the notions I had been bred in."

"Ah!" I said. "I see. You looked for a principle in what you had thought was an exception."

"Yes," returned my wife; "and I soon found one. And the next step was to throw away all false judgment in regard to such things. And so I can see more clearly than you into the right of this matter. —Would you hesitate a moment between Tom Weir and the dissolute son of an earl, Harry?"

"You know I would not."

"Well, just carry out the considerations that suggests, and you will find that where there is everything personally noble, pure, simple, and good, the lowliness of a man's birth is but an added honour to him; for it shows that his nobility is altogether from within him, and therefore is his own. It cannot then have been put on him by education or imitation, as many men's manners are, who wear their good breeding like their fine clothes, or as the Pharisee his prayers, to be seen of men."

"But his sister?"

"Harry, Harry! You were preaching last Sunday about the way God thinks of things. And you said that was the only true way of thinking about them. Would the Mary that poured the ointment on Jesus' head have refused to marry a good man because he was the brother of that Mary who poured it on his feet? Have you thought what God would think of Tom for a husband to Martha?"

I did not answer, for conscience had begun to speak. When I lifted my eyes from the ground, thinking Ethelwyn stood beside me, she was gone. I felt as if she were dead, to punish me for my pride. But still I could not get over it, though I was ashamed to follow and find her. I went and got my hat instead, and strolled out.

What was it that drew me towards Thomas Weir's shop? I think it must have been incipient repentance —a feeling that I had wronged the man. But just as I turned the corner, and the smell of the wood reached me, the picture so often associated in my mind with such a scene of human labour, rose before me. I saw the Lord of Life bending over his bench, fashioning some lowly utensil for some housewife of Nazareth. And he would receive payment for it too; for he at least could see no disgrace in the order of things that his Father had appointed. It is the vulgar mind that looks down on the earning and worships the inheriting of money. How infinitely more poetic is the belief that our Lord did his work like any other honest man, than that straining after his glorification in the early centuries of the Church by the invention of fables even to the disgrace of his father! They say that Joseph was a bad carpenter, and our Lord had to work miracles to set the things right which he had made wrong! To such a class of mind as invented these fables do those belong who think they honour our Lord when they judge anything human too common or too unclean for Him to have done.

And the thought sprung up at once in my mind— "If I ever see our Lord face to face, how shall I feel if He says to me, 'Didst thou do well to murmur that thy sister espoused a certain man for that in his youth he had earned his bread as I earned mine? Where was then thy right to say unto me, Lord, Lord?'"

I hurried into the workshop.

"Has Tom told you about it?" I said.

"Yes, sir. And I told him to mind what he was about; for he was not a gentleman, and you was, sir."

"I hope I am. And Tom is as much a gentleman as I have any claim to be."

Thomas Weir held out his hand.

"Now, sir, I do believe you mean in my shop what you say in your pulpit; and there is *one* Christian in the world at least.—But what will your good lady say? She's higher-born than you—no offence, sir."

"Ah, Thomas, you shame me. I am not so good as you think me. It was my wife that brought me to reason about it."

"God bless her."

"Amen. I'm going to find Tom."

At the same moment Tom entered the shop, with a very melancholy face. He started when he saw me, and looked confused.

"Tom, my boy," I said, "I behaved very badly to you. I am sorry for it. Come back with me, and have a walk with my sister. I don't think she'll be sorry to see you."

His face brightened up at once, and we left the shop together. Evidently with a great effort Tom was the first to speak.

"I know, sir, how many difficulties my presumption must put you in."

"Not another word about it, Tom. You are blameless. I wish I were. If we only act as God would have us, other considerations may look after themselves—or, rather, He will look after them. The world will never be right till the mind of God is the measure of things, and the will of God the law of things. In the kingdom of Heaven nothing else is acknowledged. And till that kingdom come, the mind and will of God must, with those that look for that kingdom, over-ride every other way of thinking, feeling, and judging. I see it more plainly than ever I did. Take my sister, in God's name, Tom, and be good to her."

Tom went to find Martha, and I to find Ethelwyn.

"It is all right," I said, "even to the shame I feel at having needed your reproof."

"Don't think of that. God gives us all time to come to our right minds, you know," answered my wife.

"But how did you get on so far a-head of me, wifie?"

Ethelwyn laughed.

"Why," she said, "I only told you back again what you have been telling me for the last seven or eight years."

So to me the message had come first, but my wife had answered first with the deed.

And now I have had my revenge on her.

Next to her and my children, Tom has been my greatest comfort for many years. He is still my curate, and I do not think we shall part till death part us for a time. My sister is worth twice what she was before, though they have no children. We have many, and they have taught me much.

Thomas Weir is now too old to work any longer. He occupies his father's chair in the large room of the old house. The workshop I have had turned into a schoolroom, of the external condition of which his daughter takes good care, while a great part of her brother Tom's time is devoted to the children; for he and I agree that, where it can be done, the pastoral care ought to be at least equally divided between the sheep and the lambs. For the sooner the children are brought under right influences—I do not mean a great deal of religious speech, but the right influences of truth and honesty, and an evident regard to what God wants of us—not only are they the more easily wrought upon, but the sooner do they recognize those influences as right and good. And while Tom quite agrees with me that there must not be much talk about religion, he thinks that there must be just the more acting upon religion; and that if it be everywhere at hand in all things taught and done, it will be ready to show itself to every one who looks for it. And besides that action is more powerful than speech in the inculcation of religion, Tom says there is no such corrective of sectarianism of every kind as the repression of speech and the encouragement of action.

Besides being a great help to me and everybody else almost in Marshmallows, Tom has distinguished himself in the literary world; and when I read his books, I am yet prouder of my brother-in-law. I am only afraid that Martha is not good enough for him. But she certainly improves, as I have said already.

Jane Rogers was married to young Brownrigg about a year after we were married. The old man is all but confined to the chimney-corner now, and Richard manages the farm, though not quite to his father's satisfaction, of course. But they are doing well notwithstanding. The old mill has been superseded by one of new and rare device, built by Richard; but the old cottage where his wife's parents lived has slowly mouldered back to the dust.

For the old people have been dead for many years. Often in the summer days as I go to or come from the vestry, I sit down for a moment on the turf that covers my old friend, and think that every day is mouldering away this body of mine till it shall fall a heap of dust into its appointed place. But what is that to me? It is to me the drawing nigh of the fresh morning of life, when I shall be young and strong again, glad in the presence of the wise and beloved dead, and unspeakably glad in the presence of my God, which I have now, but hope to possess far more hereafter.

I will not take a solemn leave of my friends just yet. For I hope to hold a little more communion with them ere I go hence. I know that my mental faculty is growing weaker, but some power yet remains; and I say to myself, "Perhaps this is the final trial of your faith—to trust in God to take care of your intellect for you, and to believe, in weakness, the truths He revealed to you in strength. Remember that Truth depends not upon your seeing it, and believe as you saw when your sight was at its best. For then you saw that the Truth was beyond all you could see." Thus I try to prepare for dark days that may come, but which cannot come without God in them.

And meantime I hope to be able to communicate some more of the good things experience and thought have taught me, and it may be some more of the events that have befallen my friends and myself in our pilgrimage. So, kind readers, God be with you. That is the older and better form of *Good-bye*.

THE ENGLISH HYMNS OF THE ELIZABETHAN ERA.

CONCLUDING ARTICLE.

Few of the hymns of the Elizabethan era live in our knowledge, and fewer still in our affections. On the whole they are *Divine poems* rather than *hymns*, and as such are to be judged rather by the intellect than by the heart. There is something hard and unloving about them, and the voices in which they speak have a strange unfamiliar sound. The Ambrosian Midnight Hymn, "Hark! 'tis the midnight cry," stirs the Christian heart after a lapse of fourteen centuries, and the hymns of the two Bernards of the twelfth century* are living tones in the Church of the nineteenth century, with power to thrill living hearts. The Latin hymn-writers being dead, yet speak. But Spenser's fine "Hymn to the Saviour," Gascoigne's morning and evening hymns, and the various sacred verses by Ben Jonson, Shirley, Wotton, Withers, Herrick, and others, are more like fossilised specimens of a religious life wherewith we have little kinship, than tongues singing of our own faith in our own language. The hymns which make our church-roofs ring, which soothe the sick-beds of princes and peasants, which come like true "singing angels," bringing peace when flesh and heart fail, and falter forth from dying lips wherever our tongue is spoken, were not indited by the mighty masters of verse, but by humbler men, whose songs gushed warm from hearts which the love of Jesus had touched. To such in all ages the Church has decreed the crown of sacred song. Aloof as the Elizabethan hymns are from the religious life of our own day, it is hard to conceive of them as having been even in their own the property ofany but an educated few. Their doctrine was laboriously orthodox, but their manner was as fantastic as that of the hymns of the later monkish hymn-writers. The specimens which are hereafter offered are chosen for their fine old English, their condensed thought, and the remarkable quaintness of their fancy, but the best of them could never have come home to the hearts of the people.

The first place belongs as of right to the gifted author of the "Faery Queen." Privileged beyond most men of genius of his day to reap cotemporary fame, his death of a broken heart in poverty and obscurity, followed by the splendid funeral in Westminster Abbey, when all the cotemporary poets threw tributary verses into his grave, give a mournful interest to the "*Divine Poems*" of Edmund Spenser. His hymn on the ministry of angels, beginning, "And is there care in heaven and is there love?" is now to be found in so many collections, that a less-known specimen, from his "Hymn to the Saviour," is selected. The first two and the last out of eighteen stanzas are given :—

HYMN TO THE SAVIOUR.

"O blessed Well of Love! O Flower of Grace!
O glorious Morning Star! O Lamp of Light!
Most lively image of thy Father's face,
Eternal King of Glorie, Lord of Might,
Meek Lamb of God before all worlds behight,
How can Thee we requite for all this good?
Or what can prize that Thy most precious blood?

"Yet nought Thou ask'st in lieu of all this love
But love of us for guerdon of Thy pain;
Ay me! what can us less than that behove?
Had He required life from us again,
Had it been wrong to ask his own with gain?
He gave us life: He it restored lost;
Then life were least, that us so little cost."

This hymn continues by an elaborate eulogy of the freedom purchased for us by Christ's blood, for which we are to testify our gratitude, first by loving Him, and next those who are with "the self-same price redeemed." Spenser then addresses the earth, "wallowing like to swine" in base pleasures, all unmindful of the Cross of Christ, and traces his history from Bethlehem to Calvary, urging "the flinty heart," by the sight of the agonies of the Redeemer, to repentance and faith. He expatiates on "the expulsive power" of the new-born love of Christ, and represents how the soul, being inflamed by it, dies to all earthly things, counting all but loss that it may win Christ and be found in Him. The hymn concludes thus :—

"Then shall thy ravished soul inspired be
With heavenly thoughts, far above human skill,
And thy bright radiant eyes shall plainly see
Th' idea of His pure glorie present still
Before thy face, that all thy soul shall fill
With sweet enragement of celestial love,
Kindled through sight of those fair things above."

In spite of the formality of this hymn, there is a tenderness in its statements of truth which may commend it to the student of our early hymns, and the fame of Spenser renders it worthy of perusal. It is a specimen of the simple and orthodox style of hymn-writing before the Emblematists had exercised the public ingenuity and perverted the public taste.

Of that galaxy of great men which lent lustre to Elizabeth's reign, the most brilliant luminary was Sir Walter Raleigh, "soldier, courtier, sailor, scholar, orator, poet, philosopher, hero." From the commencement of his military career at the age of seventeen, to the day when he laid his head calmly upon the block, his life is one bewitching story of romance and vicissitude, linking the eclectic cultivation of the modern with the poetic chivalry of the middle ages, by a spirit of romantic adventure peculiar to itself. He was rather a man of a roving and daring spirit than of poetic contemplation, but his imagination was very brilliant, and in that long and dreary leisure of imprisonment, in which the fire of his erratic hopes and ambitions was extinguished, he learned to express

* "Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts," St. Bernard.—"Brief life is here our portion," Bernard de Morlaix.

himself with combined felicity of language and vigour of thought. Whatever may now be thought of his sonnets and other poems, they were greatly admired in his own day, and his poetic genius received the homage of no less a poet than Spenser. Raleigh, dazzling, brilliant, rich, prosperous, the idol of a Court, the favourite of a queen, with nothing left him to conquer but that restless ambition which finally "overleapt itself," claims less of our interest than Raleigh disgraced, imprisoned, deserted, learning in the quiet eventide of his too tempestuous life that "whoso drinketh of this water shall thirst again." The hymn which follows (supposed to have been written by him in 1603, in the interval between his condemnation and his respite), a letter to his wife, and a few lines written by him in his Bible twelve years afterwards, on the evening before his execution, encourage the hope that this brilliant but unfortunate adventurer had learned to drink of that water of which "whoso drinketh shall never thirst."

MY PILGRIMAGE.

"Give me my scallop-shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to walk upon,
My scrip of joy (immortal diet),
My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gage—
And thus I take my pilgrimage.
No cause deferred, no vain spent journey,
For there Christ is the King's attorney;
Who pleads for all without degrees,
And He hath angels but no fees;
And when the grand twelve million jury
Of our sins with direful fury
'Gainst our souls black verdicts give,
Christ pleads His death and then we live.
Be Thou my speaker, taintless Pleader,
Unblotted Lawyer, true Proceeder:
Thou giv'st salvation even for alms,
Not with a bribed lawyer's palms,
And this is my eternal plea
To Him who made heaven, earth, and sea.

Blood must be my body's balmer,
While my soul like faithful palmer
Travelleth towards the land of heaven:
Other balm will not be given.

Over the silver mountains,
Where spring the nectar fountains,
There will I kiss
The bowl of bliss,
And drink my everlasting fill
Upon every milken hill:
My soul will be a-dry before,
But after that will thirst no more."

WALTER RALEIGH.

Although there lurks in this quaint hymn something of the bitterness of a man who felt himself unjustly condemned by an earthly tribunal, there is the same clear appreciation of the way of salvation by the death of "the just for the unjust," which distinguished nearly all the Elizabethan hymns. Fifteen years afterwards when the brilliant courtier had again been tempted and betrayed by ambition, and found himself once more within those prison walls which for his soul's sake it had been better he had never left, he composed the following lines, and wrote them in his Bible on the last night of his life in the little room over the gatehouse. They were much prized in that day, and though there is a taint of the gloom of his earlier days about them, we may believe that it was in humble hope of a resurrection unto life, through the death and atonement of "the taintless Pleader," that Raleigh laid his head upon the block a few hours afterwards with the words, "This is a sharp medicine, but a sound cure for all diseases."

"When such is time, that takes on trust
Our youth, our joy, and all we have,
And pays us but with earth and dust:
Who in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days:—
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust."

Sir Henry Wotton deserves a brief notice, as two of his hymns are found in many of our collections. He would have been remembered for his humorous definition of an ambassador—"An honest gentleman sent to *lie* abroad for the good of his country,"—and for his advice to Milton, whose *Comus* received from him an enthusiasm of praise which does him great credit, rather than for his works and character, had not Isaak Walton embalmed him in one of his quaint tender biographies. A keen vision for political omens seems to have made and kept his fortune. While Essex was in favour with Elizabeth, Wotton was attached to his service, but his sagacity in descrying the signs of the favourite's coming downfall saved him from sharing it. Again he scented out and divulged to James I. a conspiracy formed against him while king of Scotland, for which James, on ascending the English throne, appointed him ambassador to Venice. After a career of success as a courtier he took orders in the Church of England to qualify himself for the provostship of Eton, and some of his hymns give the impression that he found the true riches, although they are marked by the prevailing dryness and formality of the period.

A MEDITATION.

"Oh thou great Power! in whom we move,
By whom we live, to whom we die,
Behold me through thy beams of love
Whilst on this couch of tears I lie,
And cleanse my sordid soul within
By thy Christ's blood, the bath of sin.

No hallowed oils, no gums I need,
No new-born drams of purging fire,
One rosy drop from David's seed
Was worlds of zeal to quench thine ire.
O, precious ransom! which, once paid,
That *consummatum est* was said,

And said by Him that said no more,
But sealed it with his sacred breath.
Thou then that hast dispurged our score
And dying wert the death of death,
Be now, while on thy name we call,
Our Life, our Strength, our Joy, our All."

This hymn, which was a great favourite of Charles I., and another, beginning, "Farewell, ye gilded follies, pleasing troubles," are the best known of Wotton's hymns, but by far his finest composition is one beginning,

"How happy is he born and taught
Who serveth not another's will."

Wotton left behind him the reputation of being "an easy, amiable man, an angler, and an undervaluer

of money." We would desire something more for the epitaph of a hymn-writer, but on the whole the popular sacred poets of that day were not men of eminent piety.

The following hymn is by Bishop H. King, well known in his day as one of the most refined of religious poets. In his earlier years he was chaplain to James I., and possibly his sombre views of life were learned amidst the vanities of a Court. His hymn *Sic Vita*, "Like to the falling of a star," is to be found in many modern collections, but his *Dirge*, which far exceeds it in merit, is seldom met with.

A Dirge.

"What is the existence of man's life
But open war or slumbered strife:
Where sickness to his sense presents
The combat of the elements;
And never feels a perfect peace
Till Death's cold hand signs his release?

It is a *Storm*, where the hot blood
Outvies in rage the boiling flood;
And each loose passion of the mind
Is like a furious gust of wind,
Which beats his bark with many a wave
Till he cast anchor in the grave.

It is a *Dream*, whose seeming truth
Is moralised in age and youth:
When all the comforts he can share,
As wandering as his fancies are;
Till in a mist of dark decay
The dreamer vanish quite away.

It is a *Dial*, which points out
The sunset as it moves about,
And shadows out in lines of night
The subtle stages of Time's flight,
Till all-obscuring earth hath laid
His body in perpetual shade.

It is a weary *Interlude*,
Which doth short joys, long woes include:
The world the Stage, the Prologue tears,
The acts vain hopes and varied fears.
The scene shuts up with loss of breath,
And leaves no Epilogue but Death."

There is scarcely one of the mediæval hymns whose strains are so profoundly melancholy as these. Even the darkest of all, the terrible "Death Hymn" of the Cardinal Damiani, concludes with a trustful appeal to "the Shepherd of the sheep." What can be more doleful than the view of life taken by this Christian Bishop?—a "Storm," a "Dream," a "Dial," a "weary Interlude." We need to recall his "Midnight Meditation" (given in our last number), in order to satisfy ourselves that he had any faith at all in Him who hath abolished death. The Elizabethan hymnology is rich in hymns of this dismal character; dismal alike regarding life and death. Few, indeed, breathe the spirit expressed in the words of Paul, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Probably the explanation of this is to be found in the fact that many of the hymn-writers were much addicted to various "pleasing follies," and that death, which "burst the bubble of life," was to them at the best but an unwelcome necessity.

It is refreshing to turn from hymns which breathe so little of the spirit of the New Testament, to one on Hope by one of the most voluminous writers of sacred poetry of the Elizabethan age, Faithful Tate, father of Nahum Tate of the authorised metrical version of the Psalms. Far from the seductions of a Court and the ambitions of a camp, this good man quietly laboured in a country parish in Suffolk, employing his leisure in composing poems on religious subjects; and it is hardly too much to say that the one from which an extract is afterwards given is worth all the diffuse and smooth versification of his son. It is taken from a very rare and curious book called "Ter Triæ," of such repute once that a translation into German appeared in 1698, a singular honour for an English work in those days. Faithful Tate is now only known through the German edition of his book.

Hope.

"Author and Rock of all my hope!
Thou hast death's prison doors broke ope,
So fast'ning to faith's cable-rope
Hope's anchor strong,
What though I sail through foaming seas?
Billows are pillows, beds of ease:
Death's blast rocks me asleep in these;
Waiting ere long,

At Thy shrill sudden voice, to rise
And rub death's dust out of mine eyes
When death shall have disgorg'd its prize
Safe on the shore.
Then hold my rudder in Thine hand
Who put to sea at Thy command,
Till I may make some new-found land,
O help me o'er!

Oh, Conscience! Conscience! when I look
Into thy register, thy book,
What corner of my heart, what nook
Stands clear of sin?
And though my skin feels soft and sleek
Scarce can I touch my chin and cheek,
But I can feel death's jawbone prick
Even through my skin.

O Death! where is thy victory?
That I might live my Lord did die;
He tied thee not, but made thee fly,
Having drawn thy sting.
Thou hadst of teeth a double row,
Till Christ by His Cross dealt thee a blow
When fast'ning on Him. But thou art now
A toothless thing.*

Well mayst thou bark, but canst not bite,
Bending thy brow, showing thy spite:
Death, do thy worst: Hope sets me quite
Beyond thy spleen.
What though my death seems written in
The very parchment of my skin
With the black ink of my foul sin:
Yet have I seen

* The following cotemporary lines, by Jeremy Taylor, are a fitting pendant to the above:—

"Death, the old Serpent's son,
Thou hadst a sting once like thy sire
That carried hell and ever-burning fire;
But those black days are done—
Thy foolish spite buried thy sting
In the profound and wide
Wound of our Saviour's side:
And now thou art become a tame and harmless thing,
A thing we dare not fear
Since we hear
That our triumphant God, to punish thee
For the affront thou didst Him on the tree,
Hath snatched the keys of hell out of thy hand,
And made thee stand
A porter at the gate of Life, thy mortal enemy.
O Thou who art that gate, command that he
May, when we die
And hither fly,
Let us into the courts of heaven by Thee."

On both hands of a Friend once slain,
But since returned to life again,
A better story printed plain:—
My sight's but dim;
Yet in the print of the nails I see
Life in a Saviour's hands for me,
While as He hung upon the tree,
Hope hangs on Him.

And still shall hang on Him, until
My bones have learned to climb that hill
Where now He sits, and whence He will
Yet come down hither,
That He may gather into one
Each dust of his and scattered bone:
Then shall He, as a living stone,
Translate me thither.

Therefore my dying tongue shall sing:
Yea even my flesh, that fading thing,
Shall rest in Hope for that day-spring
All the night of death.
And when I lay my weary head
And bones in the grave, as in a bed,
Let not the mourner say, he's dead,
But slumbereth."

FAITHFUL TATE.

The quaint beauties of this hymn do not require to be pointed out: its singularly terse and felicitous expression must commend itself to every critic, and its joyful assurance of faith to every Christian. The lines in italics are especially touching and forcible, and demonstrate the possibility of clothing the most vigorous and definite "orthodoxy" in poetic language. The simplicity of this hymn, with its calm tone of certain victory, must have come as if from the glowing atmosphere of some sunny height upon the troubled spirits who were walking in the deep gloom of the troublous period of the civil war. It falls still as a pleasant sound upon ears which are weary of the din of strife.

Passing over Ben Jonson, Drayton, Giles and Phineas Fletcher, Vaux, Surrey, Sidney, Mardley, Davies, Donne, Drummond, Fairfax, Browne, and Wither—that goodly group of men of letters by whom the hymnology of this era was enriched—a hymn by the dramatist George Gascoigne, merits quotation as a favourable specimen of the style of the early portion of the Elizabethan era. In Gascoigne's hymns the tendency to invest natural objects with spiritual meanings is quite obvious; but that exaggerated love of emblems and obscure analogies which distinguishes many of the hymn-writers of this period, and which seems to have been introduced by Donne, was a later growth. Gascoigne was one of those adventurers, half-literary, half-military, who abounded in the reign of Elizabeth. After completing his education at Cambridge he was disinherited by his father for his reckless extravagance, upon which he ran away to Holland, and obtained a commission from the Prince of Orange, in whose service he went through various vicissitudes, at one time being taken prisoner by the Spaniards, and at another receiving from his Dutch master a reward of three hundred guilders for his dashing bravery at the siege of Middleburg. He reappeared in England in the character of a literary man about Court, and wrote a masque called "The Princely Pleasures of Kenilworth," for Queen Elizabeth, whom he accompanied on one of her progresses, and also various translations from the Greek dramatic poets. We are left in his case, as in not a few others, to infer his piety from his hymns. Few of his poems are sacred, but of these, two graceful pieces, "Good Morrow" and "Good Night," only resigned their place in popular favour on the appearance of Bishop Ken's Morning and Evening Hymns.

GOOD MORROW.

"You that have spent the silent night
In sleep and quiet rest,
And joy to see the cheerful light
That riseth in the east;
Now cheer your soul, now cheer your heart,
Come help me now to sing,
Each willing wight come bear a part,
To praise the Heavenly King.

For as the deadly night did last
But for a little space,
And heavenly day now night is past
Doth show his pleasant face;
So must we hope to see God's face,
At last in Heaven on high,
When we have changed this mortal place
For immortality.

And of such hopes and heavenly joys
As then we hope to hold,
All earthly rights and worldly toys,
Are tokens to behold.
The day is like the day of doom,
The sun, the Son of man;
The skies, the heavens; the earth, the tomb,
Wherein we rest till then.

The rainbow bending in the sky,
Bedecked with sundry hues,
Is like the seat of God on high,
And seems to tell thee news:
That as thereby He promised
To drown the world no more,
So by the blood which Christ hath shed
He will our health restore.

The misty clouds that fall sometime,
And overcast the skies,
Are like to troubles of our time,
Which do but dim our eyes;
The little birds which sing so sweet,
Are like the angels' voice,
Which render God his praises meet,
And teach us to rejoice.

The carrion crow, that loathesome beast,
Which cries against the rain,
Both for her here and for the rest,
The Devil resembleth plain:
And as with guns we kill the crow,
For spoiling our relief,
The Devil so must we o'erthrow,
With gunshot of belief.

Unto God's joys for to attain
God send us all his grace,
And grant us after worldly pain
In heaven to have a place,
When we may still enjoy that light,
Which never shall decay;
Lord, for Thy mercy lend us might,
To see that joyous day."

GASCOIGNE.

Although it is difficult to see why the *day* resembles the "day of doom," the *earth* "the tomb," &c., yet the spirit which in "all earthly sights and worldly toys" saw tokens of the eternal and invisible is much to be reverenced. The hymn is interesting from its simple and devotional tone, and it is to be observed

also that its construction contrasts remarkably with the complicated and fantastic metres which were afterwards fashionable.

The three popular hymn-writers of the latter part of the Elizabethan era—Herrick, author of "Noble Numbers," Crashaw, of "Steps to the Temple" and "Divine Poems," and Henry Vaughan, of "Silex Scintillans," were men of very diverse characters and aims. Of the Rev. R. Herrick, rector of Dean Prior, the scandalous author of the "Hesperides," the boon companion and dependant of the rich and dissolute royalists who rioted at the inn of the "Triple Tun" during the Protectorate, the less that is said the better. It is difficult to allow his claim to be a sacred poet at all. It is founded upon one hymn, "The Litany to the Holy Spirit," vigorous alike in poetry and thought, a hymn which is to be found in countless collections in England and America, and is probably the only Elizabethan hymn, with the exception of one by Mardley, ever used in public worship. It will at once be recognised by a single stanza—

> "In the hour of my distress,
> When temptations me oppress,
> And when I my sins confess,
> Sweet Spirit comfort me."

Not another of his sacred pieces has survived. Crashaw merits the name of a sacred poet, but his hymns for the most part have fallen into an undeserved oblivion. This is possibly owing to a suspicion of the orthodoxy of a man who deserted Protestantism for a more sensuous faith, but happily all men who speak the language of love to our Lord Jesus Christ use in the main the same tongue. Crashaw was at one time an ardent and powerful preacher in the Church of England, but on being expelled from his fellowship during the ascendancy of the Puritans, he joined the Church of Rome, and died in Italy, a canon of Loretto. Faulty as some of his hymns are, from an excess of passionate emotion unhappily expressed, he excelled all the hymn-writers of his day in imagination, ardent language, enthusiasm, and witchery of delicate metaphor, and he always succeeds in carrying away the reader by the charm of his lyrical movement. His "Meditation on the Day of Judgment," in imitation of the *Dies Iræ*, has a gloomy grandeur, which brings it near the original, while gems of imagery and thought sparkle through it here and there. The few lines which follow are taken almost at random from the hymn.

> "O those eyes! whose angry light
> Must be the day of that dread night."

Again, of the trump, which—

> "Shall urge the *murm'ring graves* to bring
> Pale mankind forth to meet his King."

Of the terror upon all things—

> "When stars themselves shall stagger, and
> The most firm foot no more can stand."

Of the final doom—

> "Oh! when thy last frown shall proclaim,
> The flocks of goats to folds of flame."

A profound tenderness mingles with the sublimity; the plea to the Judge of men contains some beautiful lines, beginning with the stanza—

> "Thy sheep was strayed, and Thou wouldst be
> E'en lost thyself in seeking me;
> If sin can sigh, love can forgive,
> O say the word, my soul shall live."

Among the many beauties of Crashaw it is difficult to make any selection. The hymn given below is inferior to some others in poetic expression, and is less a specimen of his ordinary style than of that strange loving magnification of redemption in which he occasionally indulged.

CHARITAS NIMIA; OR, THE DEAR BARGAIN.

"Lord, what is man? Why should he cost Thee
So dear? What had his ruin lost Thee?
Lord, what is man that Thou hadst over bought
So much a thing of nought?

Let him go weep
O'er his own wounds;
Seraphims will not sleep,
Nor spheres let fall their faithful rounds;
Still would the youthful spirits sing,
And still Thy spacious palace ring,
Still would those beauteous ministers of light
Burn all as bright,
And bow their flaming heads before Thee;
Still thrones and dominations would adore Thee;
Still would those ever-wakeful sons of fire
Keep warm Thy praise
Both nights and days,
And teach Thy loved name to their noble lyre.
Why should a piece of peevish clay plead shares
In the eternity of Thy old cares?
Why shouldst Thou bend Thine awful breast to see
What mine own madnesses have done with me?

Will the world's illustrious eyes
Weep for every worm that dies?
Will the gallant sun
E'er the less glorious run?
Will he hang down his golden head,
Or sooner seek his western bed,
Because some foolish fly
Grows wanton and will die!

If I am lost in misery,
What was it to Thy heaven and Thee?
What was it to Thy precious blood
If my foul heart call'd for a flood?

What if my faithless soul and I
Would needs fall in
With guilt and sin,
What did the Lamb that He should die?
What did the Lamb that He should need
When the wolf sins Himself to bleed?

If my base lust
Bargained with death and well-beseeming dust,
Why should the white
Lamb's bosom write
The purple name
Of my sin's shame?
Why should His unstained breast make good
My blushes with His own heart blood?

Oh, my Saviour! make me see
How dearly thou hast paid for me;
That lost again my life may prove
As then in death, so now in love."

RICHARD CRASHAW.

The last of this triad is Henry Vaughan, the quiet Welsh doctor, whose professional avocations were so

little onerous that he found leisure to "communicate his poor *talent* to the *Church*, under the protection and conduct of her *glorious Head*," by giving forth a faithful record of his heart in a volume of sacred poems called "Silex Scintillans" (Sparks from a Flintstone). "Holy George Herbert," he says, was his model; and many of his faults are to be traced to this source. In the preface to his volume, after eulogising Herbert, he makes the following true remark: "He that desires to excel in this kind of *Hagiography*, or holy writing, must strive by all means for *perfection* and true *holiness* that a *door may be opened for him in heaven*, and then he will be able to write, with *Hierotheus* and holy George Herbert, *a true hymn*." Possibly the absence of excellence in the Elizabethan hymns may partly be accounted for by the absence of this initial qualification in many of the hymn-writers. Vaughan's hymns were little esteemed by the godless generation for which he wrote, and their beauties are now appreciated only by a select few. His faults as a hymn-writer are mainly those of the style of the age in which he lived and of the master he imitated. His hymns are full of quaint and fantastic terms, and ingenious strainings after obscure metaphor and allusion; their originality of thought is often condensed into obscurity, and their felicity of expression defaced by conceits. The lines are overcrowded with ideas, and often read inharmoniously; and he continually makes the sense of one line run into the line following, exaggerating what is doubtless a beauty in versification. But his spirit overflowed with religious ardour; his hymns are the genuine expression of the heart of a man who walked humbly with his God; and the thought, though clothed in quaint and antiquated garb, is vigorous and poetic enough to redeem his volume from oblivion. The only hymn of Vaughan's which compilers have thought worthy of selection is among the least meritorious of the whole number—"Rules and Lessons." "When first thine eyes unveil, give thy soul leave."*

* As the space is too limited to admit of quotation, the first lines of some of Vaughan's best hymns are appended.

THE DAWNING.

"Oh! what time wilt Thou come? When shall the cry
'The Bridegroom's coming!' fill the sky?
Shall it in the evening run
When our words and works are done?
Or will Thy all surprising light
Break at midnight,
When either sleep or some dark pleasure
Possesseth mad man without measure?
Or shall these early fragrant hours
Unlock Thy bowers,
And with their blush of light descry
Thy locks crowned with eternity?" &c., &c.

The Passion—"Oh my chief good." *The Match*—"Accept, dread Lord, the poor oblation." *Sundays*—"Bright shadows of true rest" *Praise*—"King of comforts, King of life." *Dressing*—"Oh, Thou that lov st a pure and whitened soul." *Love and Discipline*—"Since in a land not barren still. *Departed Friends*—"They are all gone into a world of light."

The hymns quoted in this and the preceding paper sufficiently illustrate the style of the Elizabethan hymnology. Their authors generally "were such as laboured after conceits or novel turns of thought, usually false, and resting upon some equivocation of language or exceedingly remote analogy." In these words Dr. Johnson has admirably described the corrupt taste which pervaded the poetry and infected the prose and even the pulpit literature of the period. In analysing many of the hymns we find that the most brilliant illustrations are only feats of verbal sleight-of-hand: the resemblance between the objects vanishes as soon as the thoughts are translated into plain terms. The literary taste of Elizabeth's reign, and the diffused pedantry of the time of James I., were more favourable to the development of trick and whim in hymn-writers than to the growth of a truly devotional hymnology. The succeeding period, which closed the Elizabethan era in letters, was one in which the flowers of poetry drooped ere fully blown. Its sterner teachings produced a few hymns of more vigorous thought and expression, of which the one on "Hope," by Faithful Tate, is a specimen; but on the whole the temper of the nation was too serious to effloresce in poetry, although it moulded into an awful greatness the poetic genius and vision of one man. The atmosphere was too sternly ascetic, too fiercely controversial, too keenly exclusive, for such airy creatures as "singing angels" to breathe and fly in. The riotous literary luxuriance of Elizabeth's reign, the pedantic affectation of the reign of James, and the stormy and gloomy era which succeeded, were all unfavourable to the production of "true hymns." There is indeed little enough in the Elizabethan hymnology to warrant its restoration. It is mainly interesting as indicative of the prevailing form of religious thought during eighty years; thought occasionally expressed in vigorous language, but lacking poetic beauty and the fervour of an enthusiastic devotion. It might be that though the old sensuous and emotional creed had lost its hold on men; the new faith, in all its glorious vitality of love and hope, was not, as in Germany, fully received: "the abundance of the heart was lacking," and so the mouth spake not. It was not till a later day that the Church in England anointed herself with the oil of gladness, and put on her robes of festival, on awaking into the realisation of the "glorious hope" which was hers through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

ISABELLA L. BIRD.

ERRATUM.—In preceding article on Elizabethan Hymns in SUNDAY MAGAZINE, page 659, for "Bernard of Clugny," read "Bernard of Clairvaux."

OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS; OR, METHODS TO DO GOOD.

BY THE EDITOR.

XI.—GOOD WORKS.

Those bodies of ours which the Psalmist pronounces, and science the more they are studied the more clearly proves, to be fearfully and wonderfully made, God has furnished with many different organs. Among them all, there is none useless, or to be dispensed with. Each has its own peculiar and also important office—on the due performance of which our health depends in all cases, and in some our life. Let any of them cease to discharge, or but imperfectly discharge, its functions, and in the course of time, not it only, but the whole body suffers. For, though functional are less alarming than organic affections, the irregular action of any organ is apt to run into disease; and disease, after a longer or shorter period of suffering, to terminate in general disorder; and that at length in death. Such is the perfect harmony between the different parts of our frame that they all sympathise with, and, for pleasure, health, and even life itself, are mutually dependent on each other. A somewhat similar dependence characterises all the true members of Christ's body—his church, by whatever name they go, to whatever class or order they belong. An important fact that!—nor could anything better prove the high importance which St. Paul attaches to it, than the striking manner in which he thus insists on, and expands it: "By one Spirit," he says, "are we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. . . . If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it, therefore, not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it, therefore, not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? . . . If they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you . . . Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

This beautifully drawn analogy between the members of Christ's body and those of our material frame teaches many lessons; and among these, not the least important is this, that we become members of his body not for ornament merely, nor even for our salvation and enjoyment only, but also for work. Activity is the universal characteristic of all life, human and Divine. God himself offers no exception to this rule: "My Father worketh hitherto," says Jesus, "and I work:" nor on the other hand, does it find an exception even in those animals or plants that stand lowest in the scale of Creation. But take an example from our own bodies. In what respect are they encumbered with useless or idle members? The hands are formed to work, the feet to walk, the eyes to look, the ears to listen, the tongue to taste, the teeth to grind and the digestive organs to extract nourishment from our food, the lungs to breathe, the brain to feel and think, and the heart—the first to live and last to die, and greatest worker of all—to beat by night and day without a pause; supplying the waste of every organ, and sending its tide of blood to the extremities of the body. And, as in camp followers, or armour, or baggage, what does not promote impairs the efficiency of an army; as in a household those who do not help hinder work, if the body through accident or monstrous birth has a limb that is of no service, it is considered an incumbrance rather than an advantage. Regarded as a deformity, not an ornament, it is removed; when the operation can be safely performed, it is condemned to the surgeon's knife. So is it with Christ's body—that Church of the living God which He has purchased with his blood. By whatever hands they were baptised, to whatever Communion they professedly belong, let none fancy that they belong to Christ, unless they are found working in his service. For them to talk of being saved by faith is to dishonour the Gospel, and to deceive themselves. Faith without works, as James plainly tells us, is dead; and like all dead things, is an offence.

Yet, if there is need to warn some against trusting to their own works for salvation, or fixing their hopes on any but the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world, there is probably as much need to warn others against a more pleasant but equally fatal error—this, namely, that they can be true without being working Christians. There is a sloth and self-indulgence which, divorcing what God hath joined together—faith and works, peace and penitence, the spirit and the enjoyment of heaven—trusts to be saved without an effort; to receive the reward without undergoing the labour, the crown without bearing the cross. If words have any meaning, how plainly opposed to this delusion these weighty exhortations?—labour for the bread that never perisheth; give all diligence to make your calling and election sure; work out your salvation with fear and trembling; pray without ceasing; watch unto prayer; be instant in season and out of season; work while it is called to-day, for the night cometh when no man can work; the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force; if any man will be my disciple let him take up his cross, deny himself daily, and follow me; if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee, for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell; and if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee, for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish

and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. Liars, thieves, drunkards, adulterers, murderers, the vilest of impenitent sinners, are not more certain to be lost than those decent persons who do nothing for Christ, flattering themselves that a worthless and a workless faith shall save them. Their peace is false; and one could fancy that the prophet had them, and the day that shall judge us all not by our professions but performances, in his eye, when he says:—"Because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar: say unto them which daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall. . . . Thus saith the Lord God: I will even rend it with a stormy wind in my fury; and there shall be an overflowing shower in mine anger, and great hailstones in my fury to consume it. . . . Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall, and upon them that have daubed it with untempered mortar, and will say unto you, The wall is no more, neither they that daubed it." Alas! deeming it an easy thing to gain heaven, they shall be buried in the ruin of hopes it was folly ever to entertain, and shall then be too late to amend. The night has come when no man can work. From a fate so sad, yet so certain, if, living for enjoyment rather than employment, we neglect the arduous duties of this great salvation, may the good Lord deliver us!

It is impossible to set too high a value on the blood of Christ. It cleanseth from all sin, and it only cleanseth from any. Washed in it the greatest sinner shall be saved; without it, the least of sinners must be lost. To a poor guilty man, suffering the stings of conscience and standing in terror of death and the judgment, it is better than gold, yea, than much fine gold; the pearl of great price, which he would sell all, and, were he possessed of a thousand worlds, would part with them all to buy. It is equally impossible, on the other hand, to undervalue the worth of our own works. Till we are reconciled to God, and, born again through his Spirit, have become new creatures in Jesus Christ, we are his enemies. Our works do not spring from love to Him, and therefore cannot have any value in his eyes. And how imperfect are even the best works of the best saints! There is foulness enough in the purest heart, and, in respect of their motives, manner, and object, sin enough in our best actions,—those whereby we do most good and earn most commendation, to condemn us. To speak of us not in our worst but best state, not of the sins we commit, but of the best services we render, our wine has its water and our silver has its dross. And so, abandoning every hope of acceptance with a holy God through our own merits, let us cling to the cross of Christ, as a drowning man to the plank that, embraced in his arms, floats him to the shore; the language of our faith an echo of his who breathed out his life with these words on his lips, None but Christ, none but Christ!

Still, I question whether good works are held in sufficient value by many whom notwithstanding we must regard as sincere Christians—a state of mind theirs that cannot be approved, and yet can without much difficulty be accounted for. Whoever reflects on the spherical form of the earth will perceive that a traveller going east may continue his journey in that direction till, passing round half the globe, he is on the west of us. He has, in fact, by advancing very far on one and the same line, exactly reversed his position. And just as a man, if he goes very far east, gets into the west, so there is always a danger lest, in our anxiety to avoid one error, we go so far in the opposite direction as to fall into another. Almost all religious, to say nothing of other controversies, illustrate this fact. The longer they rage, the fiercer grow the passions which they kindle, and the more extreme the positions which the combatants, carried away by their feelings, are apt to assume.

For example, the Reformation in Scotland, which, in contradistinction to that of England, was opposed by the whole power of the crown and owed little to the nobles, was, under God and the few distinguished leaders He raised for the occasion, a popular movement. The people had a hard fight of it, and the people fought it well. They made, to use one of their own favourite expressions, "root and branch" work of the demolition of Popery. Still, this Reformation presented to some degree an example of the tendency that men show to pass from one extreme to another, especially when borne along on the crest of a popular wave. This cannot fairly be denied, I think; and wily be denied by none but those who admire our reformers well, but not wisely; who seem to claim for them an infallibility which they denied to the Pope, nor ever thought of claiming for themselves. However justifiable and commendable such movements may be, they commonly present, with its resistless power, more or less of the violence of a river which, swollen high with rains, not only clears its channel of the impediments that obstruct its progress, but also in various places undermines its own banks, and hurls away in its impetuous, red, roaring flood the soil that fertilises, and the trees that adorn them.

I will yield to no man in a high and just admiration of the principles, the piety, the energy, the sagacity, and the heroic courage of the Scottish Reformers. Events have justified almost everything for which they were once condemned. Yet I cannot but think that in their devout abhorrence of a sensuous and formal religion, they somewhat overlooked the aid a spiritual worship may receive from forms, if these are in harmony with a devout mind and the apostolic rule, "Let all things be done decently and in order." We sympathise with the zeal with which they stript the Church of meretricious ornaments; but they might have substituted for the gorgeous vestments and heathenish trappings of Popery what would have seemed in some respects a less scanty and mean attire. There is no sin in beauty, nor holiness in ugliness. God adorns all his works, painting even the flowers of the field, and bathing their leaves in delicious fragrance. And why then need it have been thought almost a sin to introduce music into his service that gratified the ear, or meet for his worship but within the cold bare walls of a mean and naked edifice? Many things, indeed, have been unjustly laid to the charge of our fathers. Knox and his coadjutors were not the rude, uncultivated men

their enemies represented them, and some, giving too ready credence to Popish lies, believed them to have been. It is not to cast blame on them, but to illustrate our proneness to pass to extremes, that I have touched a small fault—one it is easy to extenuate. For what surgeon so skilful as to remove a monstrous excrescence without his knife taking some flesh along with it? or what vast tree, the growth of centuries, was ever uprooted but it injured the green sward, and tore up some good soil in the meshes of its gigantic roots?

Our tendency to run into extremes finds no less striking and more sad illustrations in the doctrinal positions which good men have allowed themselves to be driven into by the violence of controversy and the natural recoil from error. In their zeal to put down one error they have often fallen into another—to use Archbishop Whately's favourite adage, going too far east, they have got into the west. Of this we have a remarkable example in the positions in which Wesley and Toplady were found at the end of their controversy. Eminently good men, whose names are still fragrant and whose praise is in all the churches, at the commencement of their controversy the first appeared as the champion of a moderate Arminianism, the second of a moderate Calvinism. But ere that unhappy war had spent its vehemence, Wesley in his recoil from Toplady's Calvinism, and the other in his recoil from Wesley's Arminianism, had each taken up positions, and ventured on statements, which in their calmer moments neither of them would have approved or defended.

If traced to its source, the secondary place given to good works by many, and even by some good and sincere Christians in their creed, if not in their conduct, will also be found, I think, to arise from our proneness to pass from one extreme to another. The Church of Rome taught her people to recommend themselves to the favour of God by good works, as she calls them—fastings and watchings, gifts of charity to the poor and of piety to the church, lives of voluntary poverty, and various acts of painful penance. Her Sustentation Fund is the doctrine of purgatory: and, notwithstanding the ostentatious parade she makes of cross and crucifix, her principle, to all practical intents and purposes, is salvation by works. This appears in every country where, removed from the restraining influences of Protestantism, her character, like a plant growing in its native soil, is fully developed. There only, Popery is seen aright; as is the lion in the desert he shakes with his cruel roar, or the tiger in the Indian jungles through which, crashing like a bolt, she makes her fatal spring; not in those menageries where, confined within iron bars and subdued by hunger, these savage beasts, but occasionally growling, quietly pace their narrow bounds, and cower beneath the keeper's eye.

For example, in a cathedral, far south in Italy, I saw a man working out his "salvation with fear and trembling." It was done under the eye of his priests; but in a manner hardly less offensive, I suppose, to Him who is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth than the pagan rites of those temples whose graceful ruins stood near by, on the shores of the blue Mediterranean and under the shadow of the snow-crowned Apennines. It was morning mass; and with only its loftiest windows touched by the beams of the rising sun, the cathedral of Salerno was filled with a solemn gloom—a dim, religious light. With an attention to their religious duties that might put many Protestants to the blush, domestic servants leaving the family a-bed, and humble labourers on their way to field or workshop, were there—praying, with their eyes turned on a crucifix, or more probably on their knees either before an image of the Virgin, or the shrine that held the mouldering relics of their patron saint. Arrayed in gorgeous robes, muttering prayers, like incantations, in an unknown tongue, and attended by boys with smoking censers and tinkling bells, some priests were already officiating at the altars; while others, carrying the Host—the true body of our Lord, as they say, were passing with grave and solemn pomp across the marble floor to begin their services for the living or the offices of the dead. But from all this mummery and imposing array, my attention was turned on an object that filled me with mingled feelings of indignation, pity, and astonishment. An old man, bent under the weight of years, entered. Having dipped his finger in the holy water by the door, and crossed himself with trembling hand in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, he advanced with slow and tottering step to the centre of the church. There, under the eye of passing and approving, or careless and indifferent priests, he cast himself on the floor. Prostrate on his hands and knees, he bowed till his lips kissed, and his forehead touched the pavement. A posture his of deepest reverence; and yet but the prelude of an act painful to see and more painful to reflect on, as a degrading and soul-destroying superstition. In this prostrate posture he protruded his tongue; and, with his long grey locks sweeping the dirty floor, crawled forward on hands and knees; and, as he crawled, with bleeding tongue he licked the marble pavement, till he had drawn among its dust a large, long figure of the cross. Thus, poor, pitiable, ignorant devotee, he was taught to earn the pardon of his sins! If he had ever heard, how did he misunderstand these grand words, "God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world!" But thus, by prayers and penances, by fasts and vigils, and some things, otherwise commendable, which Popery calls *good works*, she teaches, and has always taught, that men may earn the mercy of God and purchase a right to heaven.

By putting them in the place of Christ, his righteousness, and saving work, Popery brought good works into bad odour—into such disrepute, indeed, that even Martin Luther, because St. James highly commended them, rejected his epistle from the canon of inspired Scripture. In their recoil from her errors, men appeared at the period of the Reformation who burst asunder the bounds of all morality. Denouncing the doctrine of good works as a delusion of Satan and an encroachment on the freedom wherewith Christ makes his people free, they openly indulged in the grossest vices; saying, that with their "life hid with Christ in God," these polluted them no more than the gutter does the kernel inside the nut which falls into it. Nor has

Rome only taught that salvation is more of works than of faith. Last century saw a sad eclipse of sound doctrine in almost all Protestant Churches. Their pulpits were occupied by men who, ignorant of the truth, or ashamed to own their Lord and to defend his cause, discoursed a cold morality; fed the people with empty husks; and putting good works, as they called them, in the place of the cross, held up heathen virtues rather than Christ and Christian graces to admiration. And under that law of action and reaction which makes the human mind, as well as a pendulum, swing from one extreme to the opposite, the result was what might have been expected. From being over-valued, good works came to be under-valued; theirs the fate of the brazen serpent, which, from being an object of idolatry, was treated with a measure of contempt—ground to powder, and called Nehustan, or a piece of brass. I cannot otherwise explain the carelessness which many display about Christian works, and the hopes they entertain of getting to heaven without having ever given such proofs of conversion as they afford. Nor can I otherwise account for the positive aversion which some good people show, not certainly to doing, but to hearing of good works. So morbid is this feeling that they would suspect the orthodoxy of the preacher who assigned them a prominent place in his sermons. St. Paul says, "Be ye followers of me;" but would they venture, lest they should puff up any, or encourage them to trust in their own merits, to follow him in the style in which he closes his epistle to the Romans? Bold and generous man, he commends Phebe by name and others also for their works; in anticipation of Christ's own "Well done," he applauds their services, and, recording their names in the imperishable pages of the Bible, crowns them with immortal honour.

It is told, for example, of an eminent saint, how, on one who sat by his dying bed delicately alluding to important services which he had rendered to the cause of religion, he started—started as if he had heard a serpent hiss; and turning round with an expression of pain and horror on his face, besought his friend, as he loved him, to make no mention of his poor unworthy works. And I have seen it recorded to the praise of another, as indicating the healthiest and holiest state a man could live or die in, that to those who spoke of his good works he instantly replied, "I take my good and bad works, and casting them into one heap, fly from both to Christ!" Now, though seeing in our best works much to make us blush, and nothing whatever, since it is by grace we are what we are, to make us vain, I venture to say that good works, by which I mean, works done for the glory of the Father, from love to the Son, and by the aid of the Holy Spirit, deserve a more respectful treatment. It is the exaggeration of a right feeling, and a false humility which casts them into the same heap with our sins. Our trust for pardon and acceptance should rest entirely in the blood of Christ; yet the works which have pleased our heavenly Father and profited our fellow-creatures, are to be recalled with thankfulness on a dying bed. Fruits of the Spirit, which glorify not us, but Him through whose grace they have been wrought, they are clear and comfortable evidence of our being the children of God.

It was not thus, as some have done, that Paul spoke of good works. It may be news to many, yet it is true that he applies the same lofty terms to them which he uses to proclaim and enforce salvation by the blood of Christ. To Timothy he says, "*This is a faithful saying*, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;" and to Titus he says, employing not an equivalent but the identical expression, "*This is a faithful saying*, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works." On death-beds, on the deck, wherever loved ones tear themselves from each other's arms, at all partings, the last are not the least important words; and it is with exhortations to good works that Paul takes farewell of the Church of Philippi. "Finally, brethren," he says, "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Elsewhere, placing good works on a yet loftier platform, in language the strongest possible according them yet higher honours, he says, "God is *not unrighteous* to forget our work and labour of love showed toward his name:" and, after that, it were surely no presumption to say that it cannot be wrong for us modestly to remember what God will not forget: and further still, that it cannot be right for us to be careless of such works as this great preacher of faith says are ordained of God, and bids us be careful to maintain.

Who ponders the Apostle's words aright, and forms a proper estimate of their importance, will be less surprised than some, no doubt, are at the manner in which Nehemiah mentions his good works in his prayers. Addressing God, he speaks of them in a way which many good men never ventured on. When counselled to fly, he spurned the coward advice: and asking, Shall such a man as I flee? against the enemies of his God, his faith, his country, and his countrymen—

> stood like an iron pillar strong
> And steadfast as a wall of brass.

But some who admire the boldness with which, amid a crowd of enemies, he faces man, may think his bearing before God over bold; and that he trode the borders of presumption—when, relating his pious and patriotic deeds, he addresses Jehovah, saying, "Wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof!" Did such a thought occur to them when engaged in prayer, many would strangle it in their hearts—regarding it as a suggestion of the devil; a temptation to be resisted, if not a sin to be mourned; as only suited to the lips of one who distributed his alms to the sound of a trumpet, and prayed in corners of the street that he might be praised of men, and said, expressing the sentiments of a heart inflated with pride, I thank thee, O God, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican! Yet when Nehemiah prayed, "Remember me,

O God, concerning this," he only asked him to remember what Paul assures us God is not so unrighteous as to forget. He was no proud, self-righteous Pharisee. A most devout, humble, and holy man, he confessed his own and his people's sins—praying, fasting, weeping, and, while he asks his good works to be remembered, throwing himself at God's feet to cry, Spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy! What a fine example of a true Christian—the humble believer yet the diligent worker!

The truth is, that to set little store on good works is an immoral and most pestilent heresy. The works by which we recommend religion and adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, the works which spring from love to Christ and aim at the glory of God, the works by which a good man blesses society and leaves the world better than he found it, are not the "filthy rags" of Holy Scripture. No filthy rags, but the gracious and graceful ornaments of a blood-bought Church; these, on the contrary, are the "gold of Ophir," "the raiment of needle-work" in which His bride, apparelled as a queen, stands at her Lord's right-hand—a lovely form, in a blaze of beauty and of jewels.

A VISIT TO THE CHRISTIANS OF ELBA.

SECOND PAPER.

THE Bible, which had sustained Francesco Madiai through his trial of cruel mockings and imprisonment, was, in 1855, offered by him in the place of his exile to the captain of a small trading vessel from the island of Elba. The word was accompanied with power. Grace is always a germinating principle, and so the captain on his return home gathered two or three of his dearest connections around the lamp of life. They too received the gospel in the power of the same Spirit. That they might not be deprived of the Bbile, which had now become their hand-book for eternity, they secreted it, in the intervals of their reading, in a hole in a garden wall. As their obedience to the Truth finally imparted boldness to their conduct, they no longer consulted the Word apart and by stealth, but, as their numbers increased, they met in a large upper room, accessible to all the neighbourhood. The mass, and all the other public and private observances of the Romish Church, were at once and for ever abandoned. This of itself, however, involved no pains and penalties. Their conduct might be classed with that of those who, while they avoided the services of Rome under the plea of Indifferentism or Infidelity, submitted nevertheless to the hierarchy and called themselves Catholics. Moreover, this was a moment of general enlargement. Italy had just burst through the thraldom of ages, and was running wild upon the theory of freedom of thought and action. This licence, however, would not benefit the Fratelli (Brethren). For as their lives were regulated by God's word, their conduct became an open protest against surrounding wickedness. And as nothing is more offensive to the natural man, dislike and hatred to the Brethren, as a natural consequence, grew into active persecution.

"Certain lewd fellows of the baser sort," headed by their priest, proceeded to burn the hated heretics in their dwelling. That they were defeated in their diabolical purpose was to be attributed, not to any intervention of public authority, but to the substantial nature of the dwelling, and the inconstancy of the mob. The Syndic alleged in justification, that he had not force sufficient to ensure the maintenance of public order, and the Brethren were consequently left to the tender mercies of a lawless rabble. Their fury finally exhausted itself, but they did not fail to adopt the lesser, and generally the more successful, arts of persecution. Their households were divided: their intercourse was shunned by friends and acquaintances; and society at large damaged their temporal interests by slander and misrepresentation. "None of these things moved them." They held fast their integrity, as seeing Him, who is invisible, and knowing that these afflictions were appointed for them.

In this, the crisis of their fate, a trial awaited them severer far than lighted faggots around their dwelling, or their "name cast out as evil." Their numbers had now grown into a little community, and as the Constitution of Carlo Alberto recognised religious liberty, they proceeded to collect funds amongst themselves for a place of worship. The Waldensian Church, attracted by their history, on repeated occasions sent them for a few weeks persons accredited to strengthen them concerning their faith; and finally, as their church progressed to completion, confided them to the ministry of a Frenchman of good report and promise. Alas! he left the few sheep in the wilderness, and returned like Demas to the world. This intelligence, more alarming because more dangerous than hot persecution, hurried Dr. Revel and his wife to the spot: two individuals singularly suited in the providence of God to such an emergency. Their fears, the moment they set their foot on shore, were given to the winds. For, so far from finding the Brothers moved by these things to "turn from the holy commandment delivered to them," they were comforted over them in all their distresses by their strong faith. The authorised report of their visit affirms, that "a contrary effect has issued, to what with so much reason was apprehended. The faith of the Brethren has come out of the trial more purified, more firm—more really faith in God—in his Word—in his Gospel, so that precisely from that which seemed destined to annihilate it, the Church of Rio Marina has been more solidly built up." The whole of the summer vacation (Dr. Revel is the president of the Waldensian College in Florence) of last year was devoted, not only to heal the breach which had occurred, but to make such arrangements as their actual and growing necessities required. The things which were

wanting were set in order, and a minister was appointed whose antecedents warrant the expectation that he will not only "give no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed, but in all things approve himself as the minister of God." Six months after this arrangement we land amongst them to rejoice in their growing order, and to find a religious body such, both in respect of life and doctrine, as would have gladdened the heart of St. Paul, and may be ranked with any of the happiest eras of the Christian Church. We joined in worship with them in a building which, for its simplicity and general suitableness, I prefer to those gorgeous palace-shrines where man indulges in a sensuous service before Him who will be worshipped only in spirit and truth.

The temple which these few poor fishermen raised out of their scanty store is in the simple Gothic style. The interior consists of one plain nave. A vaulted roof stretches through the whole length of the building, whose walls are decorated, not with memorial fantasies, but with words of everlasting life. These words (Rev. ii. 10 ; John iv. 34 ; Eph. ii. 8 ; and 1 John ii. 12) indicate men who have actually renounced error and embraced faith under the test of persecution, and are admirably suited to their case.

On either side of the apse are the tables of the law, whose summary, as given by our Saviour in Matt. xxii. 37—40, is recorded at the opposite end of the church. Within the apse stands the pulpit, with the communion-table before it. The men and women sit apart. There are sittings for 150 persons in a building capable of holding double that number. On the outside, over the entrance, the character of the worship is at once indicated by the words, "Tempio Evangelico," while over the wheel-window above is blazoned forth to every passer-by that glorious announcement of Christ Jesus, "God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) The registered number of the Fratelli at present stands at one hundred, of whom sixty-four are recognised and regular communicants. The congregation, however, always consists, besides the Brethren, of men who approve the worship, but lack the courage of, on the one hand, renouncing the Romish Church, and on the other accepting the prescription required for the brotherhood. However, at this point of their history we expect to see not only a steady development in their Christian profession, but in their actual numbers. It was when the first Christian Church had rest from persecution, and the first Christian Council had decreed against false brethren, that it was edified and multiplied. Already we have the beginning of such a realisation. Two-thirds of the population are in passive sympathy with them, and are only withheld from actual communion through unworthy fear or interest. The Bible which Cignoni brought to Rio has not only removed Romish error from the hearts of the Brethren, and from their dwellings images and old wives' fables, but is found in the houses and consulted as the oracle of truth by numbers of those who still conform to the worship of Rome. The result is certain. *The Bible and Rome cannot stand together.*

Their "patient continuance in well-doing" has so lived down opposition, that even the Syndic himself, upon whom we waited, ostensibly to pay our respects, but chiefly to refer incidentally to the Brethren, bore them this testimony: that they were the best-conducted, the most upright, and the most industrious of the whole population. He could not allege an indiscretion or contemplate in any way a contravention of his authority by any member of their body. How noble a testimony is this in such a place and by such a man —a Syndic and a Romanist. "But the Fratelli," we remarked, "*have* already suffered from violence. (I thought it opportune to refer to this, for I had seen on our entering the notable priest escape from his boudoir.) Even within these few days their worship has been disturbed by some one throwing stones through the church-window. May not a sudden outburst of popular passion produce a second Barletta?" "Oh! as to the stone," he replied, "that was the unmeaning act of some thoughtless boy. No one here, I am sure, wishes to interfere with them in any way. As to Barletta, no one can pronounce more indignantly against that than I do. I have sufficient means to make my authority respected, and I pledge myself that it shall be exercised, if need be, not only to protect these men from violence, but their worship from disturbance." We engaged that so welcome an assurance should be communicated to the Brethren, and only regretted that we could not convey a like assurance from the Government to every Protestant in the peninsula at a moment when the "Movimento" in a place* whose archbishop had pledged himself to Protestant extirpation, had delivered itself of such sentiments as necessitated its Protestant citizens to claim the protection of the Prefect.

After the Brothers had provided a suitable church for their worship, their next care was to secure a God's acre for their dead—their resting-place in hope until the morning of the resurrection. A cemetery was accordingly consecrated on a knoll in one of the most charming spots in the neighbourhood. Below hastens the stream of Rio—so like life, now joyous and clear, now impatient and troubled—to lose its fretting strife in the tideless sea, the image, unstirred by nature's passion, of deep, boundless, and abiding peace. Above rise the dark and savage crags of Mont Serrat, peering over the sides of hills, which shoulder up the high and lonely cone of the Tower of Jove, looking far away and above the dreams and passions and follies of men, full into the repose of heaven.

The cemetery is well walled-in and planted with cypresses, and entered by a handsome iron-gate. At the further end are four mortuary chapels over vaults belonging to the elders of the brotherhood. Already only one of them is unoccupied. This I visited, and, to my astonishment, found it as carefully finished, as though for the abode of the living. The whole appearance of the place surprised me, considering the position of the Brethren, and how often God's acre testifies to the neglect and forgetfulness of survivors. Hitherto, only two have been interred in the open ground. The church itself is scarcely in more than

* Genoa.

an embryo state. The only inscription in the place is to the memory of the Cignonis' mother, a second Anna, who for fourscore years waited for "the Consolation of Israel." I cannot do better than give a translation of this first Protestant memorial in Elba, not because its classic Italian is worthy of the dead who sleep in Santa Croce's aisle, but because it is here the first Gospel witness for those who sleep in Jesus since the days of the Fathers :—

"Giacoma Cignoni. Born 25th February, 1787, entered into the peace of the Lord, 2nd December, 1865. After having lived seventy-eight years in the Romish Church, she, on the brink of the grave, exulting knew and adored the Christ of the Gospel, who brought to her heart grace, pardon, peace, and eternal joy. Blessing God for the conversion granted, and mourning their beloved mother, her family, grieving, has here placed this monument.

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life : he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.—John xi. 25."

In both these constructions the Brethren had regard to their first wants. These satisfied, their next object was to provide a school for their children and a house for their pastor. These must have been indefinitely deferred, and cannot now be completed but for assistance from without. The better to economise resources and to suit their present modest beginnings, it was decided that the two objects should be met under one roof. Accordingly, adjoining the church a building is in progress, the upper part of which will form the pastor's home, and the lower, divided into two spacious and well-ventilated compartments, will accommodate one hundred scholars, fifty of each sex. Till this twofold purpose be accomplished the pastor and his wife will remain in their own hired apartments, and the school be carried on under very limited appliances in an underground chamber. It is engaged that the school department be finished first, as the more pressing necessity of the two, and that its direction be immediately entrusted to a master and mistress well qualified for general and useful education, so that the Fratelli may be relieved from their present painful position of seeing Protestant children sent to the Romish school, if more is required from them than their own merest elementary education. If present arrangements be carried out, two consequences are inevitable. The tone and character of the Protestant population will be raised, and the number of scholars will be largely augmented, not only from among themselves, but more from the Romish element of the place. That is to say, the schools will form a fulcrum to shake a superstition and confirm a faith.

Lastly, to link themselves to "the whole state of Christ's church here upon earth," they have more than once, unasked, opened their sympathies to their brethren abroad in their trial of affliction. Recently, it was no sooner known that the angel of death was shaking pestilence from his wings over the doomed city of Naples, than, prompt to the occasion, they instantly ministered according to, and even beyond, their power, to the wants of those there who, like themselves, had renounced the errors of the Church of Rome for the gospel of the grace of God.

Having thus far spoken generally of the circumstances of the Christian society of Rio Marina, I shall now give some brief account of my visit to their church service and their schools.

There are three full services in the church during the week. Their form of worship nearly resembles that of the Scottish Church. Their "Confession de Foi" consisting of Thirty-three Articles, is in harmony with the teaching of the Thirty-nine of the Church of England. At the first service after our arrival, I found 120 persons present, mostly women, the men in the spring of the year being generally absent at sea. Each worshipper on entering supplied himself with a Bible from a heap, collected upon the Communion-table, and on taking his seat, occupied himself with its contents until the Minister opened the service. In this they devoutly joined, giving at the prescribed places a hearty and united Amen ! In their hymns of praise they sang lustily and with good courage. The sermon, which was draughted largely from the wells of salvation, was listened to throughout with unflagging attention. No wandering eye—no yawning lips or nodding head, betrayed an unheeding spirit. Their outward appearance was in keeping with Apostolic teaching. The women were "adorned in modest apparel, with shame-facedness and sobriety—not with braided hair or gold ;" and the men, the poorer in clean comfortable attire, and the richer without the parade of purple and fine linen.

At the Sunday-school I found twenty-six girls present and nine boys. This disparity between the sexes both at the Sunday and day schools, is attributed chiefly to the practice of the fathers of the flock, who are mostly mariners, taking their boys with them to sea as soon as they are capable of the least service. I was as much surprised at the number of verses which one and all had prepared during the previous week, as at the correctness and fluency with which they were repeated. Many had a dozen verses—none less than five, even where their ages did not exceed four or five years. It was sweet to listen to the words of life streaming from such infant lips. One little girl with a Bimba (a babe) in her arms, especially called for my commendation. On passing to the next form so much confusion was caused by the cries of the Bimba, as to induce the remark, that the mother's arms at home was a more befitting place for such a babe than the school-room. Conceive my surprise on being told, that I was the cause of all her noisy outburst, having passed her by without hearing her task ! I could not believe that a suckling, for such she still was, could do more than imperfectly stammer forth its infant wants. For peace sake, however, I bent over her mouth, to approve whatever it might utter. In a moment the little creature, clapping her hands and exchanging grief for joy, began, to my amazement, to utter forth those words which first awakened the wonder of the "Master of Israel,"—"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up," &c. (John iii. 14—16.) When I reflected that our first memories are undying whispers that reach to the most distant old age, how did I rejoice

to think, that in these precious words of the Spirit this babe had a polar-star for all the changing scenes of her future life. And as our first lispings are the most frequent, who shall limit the influence upon the listener of gravest years of her prattle, burthened with "tidings of great joy." "But how," I asked, astonished, "has she acquired the knowledge of these verses?" "Merely," was the reply, "by hearing her sister repeat them during the week." Hear this, ye who would deny capability to the infant mind, and forbid Scripture records to its memory. When her lispings ceased, I could not but exclaim, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise."

The repetitions done, the worthy pastor applied their subject to the children, and then explained and enforced those texts which were their appointed task for the following Sunday. This was done in a way, not only to instruct and interest the children, but to prove under the Spirit's teaching to listening adults, of which many were present, "the power of God unto salvation." Before prayer closed, as it had opened, this afternoon exercise, a doxology was sung by the children. It was angel-music to my soul! For what sweeter charm on earth than infant voices hymning in unison praises to God!

I found in the day-school thirty-nine children, varying in age from four to fourteen. Of this number only nine were boys, and of too tender an age to be capable of general instruction. The morning is devoted to reading, writing, simple arithmetic and geography, and Bible history; the afternoons to useful needlework — an acquirement, by-the-by, which I sought for in vain some years ago in the Society's school at Cairo. The mistress, an approved convert, albeit her husband adheres to Romanism, has long borne an exemplary character, and to the extent of her own information has grounded the children well in elementary knowledge. Their general understanding of the Bible pleased me. The intelligence of some, whom I questioned upon the conduct of Saul in the matter of the Amalekites, was above their years. Order and quiet prevailed. I am not capable of speaking of their needlework, but according to the judgment of another, it was creditable both to the teacher and the taught. During the time of my visit the mothers of the scholars were continually coming in and going out, and showed as much interest in the questions and answers, as though the future welfare of their children depended upon the issue. As the school-room is the basement story of a house and badly ventilated, it is well, the health of the scholars and the growing importance of the school considered, that the building intended for a more enlarged education is rapidly approaching completion.

The evening school, which is limited to the winter months, and is opened to lads from ten years upwards, promises to be one of much usefulness. Although it has only been formed within these four months, it has steadily increased from ten scholars to thirty. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are the subjects taught, and by the pastor himself, who, by-the-by, to his more proper vocation voluntarily adds an active superintendence over and general assistance in all the schools.

When we consider the singular circumstances which gave rise to the brotherhood, the difficulties and trials by which their sincerity has been tested, the sacrifices they have made to secure their worship, and the constancy with which they have adhered to it, we must attribute the whole work to the Spirit of God. Man in no way assisted its birth. It was the testimony of the Spirit to his own revelation. He took of the things of Christ, and wrote them on Cignoni's heart. "The entrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

Then again, when we consider the Syndic's testimony to their character, and the passive influence of their life of faith upon the surrounding population, so that opposition is now converted into sympathy, and instead of the lighted faggot at their doors their Bible is welcome in Romish dwellings, we wonder and adore, confessing our belief that the little band is destined to be a light to lighten the whole island, so that the voice of prayer and praise shall rise from its every creek and bay. Nor are these our only reflections. We go a step further, and, considering the growing importance of the mines of Rio Marina, the works that in consequence the Government are projecting for the increase of traffic, the number of dependent smelting localities on the Continent, the increasing multitude of ships which speed hither from every land for its almost inexhaustible ore, whose purity is becoming more known and prized every year,—I say, these things considered, we conclude that Rio will become not only the chief place in the island, but one of importance in the kingdom, and that in consequence this little few are destined to work out some of the great things of God—to play an important part in that drama of which Italy is certain to be the theatre.

The effect of these details upon him who reads, if he be a Christian, and acknowledges the responsibility of his faith, is that of the Macedonian appeal to Paul, "Come over and help us." He will assuredly gather that the Lord has called him by this narrative to assist to the Gospel in Elba. And woe be to him "who seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him."

During our stay we became familiar not only with the history of the church, but of its members. As to their circumstances we found that, though generally poor, very few of them were so destitute as to be wholly dependent upon the industry of the rest. One of these, whom I visited, a "widow indeed," and nearly fourscore years, was bedridden, a martyr to rheumatism, and, alas! stone-blind! I never felt more painfully the helplessness of human sympathy than in the presence of so much woe. As to their moral character, I found full corroboration of the Syndic's testimony. No inconsistency, no irregularity of conduct could be alleged against any of the communicants. Two only of the whole body had, in so long a time, gone back; and in each case, it was the old delusion of a woman hoping by her conversation

as a wife, to win over a man as a husband whom she knows to be disobedient to the truth.

Witnessing their "order and stedfastness of faith," my friend's sympathy among them was almost limited to the agreeable task of receiving and counselling the elders as his brethren of a common faith in a common hope. In our last interview with them and their pastor such details were considered with regard to their Christian and Protestant standing as should assist to their general fellowship and development, and secure them from the snares and interference of the Romish Church. This was done in the spirit of the words, "One is your master even Christ, and all ye are brethren," and "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."

The whole church was assembled at my friend's request. At that interview, after noticing several creditable incidents in the past, he urged upon them love and unity among themselves, meekness and forbearance towards those of a contrary part, so that whether he saw them again or not, he "might hear of their affairs, that they stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel." All were affected by his address, some even to tears. When he rose to depart, a most affecting scene occurred, such as I shall not easily forget. Save that my friend stood, like Saul, head and shoulders above the admiring brethen, I should have lost him, and he perchance have perished in the general embracing rush which followed. Olinto Cignoni flung his brawny arms around him with patriarchal power in patriarchal love, while the holy kisses fell so fast and thick upon his rejoicing face, that, aghast at such an example to the envious crowds which came pressing round, I was alarmed for his safety and mine; for who can tell, I thought, but that such zeal may gather force, and those lusty arms and longing lips find rest on mine to quench the breathing life within me. However, ere such a catastrophe befel, a lull came over the tempest of fondness. My friend survived the shock, and I have escaped to warn my cold reserved countrymen of the warmth and power of Elban love.

I must not close my narrative without some notice, however brief, of Mr. Bonnet, the pastor. Of his piety and zeal there is no doubt, and therewith firm gentleness, which is strengthened by prudent decision. These are qualifications of prime importance in connection with a nascent church in such a locality. Moreover, he has already had successful experience in building up and steadying an infant church. It was his admirable conduct in connection with the church at Pietra Marazzi, that pointed to him as the right man, under critical circumstances, for Rio Marina, albeit to the sacrifice, in some respects, and the general regret of his previous charge. Moreover, he has stored his mind with church history, and is thoroughly versed in its controversial periods and questions. Herein he has already made such happy and discreet use as to merit applause, and give assurance of his success and moderation. The Cardinal Archbishop of Perugia dared to breathe a slander upon his labours in that city, classing him and his faith—*his Protestant faith*, with the vilest theories and abominations which have disgraced the world. This Goliah of an apostate church had, however, to bow the head before the sling of the Gospel David. Mr. Bonnet's defence and justification should be read in every tongue, not only as showing how simple truth can defend herself against the mighty, but as affording in little more than a summary-form the great facts of Christian history and experience in connection with everlasting truth—*the pillar and ground of Protestant faith.*

All things come to an end; and so, having satisfied ourselves on the several matters which originally drew us to the island, we rose to depart. A group of the more influential of the flock, all clad in their "Sunday best," gathered round the door of the pastor's house, to bear with sorrowing hearts their patriarch patron down to the boat. From early dawn I had watched its pennon and lateen-sail fluttering in the breeze, impatient of our stay, with feelings akin to sadness, although neither home nor fatherland bound me to the spot. In an age, in a land, in a world where the simple confession of the faith, as once delivered to the saints, was almost lost, we found a brotherhood whose minds were neither beguiled by traditional subtleties, nor corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ—a people holding fast the truth amid abounding error and superstition. My spirit was refreshed, and in consequence the people and the place had become dear to me. Our interest, too, had been awakened towards the general population. Their first reception of us was cold and ungracious, an islander's general welcome to strangers from the continent; now, however, we were never suffered to traverse the public thoroughfares without look or gesture of the kindest courtesy. The simple manners of the people had been favourably brought out by intercourse. Beggars and squalid objects of diseased misery, that, importunate, crowd upon your steps in Italy, are here unseen. Indeed, so salubrious is the place, that hospital and infirmary are alike unknown. No poverty met our eyes in the streets, but everywhere the honest struggle of industry after competence. All this had brought us near to the inner life of the place, still here we had no home, no continuing city, we were strangers and pilgrims among them, and so no wonder we again assumed the sandal-shoon and scallop-shell. The Brethren, mustered at the door, had prepared a chair for conveying my friend down the tedious and difficult descent to the beach. One led the way, holding his crutches aloft as symbols of office and honour, before relief bearers, followed behind by the sturdy few selected to bear on the chair of triumph. His nephew and myself, as beings of lesser note, modestly brought up the rear. As we passed, all the doors and windows of the houses were filled with kindly greeting faces, shaded with sadness. Although, as we broke down the steep and slippery streets, the chair swayed at times, I had no fear for my friend's safety. I knew the sturdy muscles which bore him high were nerved with vigorous love. His honest face, that had never betrayed fear, was flushed with satisfaction now, as he looked secure around him; a deeper satisfaction, a holier flush, than once prevailed, when applauding crowds bore him from the contest victor for his country's councils. As we neared the beach the red-skinned facchini looked as savage as

on our arrival—busy at the same toil, and animated by the same monotonous cries. We expected no breath of cheer or goodwill from them to swell our canvas from the shore, and so were not disappointed. As we stood at last by the side of our vessel, and contrasted these dusky savages with the sober, orderly-looking Brethren clustered around us with a sad and last farewell, my heart sunk within me—the contrast was so sad and striking. Surely we were leaving a few gentle sheep to be worried and devoured by famished wolves. Barletta was too recent and too terrible to be forgotten then. However, I rallied from alarm, when I reflected that these, though many, were but the refuse of the whole—that the Syndic, supported by sufficient force, was pledged to the protection of the brethren—that the bulk and better part of the population were at least their sure, though silent friends; and above all, that the power and faithfulness of the great Shepherd of the sheep were their guaranteed succour: and so we "commended them to God and to the word of his grace." The busy and crowded shore, with the facchini yelling unfriendly around, was no scene for tears and prayers such as once and for all time sanctified the shores of Miletus. Sorrow was as much saddening us as the Brethren who had accompanied us to the ship. The *suprema verba* were given, and then in a moment they disappeared among the hillocks of iron ore that rise around the shore. Our sail flew to the breeze, broad and full, as the steersman bent o'er the rudder. Away we sped over the blue waves crisping before the wind, and babbling in joyous wavelets round the cleaving bows. On, still on we flew, lessening instant by instant all traces of the past, till we reached the mainland, now resounding everywhere with the shouts, and hurried march of battalions rushing to war. Women were tending flocks, and cultivating fields, abandoned by their husbands, armed for the strife. Man was run riot for his brother's blood, and was about to leave a desolate wilderness behind him, where now plains spread before us pleasant as the garden of the Lord. What a sequel, but what a motive was this to our mission of brotherhood and peace!

BLACKETT BOTCHERBY.

WORDS IN A BARN.

IT has pleased our God once more graciously to crown the year with his goodness, and that far above what we have been able to think or pray for, and very much above what we have deserved. The treasures with which He has clothed our fields have been so abundant that we could scarcely find hands enough to carry them all into the barn. Wherever we turned our eyes all things united in calling out to us:—"O taste and see that the Lord is good."

We read in one of the Gospels a parable of a man whose ground had brought forth plentifully, and who said to himself:—"I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods." Our fields and our barns really resemble those of that man. Oh! let us watch and pray that we may not resemble him in his resolution to make idols of the received benefits, lest we too, in eating, drinking, and making merry, forget the love of the Divine Giver in the enjoyment of his perishable gifts. May we never forget that all these blessings, countless and excellent as they are, are only temporal additions to the one all-surpassing gift with which He has blessed us in Jesus Christ, viz., his kingdom and righteousness. This day, with its innumerable bounties, confirms that saying of the Gospel:—"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

In the abundance which now surrounds us there is much that may make us forget the source from which that abundance has flown down to us. We see the gifts, but the Giver we see not. If we have no heart to observe more than what we see with our eyes and touch with our hands, everything soon becomes sensuous and mechanical to us. It seems as if the whole creation were but a great self-acting machine, as if everything came of and by itself. We dropt the precious grain into the soil, the sun regularly rose and set, the rain and the dew came down to moisten the soil, and the sunshine sweetly fostered the seed, gradually the blade pierced the clod and grew up naturally into the ear, which contained the blessed nourishment for man and beast. All this, apparently, went on as steadily and uninterruptedly as though it had been regulated by some mighty clockwork; indeed, as though man were the only intelligent being who had anything to do with it. This might easily tempt us to believe that it was all the result of our own ability, skill, and industry. There are, alas! many people who think so, or at least seem to think so. Some of these are even sagacious and learned. They say that the blessed harvest which we have been gathering in, is merely the result of the action of the eternal laws which obtain in Creation, and that man himself is only a somewhat finer machine, driven and constantly regulated by those same eternal laws. But sagacious and learned as those people may be, they are yet like to the brutes, which eat and drink and know not Him that made them and gives them their food day by day. It is true that everything here below moves and acts according to natural laws, but where there are laws there must also be a Lawgiver, who made those laws and uses them according to his wisdom and for his purposes. We cannot see that wonderful Lawgiver, but we see his work; and if, unlike the brutes, we are rational beings, with thinking heads and feeling hearts, we cannot but marvel at the skill, the power, the wisdom, and the love with which all these various laws work harmoniously together to produce the myriad small grains of corn and wheat, or to make the stately tree start forth from the tiny seed to bear its sweet refreshing fruits which "fill our hearts with food and gladness." So we will rejoice in Him now. We will thank and praise Him, because all the bless-

ings which at present gladden our hearts are his work and his gift. We will say :—"Some of us have planted and some have reaped, but God gave the increase."

But it was very kind of our God that He did not do the work wholly alone ; that He allowed us to be his fellow-labourers. This is indeed a great honour, which we should thankfully appreciate. The harvest is a reward which our Heavenly Father has kindly allowed as the result of our work. Without that work not one grain of corn would have blessed our fields. This is an important fact. It is perfectly true that without God's blessing all our work is in vain. But it is equally true that, as a rule, without our work God cannot bless us. It has pleased our kind Creator so to arrange matters in this world that work is the channel through which blessing flows to us. And a wise arrangement it is, for the proverb says rightly that idleness is the devil's pillow. Look, for instance, at those unhappy persons who through their wealth are able to live without working. Instead of imposing some useful labour upon themselves, as they might so easily do, they waste their precious lifetime in mere self-enjoyment, and in doing nothing worth doing. But observe how soon they get satiated and disgusted with everything, even with their cherished pleasures, and turn either profligates and debauchees, or ill-tempered, fickle, crotchety and grumbling truants —a nuisance to others, and a burden to themselves. Or look at those pitiable wretches, who, though they have hands to work with, are yet too indolent to give themselves any trouble, and prefer living upon other people, or turn beggars and swindlers. Such people, dear friends, know nothing of the joy of a blessed harvest. For if they, too, have a harvest, it is that of an evil conscience and a bad reputation. Work is a divine occupation, for our Lord says, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." And to rejoice in the success of a blessed harvest is a divine enjoyment ; for God is glorified when the work of his hands bears much fruit.

But everything has a shady side here below, and so had our work, of which we are at present reaping the fruits. It has cost us many a sweat-drop. Sometimes it was very painful and wearisome, and sometimes it was disappointing and unsuccessful. It was not always a cheerful, sunny day that found us in the fields. We had to endure many a storm and shower. It was not always under the refreshing shadow of oak or beech that we did our work. We had often to bear the heat of the day, which made us almost faint, like Jonah, when he said :—"It is better for me to die than to live." Sometimes our work made our limbs ache, and sometimes we were even laid aside with illness. In short, dear friends, we have experienced that we were not working inside, but outside the garden of Eden. In the midst of the countless blessings of God's grace we have felt the "thorns and thistles," of which God spoke to our first parent when He said to him, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake ; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life ; thorns also, and thistles shall it bring forth to thee ; . . . in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Our being a *working* people testifies to our resemblance to God, who also is a working God ; but it is equally true that the painfulness and the hardships of our work testify to our resemblance to that fallen man, who, through sin, brought the burden of toil and care upon himself and his posterity. Wholesome and delightful as labour often is, yet, taken as a whole, and in the long run, it is burdensome and oppressive. What a man of God said four thousand years ago is still true :—"The strength of our years is labour and sorrow." One day I met a labourer on the field, a hale, venerable-looking old man, evidently pleased with the work which was prosperously progressing under his hands. I observed, however, that his active spade had to struggle with many obstinate impediments.

"Well, old friend," I said to him, "I am glad to see you enjoying your noble battle."

"Ay, sir," he answered, leaning on his spade and wiping the sweat from his brow ; "I like it pretty well ; but still I am glad to know that there will be an end of it."

"So then, you would not wish it to continue for ever ?" I asked.

"Why, sir," he replied ; "I am fond of work, thank God, but I am glad I am going to a land where the work will not make my back ache nor my face sweat."

Indeed, dear friends, without such a prospect all labour here below is only a burden and a cross. The pains and sorrows connected with our work, while reminding us that we have lost Paradise, ought at the same time to make us fix the eye of our faith and hope more firmly and thankfully on Christ, as He has regained it for us through his blood and tears. This hope should cheer us up under the difficulties and troubles of our daily cares, which so often mar the happiness of our life. It should make us patient and resigned when good work gets spoiled, or good plans, carried out with great care and sacrifice, fall to the ground. To those who labour in this spirit no work can be fruitless, even though they should not see the fruits of it in this life. We may this year thankfully rejoice in an abundant harvest, but we can remember years when our barns were left all but empty. We are not assured that such distressing harvest times will never return ; but we have always wherewith to console and to encourage ourselves in Jesus Christ our Lord. The harvest which we see with our eyes, and touch with our hands, is not the true and real harvest of a Christian's work. That true and real harvest is stored up in better barns than those of wood, brick, and mortar. It will be seen stored in the barns which our heavenly Father has built in his everlasting Paradise. It can never be lost to those who labour here below in the faith and love of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Let us rejoice at the sight of the present harvest, dear friends, but let us at the same time rejoice in the spirit of humility. I have said that the present blessings may be looked upon as a reward for our work, but surely they are not a reward for our own righteousness. This is the place to humble ourselves in the dust before our God, and to say with Jacob : "We are less than the least of all these Thy benefits."

If we feel as we ought to feel, our well-filled barns will be like coals of fire heaped upon our heads. All over the country during the past year heaven has dropped fatness ; the pastures were clothed with flocks, the fields and valleys were covered with corn. God has, indeed, dealt with the people as if there were no sinner amongst them, as if not one of his commandments had been broken. And yet, if only one day of the year were to arise as a witness, and give an account of all the deeds that have been done and all the words that have been spoken, both in private and in public, what a sad tale would it be ! I remember reading of a very wicked farmer, who went one day to the neighbouring village to buy a new cart-rope, as he was doubtful whether the old one would be strong enough for the harvest loads. As he was returning home, with the new rope in his hand, he passed by a poor but godly old man, sitting by the way-side, who looked with peculiar attention at the rope. The wicked farmer, on noticing this, stopped and asked the old patriarch why he looked so intently at it. "Because I never witnessed such an evidence as this rope is that we are living in the year of grace," was the answer. "Why?" asked the farmer. "Because, sir, under the law it was said : 'Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity and sin as it were with a cart-rope ;' but I see that we are now living in a time when people, after having drawn sin in that way, want a new cart-rope to draw home God's blessings. This strikes me, sir, as a palpable proof that God is a God of long-suffering and slow to anger." I don't know what impression these words of the old man made upon the wicked farmer, but perhaps there are some amongst us now whom this story may strike as peculiarly applicable to themselves. We read in the Book of Ruth of a farmer who, on entering his field on the harvest-day, said to the reapers : "The Lord be with you ;" and the reapers answered : "The Lord bless thee." This little bit of conversation gives us a touching glimpse of the spirit in which that farmer and his people were wont to carry on their work. Nor can we wonder to find that the continuation of the story shows that both the farmer and his reapers were good, kindhearted persons, who sympathised with the poor, supported the weak, and revered unprotected innocence. I am afraid there are many farmers and reapers in our time regarding whom it would be difficult to give such honourable testimony. The conversation which now-a-days is usually carried on in the harvest-field is such that it would sound like profaneness to begin it by saying, "The Lord be with you," or to close it by saying, "The Lord bless you." We also read in the Book of Ruth that there were vessels with wine on the field to quench the thirst of the reapers, and it appears that anyone who was athirst was permitted to go to these vessels and draw ; but we do not read that anyone got drunk. I greatly fear that, were that practice introduced into our fields, the carts would be required to carry the reapers home instead of the corn.

Truly the blessings of God which are manifest on this harvest-day are countless ; but what comes nearest to them in number is our sins, with which we reward every day the mercy and long-suffering of our heavenly Benefactor. Let us try not to overlook or to forget that sad, mortifying truth, dear friends, but rather open our hearts to listen to the voice which on this blessed day sounds into our ears, "Do not despise the riches of God's forbearance and long-suffering, but allow the goodness of God to lead thee to repentance." Our well-filled barns tell us a tale that ought to go home to our hearts. Another tale might have been told to us by blighted crops, wasted fields, inundations, mildew, thunderstorms, and other fearful calamities. A great famine might have been staring us in the face, and, instead of being a day of joy, this might have been one of deepest distress. And if God had brought such a visitation upon us, could we have accused Him of injustice? No, assuredly not. Nothing would have been left to us but to acknowledge that we had fully deserved it, and to cry for mercy. But observe now, God in his immeasurable grace has not taken this course with us. He desires to speak kindly to us. He has no pleasure in the death of any one of us, but rather desires that we should turn from our ways and live. He gives time for consideration. Here are his innumerable blessings filling our hearts with food and gladness. He whispers into our souls these sweet words : "See how I love thee ; and I have given thee even better things than all these : why, then, shouldst thou stray far away from me and die? Come to me and love me : these things are only my perishable gifts ; am I not much better than all of them?" Certainly He is. But our conscience-stricken hearts answer : "How can I come to thee? for I am a sinner, and thou art holy and just." But here our blessed Lord Jesus Christ steps in with the blood of the covenant drawn from his own veins. He beareth testimony to that saying that God has given us better things than the bread that perishes. If any one of us, on seeing the loving-kindness of God on this day of blessing and beneficence, desires to go to the great Giver himself, and to make a firm covenant with Him for time and for eternity, a new and living way is opened up through that all-sufficient Mediator, to the fountain for sin and uncleanness. The abundant blessings of the day, though they cannot save, call us to Him who is as able as He is willing to save. If anyone now present is not in Him, let him hasten to fly to Him, for this may be the last harvest we shall be permitted to enjoy. Perhaps our time may be short and the series of God's blessings drawing to a close. Let us therefore, dear friends, not be careless, but consider. May this day of blessing never rise up as a witness against those amongst us who have not yet given up their hearts to Jesus, but may it be the birthday of a new life, from which the angels of God will some day reap a harvest far better and more precious than that which we are now thankfully enjoying.

And I trust, dear friends, that there are amongst us those who regard the present harvest as a kind answer of God to their prayers. It is a sad truth that many, very many, of those who every day receive their bread from the hand of God, yet never pray for it. This does not by any means argue that

prayer is unnecessary, but only that our Father which is in Heaven is a merciful God, making his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sending rain on the just and on the unjust. Prayer spreads its blessings over a wide area. It is like the light, which casts its lustre over a large company, though but one of them lit the candle. Many who never pray are often blessed for the sake of one who does. We read in Bible history of a whole nation which, but for the prayer of one man, would have been destroyed; we also read of a famine by which a country was stricken for three years, and which was only stopped because one faithful servant of God was constant in prayer. I do not believe that a harvest would ever spring up from the dark earth if nobody prayed it down from heaven. I do not mean by this that we can make ourselves deserving of a good harvest by offering up prayers: this were to speak as though our good Lord in Heaven were a large corn merchant, and prayer a piece of coin for which He sells to us according to value; nor do I mean to say that a man who prays, but does not sow, is a better farmer than the man who sows but does not pray; but what I mean is, that we have been doing no fruitless or superfluous thing when we have humbly knelt down and whispered in faith, "Give us each day our daily bread!" I believe that such whispers have had a decided bearing on the present harvest, though I am not able to tell how it was so. Prayer is the spiritual telegraph, and as we are not yet initiated into all the secrets of the heavenly telegraphy, we cannot be surprised at witnessing powerful effects which we cannot clearly explain. The efficacy of a Christian's prayer, not only with reference to spiritual matters, but to temporal blessings also, is not a matter for logic and argumentation. Its marvellous efficacy must be believed in on the authority of God's word. God assures us that He hears prayer, and that the prayer of the righteous availeth much. It is often difficult for us creatures of flesh and blood to believe this, but we should strive earnestly against that unbelief which puts away the truth, and even makes light of it. An unprayed-for harvest is not nearly so rich and lovely in the eyes of a good man, as a prayed-for one. A child and a slave both eat of the same bread, provided by the same hand, but to the child it tells quite a different tale from what it does to the slave. To the child it is the gift of a loving father, whom he sees and talks with every day in sweetest confidential intimacy; to the slave it is but the daily allowance of one whom he calls his master, but whom he seldom sees and more seldom speaks to. May we all of us be able to look upon the harvest as beloved children, to whom the great invisible Giver is no stranger or task-master, but a father and a friend, who gladdens us with the gifts for which we have often asked in childlike confidence.

Indeed, when looking in this spirit on the blessings which surround us, they reflect to us the loving attributes of Him who gives them. To the eye of faith the harvest is, as it were, a mirror of God's character. It speaks of love and loving-kindness. It must be a delightful thing to know, to be a child of, and to dwell in constant communion with a Being who finds a pleasure in calling forth such choice refreshments for his creatures. True, it is his nature to chasten the refractory, to punish the evil doer, and to revenge the oppressor; but his heart's pleasure is to bless, to make happy, to fill heaven and earth with joy. And right well He knows how to find the means to call forth joy. With what surprising skill and foresight does He prepare such provisions as exactly answer our wants, please our taste, and gladden our hearts. What a large-hearted munificence is displayed in the countless variety of fruits, and in the immeasurable abundance of everything that can contribute to the happiness and comfort of our life. Our bread is not scantily measured out to us, but the store-rooms of heaven are thrown open, and the country is covered with corn and fruits of all kinds, so that there seems no end of the ingathering. Truly He is a God who giveth plentifully and upbraideth not. His is not the heart of the miser, of the calculating taskmaster, of the narrow-minded churl. He is a king, royal, generous, and munificent in all his doings. We put one grain into the soil, and He blesses it so that it multiplies and springs up six, ten, even twenty-fold. A child thrusts a cherry-stone into the ground, and a tree springs up clad with juicy fruit. We send our cattle into the field and place the beehive in the garden; and lo! streams of milk and honey flow through the land. It is true a severe plague visited our herds this year, but his is the earth and the fulness thereof, and as though to compensate for our lack He has blessed other countries with all the greater abundance. There is no searching out of his understanding and no limit to his power, and who can fathom the depth or scale the height of his goodness towards the creatures of his hands?

If, then, dear friends, we look with wonder at the rich abundance wherewith God has blessed us, let us at the same time understand that God has set us an example to imitate. Let us not merely ask how to enjoy ourselves; but also how to make others enjoy. Our Heavenly Father shows us that true love is that noble disposition of the heart, which finds its pleasure in the pleasure of others. To our selfish nature this is a hard lesson to learn. Nor have we learnt much of it in the school of the master whom, alas! we adopted when we fell from the favour of our Creator. It is true there are persons who, though they care little for God and his service, yet, from a merry, jovial kind of temper, or from an innate good-humour, try to make everybody they meet gay and cheerful. But upon close examination it will be found that this sort of munificence, as a rule, does not proceed from nobility of principle, but from weakness of character. Often, indeed, it requires the stimulus of strong drink to bring it into operation. To make other people happy merely that we may the more enjoy them, is a thing quite different from making others happy because we love them. The former is carnal and selfish, the latter is noble and God-like. But that lax, ill-principled generosity is on the whole not the ruling passion of our race. We are naturally more inclined towards the contrary. We usually try to make ourselves as comfortable as we can, and to allow others to help themselves. We often make Cain's say-

ing, "Am I my brother's keeper?" our motto when we little think of it. If, for instance, this year's crops had been placed under the absolute administration of any one of us, I am very much afraid that in the annals of this country this harvest would have been marked as the poorest ever witnessed. When distributing to others we are much inclined to ask, "How little will do?" but when distributing to ourselves we ask, "How much can I keep?" Our opinion evidently is that God may safely trust his benefits to us, but that we ought to be very chary of trusting our benefits to others. Some of us hoard up our money in dark corners, rather than allow it to circulate for the benefit of society. Some again spend it profusely, but mainly upon objects from which nobody save themselves draw any enjoyment. Then some try to squeeze the largest possible profit out of other people's work by paying them the smallest possible wages; and others would refuse to give their neighbour even so much as a cup of cold water except they were in one way or another to be paid or rewarded for it.

Dear friends, the harvest teaches us better things than these. Those of us who are led by such a selfish narrow-minded spirit, may now learn how very unlike they are to Him who every day spreads their table for them, and fills their cup with abundance. Let us learn from Him how to live and at the same time let others live; how to rejoice and at the same time make others rejoice. Our God is not only a giver, but a cheerful giver. He not only prepares for us a profuse repast, but He also provides a feathered chorus to sing while we partake of it, and furnishes a dazzling variety of flowers to adorn our table. Now such manifestations of his kind and amiable character should speak to our hearts, should fill us with a loving, liberal, generous, and cheerful spirit. And if anyone should ask which is the best way to get our hearts opened that such a spirit as this may enter, I would answer that I know no other way but cordial faith in Jesus Christ, in whom far better and still richer gifts than all these are presented to us; in whom not only this earth and the fulness thereof, but the everlasting treasures of heaven are freely given to us. For we cannot possibly make others truly happy and cheerful so long as we ourselves are unsaved and tremble at the thought of the coming day: nor can we be truly liberal and generous until we are truly rich and truly kingly. Christ makes his friends heirs of God, and joint heirs with Himself. If in our heart we believe *that*, and look upon ourselves as the owners, through grace, of such an immeasurable inheritance, we will certainly feel like kings—we cannot continue to fret, grumble, and quarrel about such trifles as silver and gold, or about such vain things as human glory and worldly profits. Our hearts will then have become too large for that, since they embrace nothing short of heaven itself, with all the riches of its everlasting and inexhaustible store.

This is a great harvest-day. Another still greater harvest-day is at hand, on which the angels will be the reapers; and each one of us is a field or a vineyard to which the great Husbandman will come to gather the fruits of what has been sown in us during our lifetime.

I pray God that that great harvest-day may, to every one of us, prove a day of great rejoicing.

J. DE LIEFDE.

HEROES AND MARTYRS OF THE REFORMATION IN ITALY.

V.—PIETRO CARNESECCHI.

Fiorenze la bella, "Florence the beautiful," occupies a more illustrious place in the history of the world than she does in that of the Church. Poets have justly celebrated the beauty of her situation—"Girt by her theatre of hills," and resting in the bosom of the rich valley through which "the smiling Arno creeps;" historians have recorded with vivid pen the story of her commercial enterprise, the struggles of her people for liberty, the varying fortunes of her state, and the strangely mingled baseness and nobleness which marked the character of some of her leading citizens; the lover of art is lost in ecstacies as he surveys the treasures with which her galleries and churches and streets are filled; and the scholar dwells with a sense of triumph on the part she had in the revival of letters, and recalls the days of Lorenzo the Magnificent and the Platonic Academy with an enthusiasm which makes him often forget that the former was a heartless and licentious tyrant, and that the latter was as much a temple of paganism as a school of learning. But to the historian of Christianity, Florence furnishes few materials of interest. Yet even for him she is not without memorable associations. Beneath the roof of her majestic Duomo the voice of Savonarola pealed forth its stirring utterances, denouncing the Divine wrath on the corruptors of the Church and the oppressors of the people, and summoning men of all classes to penitence, to mutual peace and good-will, and to a holy, God-honouring life. To one of her sons, Antonio Brucciolo, Italy is indebted for the first translation of the Holy Scriptures from the originals into the vernacular language of the people. And within her walls were born Pietro Carnesecchi and Peter Martyr Vermigli, than whom no nobler names are to be found among the confessors of the truth in Italy at the time of the Reformation.

The exact date of Carnesecchi's birth has not been ascertained. If, as Gerdesius asserts,* he had for his preceptor Francisco Robortello, who was born in 1516,† we cannot place the birth of Carnesecchi earlier than that year; for, seeing his education was not neglected in early life, it may be presumed that he would

* Spec. Ital. Ref., p. 140.
† Tiraboschi, vii., 819, ad. Firenze, 1812.

not be placed as a lad under the instructions of a tutor younger than himself. It may be doubted, however, whether Gerdesius is correct in this statement. It is in itself improbable, and it obliges us to fix a date for Carnesecchi's birth later than subsequent facts in his history justify. One fact alone seems decisive on this point; Carnesecchi held high office and exerted great influence at the Court of Pope Clement VII. But Clement died in 1534, when Carnesecchi, supposing him of the same age as Robortello, would have been only eighteen years old, and consequently incapable of occupying an official position of authority at the Papal Court. It is more probable that he was born in the closing decade of the fifteenth century.

Of patrician descent, Carnesecchi was from the beginning liberally educated, and was early introduced to the most cultivated and dignified society of his native city. His abilities, his culture, the elegance of his person, and the urbanity of his manners procured him the favour of the most illustrious personages. De Thou tells us that he enjoyed relations of intimacy with the Medici, and was long held in high esteem by Marguerite, the wife of the Duke of Savoy.* He obtained the friendship of Bembo and the praise of Sadolet, who mentions him as "a young man of distinguished virtue and liberal accomplishments."† His intimacy with the Medici family brought him under the notice of Clement VII., who was a member of that family; and by him he was made apostolical protonotary, and endowed with two abbacies, one in Naples the other in France. The duties of his office were very much those of private secretary to the Pope, with whom he was thus brought into constant and confidential intercourse. Such was the feeling with which he inspired his chief, that he repeatedly offered to make him a Cardinal, and such the influence he acquired by the fidelity, diligence, and ability with which he discharged the functions of his office, that it came to be commonly said that the Pontificate at that time was conducted rather by Carnesecchi than by Clement.‡

After the death of Clement, Carnesecchi spent some years in travelling through Italy, that he might gratify his literary tastes by the society of men eminent for learning and abilities. It was whilst at Naples with this view, in 1540, that he became acquainted with Juan Valdez, and was drawn by him to the study of the sacred writings, and to earnest religious thought and consideration. Of an open, candid, and inquiring mind, he apprehended the truth as taught by Valdez, and yielded himself to the convictions that were pressed upon him both by the teaching of that earnest reformer and the conversations and discussions that engrossed the attention of the circle of eminent persons of which he was the centre. The result was that Carnesecchi became thoroughly imbued with the reformed doctrines, and to these he retained his attachment to the last, though still retaining his place and preferments in the Church of Rome.

After the death of Valdez, Carnesecchi betook himself to Viterbo, where Cardinal Pole had drawn around him a number of persons interested in religious inquiries, and in earnest to possess themselves of the truth as taught in Scripture. Here he was associated with Marc Antonio Flaminio, Vergerio, Soranzo Bishop of Bergamo, and others whom a popish annalist classes as "Valdensian, Lutheran, Zwinglian, and Calvinistic heretics."* The same writer adds that he had intercourse also with Baldassare Altieri, whom he describes as "a Lutheran apostate, holding communication with the Protestants of Germany, and having a monopoly of heretical books;" but who occupies an honourable place as one who laboured and suffered much for the cause of truth in Venetia. The men with whom Carnesecchi associated at this time must be regarded as to a certain extent his teachers; but his vigorous intellect and open candour helped him to outstrip in knowledge some who "were in Christ before him," while his moral courage enabled him to stand fast when others wavered, trimmed, or finally went back to the errors they had professed to renounce. Flaminio, whose abilities and learning fitted him to take the lead in such a society and in such pursuits, appears to have acted as a sort of lecturer to the "Santa e utila Compagnia," as Pole describes it in a letter written at the time;† and this duty he seems to have discharged well, "to the great consolation and edification" of the hearers. But there was a point at which Flaminio stopped short, while the decision, firmness, and courage of Carnesecchi carried him onwards. Flaminio, scholarly and diffident, was awed by reverence for tradition and the authority of the Catholic Church, which prevented his following the clear teaching of Scripture when it led to conclusions opposed to the dogmas and usages sanctioned by Rome. Among other questions on which he and Carnesecchi had conversed at Viterbo was that relating to the sacrifice of the Mass and the dogma of Transubstantiation. The progress of Lutheran and Zwinglian opinions regarding the Eucharist filled Flaminio with pain and anxiety, and dreading that his friend was infected with the notions of those "execrable sects," he wrote him, after they had separated, a long letter from Trent, dated 1st Jan., 154$\frac{3}{4}$. In this, after entreating Carnesecchi to read some books which he mentions, he proceeds to urge the argument from antiquity in support of the Romanist view of the Eucharist. For this purpose he adduces and dwells on the testimony of Irenæus as proving that "the early Church held that in the Eucharist the body and blood of Christ are really present, that there is an oblation of the body and blood of Christ under the species of bread and wine, and that this was introduced by Christ and his Apostles." He then appeals to the universality of this belief all over the Christian world, and denounces the temerity of those who venture to set themselves in opposition to the accordant judgment and teaching of the Church in all places and from the age of the Apostles downwards. He asserts that Bucer, after having been one of the most zealous adherents of the Zwinglian doctrines, ultimately recanted, and returned to the ancient faith;‡ and he concludes by inviting his friend to join him in humbly

* Thuani Hist., bk. xxxix. † M'Crie, . 328.
‡ Gerdes, Ital. Ref., p. 141.

* Laderchi, Baronii Annal. Continuat t. xxii., p. 325.
† Poli Epist., iii. p. 42, quoted by M'Crie, p. 329.
‡ This is a mistake. See Baum, Leben Butzer's Elberf., 1860.

casting themselves before God, and exhorting him not to be persuaded by any reason, however plausible it may seem, to separate from the Catholic Church, lest they be cast on those dangerous rocks and make shipwreck. "Let us say," he exclaims, "with David, 'Show me thy way, O Lord, and teach me thy paths, for thou art the God of my salvation,' and we shall doubtless be heard; for good and right is God, and He will guide the meek in judgment; He will teach the meek his ways. If we are determined to judge of divine things by human disputation, we shall without God be refuted, and in these contentious times we shall be so attached to one party and so pursuing with hate another, that we shall utterly lose judgment and charity, and esteem darkness light and light darkness, and persuading ourselves that we are rich and blessed, we shall be poor, and wretched, and miserable, not knowing how to separate the precious from the vile, a knowledge which the Spirit of Christ alone can teach, to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

To this letter, the spirit of which it is impossible not to admire, Carnesecchi wrote a lengthened reply, a copy of which has fortunately escaped the general destruction of his papers. In this, after acknowledging the kindness of Flaminio's intention in writing to him, and the courtesy that characterised what he had written, he proceeds to deal with his arguments. To the authority of Irenaeus he attaches great weight; but contends that the testimony of that writer goes only to assert the observance of the Eucharist in the Church, and that it is only to put a false meaning on his words to say that they refer to the Mass, a term of later and barbarous origin. He then cites from some of the Fathers passages in which the Sacrament of the Supper is set forth as an oblation and a sacrifice much more decidedly than by Irenaeus; but he argues that the language they use is rhetorical, and ought not to have a dogmatical sense affixed to it. He then shows that the doctrine taught in the early Church concerning the sacrifices of Christians was that these sacrifices are to be those of praise, and their oblation that of themselves wholly unto God. "The hinge of the controversy," he says, "turns on whether Transubstantiation or the more recent Consubstantiation is a doctrine sanctioned by proper authority." "Does Irenaeus," he asks a hearer of those who had been disciples of the Apostles, "say a word of these? or are they mentioned by any later author while as yet the sanctity of the religion remained inviolate? I know," he proceeds to say, "that you cannot adduce one till you come down to very troubled times, the age of Pope Gregory I., and of Charlemagne, when they began to use the word *transelementatio*, and to speak of a certain inexplicable change of the bread and wine, a change of grace not of nature, whereby the bread and wine truly remains bread and wine, though no longer common, but hallowed and blessed. What, I pray, is this? Do we knowingly and willingly choose to err, or blind to follow blind leaders? If ever there was a defection from the dogma and discipline of the Catholic Church it is this." Having in this way replied to the reasoning of his friend, he concludes by refering to the angry charges and insults heaped on those who sought to revert to the doctrine of the primitive Church on this head. Those who utter such charges ought, if they had any sense, to consider that no reproaches and accusations are so futile and ridiculous as those which either recoil or may be easily thrown back on those from whom they proceed. Even Flaminio himself had in his letter denounced the obstinacy of those who blindly remain in their opinion, their pride concealed under a false zeal, their arrogance and their condemnation of general and perpetual usage. But by thus throwing abuse at each other nothing is decided. "Wherefore let us consider what is true, right, and praiseworthy, what behoves and ought to be done; not what is done by this one or that one; and by the same rule let us pronounce as well concerning things themselves as, if we will, concerning persons."

Whilst this letter of Carnesecchi is inferior to that of Flaminio in composition, the Latin being harsh and rugged, it shows how clearly he had apprehended the true course which it behoves the inquirer to follow in order to ascertain the truth in regard to any of the doctrines and institutions of Christianity, and how much he was in advance of his friend in point of spiritual enlightenment and mental freedom. The differences of opinion which subsisted between them, discussed in this candid and generous manner, produced no alienation of affection on either side. Friends they continued to the last, and though Flaminio never so decidedly connected himself with the Reformers as did Carnesecchi, there can be no doubt that he came to be on most points at one with them, and that, as he grew older, he attached himself more and more closely to them. Of his feelings towards Carnesecchi we may judge from the language in which he addresses him in a poem, written about this time, when Flaminio had to bid his friend farewell, in consequence of being summoned by his sovereign to go on a distant embassy.

"Though from thy sight constrained to part,
Obedient to my sovereign's will,
I'll bear thee with me in my heart,
Thy charms shall hover round me still.

"No lapse of time, no change of place,
Not death itself, best, dearest friend,
Can from my soul thy form efface,
Or bid our sweet communion end." *

From this time Carnesecchi was in close and continual intercourse with the Reformers, and the friends of letters. His house was the resort of all to whom evangelical religion and learning were dear; he exercised a generous hospitality to all good men who visited him; and he maintained correspondence with those who, in other parts, were suffering for the cause of truth, and sent them pecuniary aid. One of his chief correspondents, and one by whom his benevolent efforts on behalf of the destitute were most liberally aided, was the Duchess Giulia da Gonzaga, and not improbably it was from her he obtained the pension by which Isabella da Manricha was supported when she had forsaken all for Christ.

It was not possible to pursue a course like this without incurring odium with the adherents of the Papal authority. The steps which the latter had taken to

* "Ode ad Petrum Carnesecum," preserved by Schelhorn, Ergötzlichkeiten i. 194.

prevent the spread of heresy in Italy had led to the flight of Ochino and Peter Martyr; and shortly after this, Carnesecchi was, in 1546, apprehended and subjected to the scrutiny of the Cardinal de Burgos as one suspected of heretical pravity. The charges laid against him were that he kept up correspondence with proscribed heretics, that he recommended to Giulia da Gonzaga heretical ministers and pseudo-apostles, that he had expended his ecclesiastical benefices on heretics, who had fled to the other side of the mountains, &c. Whether Carnesecchi denied the charges brought against him, as Laderchi says, or whether, as Gerdes with more probability asserts, the easy nature and mild disposition of the Pope, Paul III., stood him in stead, the result was, that for this time he escaped. Not deeming it safe, however, to remain in Italy, he retired to France, where, after spending some time with Margaret of Savoy, who was favourable to the reformed doctrines, he settled at Paris, under the protection of Catherine de' Medici, queen of Henry II. Whilst in France his intercourse with persons holding the reformed doctrines, and his study of the sacred Scriptures, as well as of the works of some of the leading Reformers, tended greatly to confirm and establish him in his attachment to their views. In 1552 he returned to Italy, and lived first at Venice and then at Padua, where he could enjoy greater immunity from Roman hostility than in any other part of Italy. Though striving to avoid all occasions of offence, he was not suffered by his enemies to remain in peace. During the pontificate of Julius III., by whom Paul III. had been succeeded, he was not molested; but the death of that pontiff and his short-lived successor, opened the way for the succession of one of a very different temper from either of his two immediate predecessors, the Cardinal Caraffa, who, under the title of Paul IV., assumed the tiara in 1555. Before his elevation a friend of Erasmus and the humanists, and the opponent of the Jesuits, he was no sooner seated in the papal chair than he entered into alliance with that body, and appeared anxious by the severity of his measures against the Reformers to atone for his earlier tamperings with the party of progress. By him Carnesecchi was cited to appear before the Inquisition to answer for his heretical doings and leanings. Having no hope that such favour as had been shown to him by Paul III. would be extended to him by his successor, Carnesecchi deemed it prudent to decline the summons; for which he was excommunicated by the Pope. Under this ban he rested till the accession of Pius IV., who, being a member of the Medici family, was prevailed on by his relative the Duke Cosmo to repeal the sentence which had been pronounced against him, and to confirm the sentence of absolution granted by Paul III. Laderchi complains that, notwithstanding the clemency thus showed him, Carnesecchi persisted in his former course, studying heretical books, aiding with money men guilty of heresy, corresponding with heretics and using means to disseminate heretical opinions among the people. All this doubtless is true; and, known and noted at Rome, his enemies only waited for a favourable occasion to bring it up against him and secure his destruction.

Meanwhile Carnesecchi had removed to his native Florence, and placed himself under the protection of the reigning Duke. Priding himself on being a patron of letters and learned men, Cosmo gladly extended his protection to one who was not only a scholar, an orator, and a poet, but a hereditary *protégé* of the Medicean house, and a man of refined taste and genial manners. Carnesecchi entered cordially into all the Duke's schemes of literary enterprise, and speedily rose to a high place in the favour of his patron. The eye of papal hostility was, however, still upon him, and it was soon found that neither the walls of his native city nor the favour of its sovereign was to avail to protect him from the vengeance of his persecutors.

Cosmo de' Medici was one of those men who, supremely solicitous for their own ease and indulgence, are not unwilling that others should enjoy the same advantages, provided this can be attained without annoyance to themselves. For a season he resisted the attempts of the directors of the Inquisition to establish that terrible power within his domain, and for a season he threw the shield of his protection around Carnesecchi. But, finding that he could not pursue this course without compromising his reputation as a good Catholic, and thereby getting himself into trouble, he relinquished the struggle, and abandoned his people to the tender mercies of the persecutor. Florence was overwhelmed with a flood of eager inquisitors, on the hunt for heretics. Heretical books were eagerly sought after, including all Hebrew books, especially the Talmud, and all books printed in Germany, Paris, and Lyons, and immense bonfires were kindled, which were fed with the leaves of the books thus collected. Numbers of persons were apprehended and sent to Rome for trial, of whom not a few perished; and many more would have suffered the same fate had not Cosmo stipulated that, though the accused were to be tried at Rome, the execution of their sentence was to be remitted to the Florentine authorities, who in some instances declined to discharge the task thus assigned to them. Among those to whom no mercy was shown was the subject of this sketch.

The apprehension of Carnesecchi was secured by means of treachery, and under circumstances which cast an indelible blot on the memory of all concerned in the transaction—especially on that of Duke Cosmo. An autograph letter was sent by the Pope to the Duke demanding the surrender of Carnesecchi, and this was brought to him by Tommaso Manriquez, master of the palace, along with a flattering and cajoling epistle from Cardinal Pacecco. When these letters arrived, Carnesecchi was seated at the table of the Duke enjoying his hospitality. The honour of even a savage would, under such circumstances, have secured the guest from apprehension; but Cosmo was restrained by no such feelings. With the utmost coolness, as if transacting a mere matter of ordinary business, he desired Carnesecchi to rise and obey the summons of the Pope. For this violation of the laws of hospitality and decency, Cosmo received a letter of thanks from the Pope, written as soon as the tidings reached Rome. Though they had thus secured their

victim, they were in no haste in bringing him to trial. On his arrival at Rome he was cast into the dungeons of the Inquisition, where he remained for nearly fifteen months before he was formally tried. During that period the Florentine ambassador, at the instigation of Cosmo, who was moved thus far to exert himself in favour of his subject and former friend, made frequent expostulations on his behalf, and sought anxiously to obtain information concerning him. But beyond the fact that in spite of the severe usage to which he was subjected, and though twice put to the torture, he adhered firmly to the confession he had made, the ambassador was constrained to inform his master that he could learn nothing satisfactory of the affair of Carnesecchi. At length, in September, 1567, he was brought to trial. An indictment of thirty-four articles was drawn up against him, in which, besides charging him with holding such doctrines as that men are justified by faith alone, that by nature we are inclined to sin, that good works do not merit eternal life, that we ought to trust nothing but the Word of God in in Scripture, that Councils have not always met under the guidance of the Spirit of God, that the sacrifice of the Mass is not propitiatory, &c., his guilt is made to culminate in that he thought it not wrong to read heretical books and "that from 1543 to 1559 he had believed that, Christ being the only mediator, it is useless to pray to saints." The trial lasted for two hours, and terminated in Carnesecchi's being declared an obstinate heretic, deprived, condemned, his property confiscated, degraded, expelled, and surrendered to the Governor of Rome to be dealt with as he should see meet. This sentence was signed by four Cardinal Inquisitors.

The Florentine ambassador heard that Carnesecchi, when he went after the trial to be degraded—that is, deprived of his ecclesiastical status, uttered "un monte di vanità e leggeresse," a mass of vanities and levities; but what were so reported to the ambassador we may well believe were the sufferer's bold avowal that he counted such degradation of small account, and held all the sufferings to which he was doomed as not for a moment to be weighed against that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory which he anticipated was in store for him through the grace of Jesus Christ his Lord.* Being reduced to the condition of a layman by this process of degradation, the skin having been scraped off those parts of his person on which the consecrating oil had been dropped when he was ordained, he was given over to the civil power to be put to death. For some reason a delay of ten days took place before the execution of the sentence; but at length, on the 1st of October, 1567, Carnesecchi was called to seal his testimony with his blood. According to one account he was beheaded, and then his body was consumed by fire; according to another he was burnt to death. He met his fate with a decent joyfulness. "He went to execution," says the ambassador, "nicely dressed with a white shirt, a pair of new gloves, and a white handkerchief in his hand," the *sanbenito*, with its hideous garniture of devils, being substituted for his ordinary external costume. His constancy had been severely tried during his protracted imprisonment, but he had neither retracted a single article of his faith nor betrayed the name of a single friend, though urgently tempted to discover his associates. No particulars have been preserved of the closing scene of his life; but there can be no doubt that he who had borne so undauntedly the sufferings of a severe and protracted imprisonment, and had gone forth to his execution as if he was going to a bridal, remained stedfast to the last, and finished his course with joy.

By the Papal party every vestige of his writings that could be laid hold of was destroyed, so that only his letter to Flaminio has been preserved. His memory was proscribed, and it became even unsafe to mention his name. Muretus had to suppress an ode he had written in his praise, though unwilling, he says, to let it perish; and in relating this to Manutius, he deems it prudent, like Cowper in reference to Whitefield,

> "Under well-sounding Greek
> To hide the name the writer dared not speak."*

Manutius, also, in his edition of the poems of Flaminio, had to omit all those addressed to Carnesecchi, so that only that already cited, preserved by Schelhorn, has survived.

And so the Pope's vengeance against this innocent man was gratified. And Duke Cosmo de' Medici obtained as his reward the coveted honour of wearing the title of Grand Duke. And Pietro Carnesecchi won for himself the martyr's crown, and went in his chariot of fire up into glory. Which of the three remembers with most satisfaction the deed of 1st October, 1567, *now?*

W. Lindsay Alexander.

* The term "leggeresse," levities, is once before used by the ambassador in reference to Carnesecchi's confession of the truth. Doubtless his informants wished him to believe that such was the character of the martyr's protest against the errors and abuses they were seeking to uphold.

* He calls him ξηροκρεων, from ξηρος *dry*, Ital. *secco*, and κρεας: *flesh*, Ital *carne*.

CHRISTIAN FINANCE—ST. PAUL'S EXCHEQUER.†

What is commonly known as systematic beneficence is now making itself prominent in all parts of the Church, almost assuming the position of a new Christian science. It has not, however, become as yet so precise and complete in its expression as to preclude us from offering a contribution towards it.

There is, of course, a very large amount of money expended in maintaining the ordinances of religion among ourselves; and a large amount bestowed in public and private charity; and a large amount applied towards the diffusion of the Gospel in other lands: that is to say, the amounts, when presented by themselves, seem very large. But amount is always relative. The question has to be asked—a question which the story of the widow's two mites

† John xiii. 29 (the Lord's Bag); 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2 (the Lord's Day.)

will not suffer us to blink—Do these large sums bear a satisfactory proportion to the enormous wealth entrusted to our nation? Mr. Gladstone, referring to the Lancashire Famine Fund, said, "In the mere amount of the private subscriptions, I do not know that there is much to boast of. A country with an aggregate income in the three kingdoms of *between five and six hundred millions a year*, with an income subject to income-tax of between two and three hundred millions a year, ought not to think much of raising a million or two, by subscription, to meet a great and extraordinary distress." Certainly it ought not; these five hundred millions represent a vast power, and suggest a serious responsibility. But if "a million or two" may be so easily raised on an emergency, ought not the same sum, or a larger sum, to be raised every year in response to the great constant wail of the world's spiritual destitution? The fact is, however, that the annual income of all our great Bible and missionary societies together is only three quarters of one million.

But amount, while it is the most obvious, is not the only nor perhaps the chief respect in which improvement is to be wished. Our methods of raising funds for religious and charitable purposes are surely not the best which could be imagined: the operose and expensive machinery, the speech-making, the preaching of sermons specially to get money, the begging from house to house, the sending of salaried advocates from town to town. We readily allow that the clamant wants of men's bodies and souls excuse the use of such means; but thousands, weary and ashamed, are asking whether no more simple, no less questionable, methods can be found.

This leads such as are in earnest to examine the principles on which all Christian giving ought to rest. Here is the root of the matter. The public aspects of Christian Finance are important enough: but this personal understanding of first principles and rules is vital. The teachings of the Word of God regarding the relation in which our use of money stands to the glory of Christ and to our own spiritual welfare, are more full than many think; and the chief hope of permanent improvement lies in the individual understanding being informed about these teachings, in the individual conscience and heart being quickened into a thorough and obedient reception of them. Without this the very best methods that can be set in operation will be empty, cold, lifeless, and, worst of all, delusive things.

We crave attention to the passages cited in the foot-note to the title of this paper.

I.

The gracious example and will of Him who hath "redeemed us not with corruptible things, as silver and gold," may be gathered from the first. "Then said Jesus unto" Judas Iscariot, "That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent He spake this unto him. *For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.*" The faithful eleven did not understand our Lord's words; but, like men, they could not refrain from guessing at his meaning. There was, they knew, no occasion to "buy meat," the only use of the contents of the bag hitherto mentioned (John iv. 8): and there were just two other uses which the known habits of the Master allowed them to think probable,—either the treasurer was to expend money for the due support of religious ordinances; or he was to expend money in relieving the poor. "*Here*," we say, in the words of the venerable Canon of Westminster, Dr. Wordsworth, "*is the primitive form of a church-fund.*" This example covers the entire breadth of the Church's membership, for we know how scantily the bag was filled. And it is a very significant circumstance that, while Jesus was the controller, Judas was selected to administer the funds. The miserable demon of greed had prompted him to pilfer from the bag, to cry "Waste" at Mary's fragrant act of piety, and was now dragging him into the bottomless abyss of despair: but as that was in spite of many faithful warnings, so it was also in spite of this daily lesson in an honest and religious use of money which the Master had been giving him for years. But the main lesson is, that our Lord's outlays of money for religion and charity were *habitual* and *spontaneous*. Had such not been the case, the disciples would not have guessed as they did. *He* did not wait until a priest or Levite, a minister or deacon or collector, should come and solicit something towards keeping up the worship of God: *He* did not say, nor train his disciples to say, Time enough to think of giving to the poor after their spirit has been sufficiently crushed out of them by misery, and they stand whining and shivering at our doors. He was ready to give before solicitation came: He gave spontaneously, without waiting to be solicited. This we venture to lay down as the first grand rule of Christian Finance, a rule inculcated by what is better than precept—the supreme example; and one the adoption of which by individual believers would go far to rectify many existing blemishes—STAND ALWAYS PREPARED FOR GIVING.

This implies two things: but before mentioning these let me illustrate the rule by an example. The late Mrs. Graham of New York (whose Life, entitled "The Power of Faith," was a favourite book with the godly mothers of the last generation), was reduced to great straits in the early days of her widowhood. While trying to support herself, four infant children, and her father by teaching a small school in Paisley, "her breakfast and supper porridge, her dinner potatoes and salt," this lady regularly set apart for God a definite portion of her small receipts, deducting it from every sum that came into her hands before allowing that sum to mingle with what she regarded as her own income. Thus, so long as she had "bread to eat and raiment to put on," she was sure of having something to give, and, best of all, a good conscience about it. Sorely reduced from the comforts of an officer's wife, she did not lose the satisfaction of being always ready, like her Lord, to give freely in proportion as she received.

The case of Bishop Wilson, of Sodor and Man, is similar. Here are two notes from his diary at a time

when his income had been raised from 30*l.* to 50*l.* a year :—

"Memorandum.—Easter-day, 1693.—It having pleased God of his mere bounty and goodness to bless me with a temporal income far above my hopes or deserts, and I having given hitherto but one-tenth of my income to the poor,—I do therefore purpose, and I thank God for putting it into my heart, that of all the profits which it shall please God to give me, and which shall become due to me after the 6th of August next (after which time I hope to have paid my small debts) I do purpose to separate the fifth part of all my incomes as I shall receive them, for pious uses, particularly for the poor.—T. W." "August, 1693. —God that gave me a will to make this solemn purpose has given me grace not to repent of it : and He will give me grace to my life's end. Amen. 'Though I give my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.'" *

Such preparation for giving implies that we devote our substance *first to God, independently of particular claims.* "Render *unto God* the *things which are God's*," is the precept which the Son of Man illustrated by his example. And his authority is used to the same effect : "The Lord hath need of it," was the simple reason He assigned when He had occasion to use the property of men. He needs our time and labour and money that He may have a visible house on earth in which to place his Name ; that the travail of his soul may be gathered in ; that the poor whom He has bequeathed to us as the remembrancers of his humiliation may be succoured (Mark xiv. 7). The friends of the Lord Christ, remembering how much they owe to Him and recognising this great "need" as having been graciously created in order to link us and our perishing substance with his glory on earth and in heaven, will devote their money *to Him first*, and so stand always ready to apply it as occasion arises. Elaborate church machinery, poor-laws, frequent appeals, will not be required to stimulate their liberality,—rather, to create a deceptive semblance of liberality where genuine liberality is not at all.

All this is certainly not new. If anyone professes to state an entirely new principle of giving, we may safely conclude that it is of rather less than no value. The discovery and exhibition of it may be new in the present generation ; but if it is to take hold on the hearts of men it must be at least as old as the New Testament. Our first grand rule—give to God—is as old as Jacob, "I will surely give the tenth *unto Thee ;*" as old as David, "Of thine own have we given *Thee ;*" as old as Solomon, "Honour *the Lord* with thy substance :" and its age is greatly in its favour. But it needs to be taught and urged till it is practised. How many give in the merest routine of habit! How many never once think of giving till asked by their fellow-men !

In order to be as ready to give as our Master's example calls us to be, *we must have some definite notion of the amount we ought to give.* Otherwise we will err by giving either too little or too much.

But does Scripture determine for us this question of amount ? Scripture at least supplies us with the means of determining it for ourselves,—which is better than determining it for us.

It sets the claims of religion and charity next after those of our necessary support. "Bread to eat and raiment to put on,"—while Israel had these he would regard himself as in a position to give to God. Giving is not to begin only after comforts and luxuries have been secured. All the givings of the poor, chiefly the case of Him who "for our sakes became poor," settle this point conclusively. It is an extreme, certainly, to say that we should give so much as to keep ourselves always poor, for many of God's children have been and are rich, and riches are promised as a blessing ; but it is equally an extreme, and one into which we are much more likely to fall, to postpone giving until we shall have laid up something comfortable for ourselves. The maxim "Charity begins at home," like "Honesty is the best policy," is a maxim of *this* world, and worthy only of the god of this world. Sir Francis Crossley said, a year ago, "I believe it is quite true that if a man does not begin to *give* when he begins to *get*, or thereabouts, he will never begin to give at all." It is no secret to the readers of THE SUNDAY MAGAZINE that this true saying of the worthy baronet represents the experience of two generations, and is to be traced back to the training of a mother rich only in faith and good works. (See Vol. I., p. 278.)

But what of the Tithe ? Let me just say that those display strange ignorance of Scripture who talk of it as a "Jewish thing, now of course abolished." The tithe is no more Jewish than the church membership of infants and the Lord's Day are Jewish. The first to practise tithe-giving, so far as we are informed, was "the father of all them that believe," whether Jews or Gentiles. The fullest example is that of Abraham's grandson : whereas the system of rites properly called Judaism, which alone was done away in Christ, did not come into existence until centuries later (Gal. iii. 17). Whatever weight patriarchal authority is to have with us is all on the side of giving to God a tenth. Besides, the references to tithes in the later books of the Old Testament, chiefly that in the third chapter of Malachi, are such as we should seriously scruple to say have no application to the Church of the New Testament.

But it may still be asked, and we believe is anxiously asked by not a few, How far does the law of a tithe apply to us now ? For one thing, it forms a good unit of sacred calculation, a safe *minimum.* If compulsory tithes were exacted from the Jews, we, enjoying the freedom of the Gospel, will acknowledge our greater privileges by giving at least as much to meet the vastly greater "need" which God now has

* Since the above was in type we have met with the following very interesting case in the Life of General T. Z. (Stonewall) Jackson, vol. i. p. 102:—"He engaged one day with a Christian friend in a conversation on the Hebrew system of religious oblations, and was much interested in the assertion that, while the tithe was no longer enjoined by express precept on God's people under the new dispensation, the usage of worshipping God with stated offerings of our substance was in no degree abrogated; and that the tenth was probably in most cases a suitable proportion to be self-imposed by Christians for this voluntary thankoffering. After much inquiry and friendly discussion, Jackson closed the conversation. The next day, on meeting his friend, he said that he had convinced him of a duty not hitherto as fully understood as it should have been, and with his usual courtesy thanked him for the benefit thus conferred. Thenceforward he scrupulously gave a tenth of his whole income to charitable uses (until he adopted a greatly enlarged ratio)."

for our substance. For another thing, the *principle* of the tithe seems in its own nature a perpetual one. It served, in patriarchal and Jewish times, as a constant reminder of the giver's dependence, a religious acknowledgment of his living at God's hand. This was surely a privilege: and it is a rule to which there are no exceptions, that the change from the Old Testament to the New did not deprive the people of God of any privilege.

With all this, however, it is to be remembered that the patriarchal practice of tithe-giving was a matter of personal devotion, not of ecclesiastical law: the public exaction of a tenth was purely Jewish and *is* done away. The New Testament makes giving a thing of personal conscience, not of submission to church law. "Every man, according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, nor of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." "I speak, not by commandment, but to prove the sincerity of your love." The Holy Spirit guided Paul to rest the matter of giving, not on stern commandment, but on grateful love. The highest form of law is the constraint of a thankful heart: and to those who do not understand this the New Testament simply says nothing. Gratitude and love are to overshadow and beautify the naked form of mere submission. We must have some fixed amount determined upon already in our minds if we are to stand ready for giving at all times; and the tenth, being the only proportion of which Scripture speaks, may be safely taken as our guide, if we remember that the whole matter lies between our own consciences and our Redeemer, whose "eyes are as a flame of fire," not at all between us and our ecclesiastical superiors.

I shall venture to illustrate this by the examples of two who still adorn the church in our land. One whose age and character would render him "very reverend," even though his rank as a Dean did not so dignify him, spoke to the following effect when presiding at a public meeting in Manchester in January last:—"I have preached the Gospel for now fully fifty years, and have endeavoured to practise these principles [those of systematic giving] in my own way. But I don't approve of the tenth being made a rule. If an old man may speak about himself, I would say that I have found great pleasure and comfort in denying myself many things which others in my station are accustomed to, that I might have the more wherewith to help the poor and to promote the cause of our Redeemer; and it has always required a good deal more than the tenth to satisfy me in this."

One who is not much more than thirty years of age yet, but by whom the Lord has already done great things, said, at the close of a sermon, "I knew a lad in Christ once who adopted the principle of giving a tenth to God. When he won a money-prize for an essay on a religious subject, he felt he could not give less than one-fifth of it. He has never since been able to deny himself the pleasure of having a fifth to give. God has wonderfully blessed that lad, and increased his means and his enjoyment of the luxury of luxuries—the luxury of doing good." Mr. Spurgeon, who began thus, is now privileged to control, in behalf of the kingdom of Christ, a sum equal to the income of a peer. "Faithful over a few things, ruler over many things," is a principle which sometimes comes into operation even in the present life. We must begin by understanding and obeying from the heart Solomon's counsel—"Honour *the Lord*," not thyself nor thy church, but thy God and Redeemer and Judge, "with thy substance, and with *the firstfruits*," not the leavings, "of *all thine increase*," not now and then, according to random impulses and under pathetic appeals, but steadily. All will be easy after this.

II.

More definite guidance in carrying out such consecration of our substance to God habitually through life, is furnished by the second text we have cited, that which connects the Lord's Bag with *the Lord's Day*. "As I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. *Upon the First Day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*" *

This sacred counsel, full of Divine wisdom and love, has been too long neglected. Mark how many points of instruction it contains.

It makes giving a *universal* privilege: "Every one of you." Through persistent strength of worldliness in us, we are apt to think a certain rate of income should form a line between those who can and those who cannot give. In doing that we fly in the face of Scripture, blaming the widow whom Jesus praised, and quietly placing at the left hand of the Son of Man those who need not be there but for their poverty! The independent poor feel the proposed exemption an insult, as they well may. Now this rule is precisely adapted to enable those who have least to attain to the highest measure of their ability in giving; only by observing it can they give any considerable amount. On the other hand, it is as wholesome for those who enjoy plenty, saving them from the snare of "trusting in uncertain riches," and helping them to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." A minister went one day into the house of a recent widow, who supported herself and her aged mother by labouring day and night at a coarse and covetously ill-paid kind of needlework, with the purpose of finding out how she might be helped. As soon as she got a glimpse of his errand, the widow quickly diverted the conversation to foreign missions, and producing half-a-crown, asked him to get it applied in aid of that part of the Lord's work.

* This was not an advice or suggestion, but an "*order*" (compare chap. ix. 14, where the same word is translated "ordained"). It was given, not to one congregation only, but to "the Churches of Galatia" also, and the inscription of the Epistle is to "all who in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." No doubt it had reference to one special collection; but I am unable to see how this can be made an objection to the authority of the passage for us without taking away nearly all the authority of the New Testament as a guide to Christian practice. Why are such things made part of the Word of God at all? Still, it would be a grave error to place this text on a level with those precepts which have their witness in the natural conscience of the race, and to press it as an ecclesiastical law. It appeals to the conscience of every enlightened Christian who is willing to be guided by the Word; if any one shrinks from it as a too severe law, he should remember that he is set at liberty (if such be the kind of liberty he wishes) by another text, "God loveth a *cheerful* giver."

"I came to-day, Mrs. F., thinking you had more need to receive than to give. Is this not too much?" said the minister.

"Though it shud lie by me for aye, I wadna' use that halfcrown, sir. It was devoted to God, and I wad never wish to tak it back."

This took place many years ago; and, though rarely or never administered by the hand of human charity, the widow's "bread has been given her, and her water has been sure."

Private storing is inculcated as a preliminary to giving. "*Let every one of you lay by him in store,*" or "*set apart by himself*" (παρ' ἑαυτῷ τιθέτω). What we have gathered from the example of the Master, is confirmed by the advice of the Apostle. Let any weary collector imagine the happy change that would be wrought in his or her work, if this rule was generally acted on. To a large extent, the collecting would be anticipated by spontaneous offerings from the privately accumulated store; and for the rest, the collector would be truly a collector and nothing more, not a beggar needing to nerve herself against the humiliation of enduring often cold looks and ungracious words.

But that is not the highest recommendation of this rule. There is a good deal of ostentation about subscription-lists, and something even worse than ostentation about fancy-fairs: this private "laying by" of money for Christ with no eye upon us but his, would bring not only freedom but humility.

Frequency of "laying by" is a prominent feature of the rule. "*On the First Day of the week,*" *i.e.* of *every week* (κατὰ μίαν σαββάτων). There is no need at this time of day to prove the power of littles: Penny Savings' Banks, Clothing Clubs, and the like, have done that with demonstration; and all, from the receivers of weekly wages up to the very rich, will find that only by bringing this rule into operation can they earn His approval who said, "She hath done *what she could.*" Were the sacred method adopted, greatly larger sums than are given now with difficulty and grudging, would be given with ease and pleasure. Testimony might be adduced in quantity sufficient to fill much more than our remaining space. The quarterly sheet issued by Mr. Ross, of Hackney—the oldest and best advocate of these principles—is packed full of instances. Let us mention one or two that cannot have got into print, being as yet known only to ourselves. A gentleman in business, who used to give a pound once a year, and did well compared with many—a liberally disposed Christian man—finds now that he can with greater ease give his little boy a shilling every Sabbath to put into the missionary box. Another, a banker, writes: "With a short experience, and a rather imperfect one, I am a convert to the storing system, the magical power of which no one could believe unless he had tried it." This from a banker, is worth half-a-dozen sermons. At a meeting of office-bearers of several churches, a professional gentleman of eminence spoke as follows: "I never made a speech before, but I wish to state, that since my attention has been called to this method, I have become convinced that it is Scriptural. I have adopted it, and I find great pleasure in it." A minister receiving, as most ministers do, a very small stipend, publicly volunteered a similar testimony in our hearing lately, expressing his deep gratitude to God for having been taught a method by which he could give more than he formerly gave, and with no straitness and trouble.

Frequent giving of all we can in small sums, instead of occasional giving of what appear large sums, will save all from a very common form of self-deception. Sixpence is not a large sum, but given once a week it is considerably larger than one pound given once a year. Five pounds looks a most respectable annual subscription, but it is less than two shillings a week; and the Christian giver, hitherto well satisfied with himself, may very properly be invited to look at his subscription in this light, and to ask himself whether he is really doing all he can for his Redeemer.

Conscience is forced to superintend our givings, when Paul's method is adopted: "*As God hath prospered him.*" A man who, every Lord's Day, alone in his closet, sets apart money to be spent for Christ, will not give exactly the same sum year after year, although his income may have been increasing every month. Mrs. Graham was not allowed to remain poor. After she had gone to New York, a sum of 1000*l.* came unexpectedly into her hands. At once 100*l.* was put into the Lord's Bag, without any one knowing the fact until an entry recording it was found in her diary after her death. The fixed habit of giving to God a tenth secured a much larger amount than would otherwise have been given, and saved the giver from ostentation and self-deception.

It is not any day of the week that is to be taken for this consecration, but "*The First Day of the week.*" Divine wisdom and grace are conspicuous here. There is a constant danger in this mammon-worshipping age of our suffering money to secularise religion; but were this rule observed, religion would be more likely to sanctify money. The benefit to the Church and to each believer would be immense. Not while our minds and hands are full of this world's business and care, but when we have put away worldly things and are yielding our hearts to the influence of spiritual truths and of the world to come, are we to sit down and consider what we can lay by us for God. Only thus are our givings likely to be a real "laying up of treasure in heaven." By making the devotement of our money for spiritual ends matter of serious thought every time this holy day returns, we will be in the way of fulfilling our Master's precept: "I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations" (Luke xvi. 9).

If the people of God will thus act, then his ministers will be saved from much irksome and ungenial work that ought never to be laid on them. "*No gatherings when I come.*" Paul has had experience of these forced fitful gatherings, and plainly he dislikes them. Our bad established plan is to lay hands on Paul, Apollos, Barnabas, every eloquent gifted preacher, and to make of him a machine for raising money. But Paul says, guided by the Holy Spirit, "Do it yourselves, rich and poor of you, in your own

closets; do it by littles every Lord's Day; do it so as to get the good of doing it, and the fair credit of being faithful 'stewards of the manifold grace of God.' Do not degrade yourselves by needing my appeals to force your liberality, nor me by compelling me to make these appeals." Though our custom has been long established, no doubt Paul is right and we are wrong.

III.

We leave many things unsaid, that we may have space to indicate the happy effects of a general practice of these personal rules on the public aspects of Christian Finance. Only let the members of all our churches, from the man who handles thousands to the boy or girl who is beginning to earn a few shillings a week, be instructed and trained in the simple sacred art of giving first to God; giving a fixed proportion of all; giving frequently; giving under the hallowing influences of the Lord's Day—and most pleasant results will certainly follow.

1. Many offerings for the relief of the poor and for the spread of the Gospel will be made spontaneously which are now got only by craving.

2. The necessity for preaching sermons and sending out collectors will not cease, at least not for a long time; but all about these that is irksome to the individual and degrading to the Christian cause will be removed at once.

3. Free-will offerings, made in the Lord's House on the Lord's Day, will supply all the funds required for the support of public worship, for the relief of the poor under the care of the congregation, and for missions already established. Ever since the days of the Apostles this has been the *theory* of the Church; but sadly marred in practice by reliance on other ways of raising money, erroneously judged more safe because less frequent and more compulsory.

In Scotland, the plate at the church door is an important source of congregational income; but we are not as yet aware of any congregation which has had knowledge enough and faith enough to cast itself fully on that simple method alone for all its funds. Some, however, are coming hopefully near to this point.

In England, several non-established congregations are mainly supported thus. "We never seem to want money," writes a gentleman connected with a Congregational church in Salop. "We have paid off £3000 in two years. This was by subscription; but for all purposes in connection with our new sanctuary we adopt the weekly offering. Our people fall in with it well, and the amount is gradually increasing. We have no wealthy persons, and were only twenty-four when we started. We have now an overwhelming congregation. I am persuaded that larger congregations would be the result of giving up the rattle of the plate." In Mr. Ross's "Record" (No. 27) there is the following notice of a congregation in Birmingham:—"Weekly offerings are in the place of pew-rents and monthly or quarterly collections, for the expenses of the chapel. There has been each year hitherto a surplus, which has been added to the fund for the liquidation of the debt on the new building. The surplus in 1865 was £132 18*s.* 2*d.* Total for the year, £512 10*s.* 7*d.* Weekly average, £9 13*s.* 7*d.*"

As for the Church of England, very great prominence is given to the offertory by a society called "The National Association for Promoting Freedom of Public Worship." We do not know enough about this society to enable us to form any opinion of its value; but the following sentences from a handbill which was being scattered over Manchester in January of this year, prove that it is, so far at least, diffusing sound principles:—"The system of pew-rents rejects the contributions of the large majority of the people whose *weekly* earnings would afford an ample resource for *weekly* contributions, but who are thus trained to the habit of not contributing anything." "It practically limits the contributions of the wealthy or generous Christian to the stated half-yearly pew-rent, contrary to the scriptural command, addressed to rich and poor alike, to give *every Sunday* as (*i.e.*, in the exact proportion that) God has prospered us." "Weekly offerings are the most scriptural, productive, permanent, and certain means of raising income for church purposes."

The excellent Bishop of Ripon says: "It has for some time past appeared to me, that, *for want of a more careful and systematic attempt to secure free will contributions*, the amount given for religious objects, whether home or foreign, is far below the proper standard. It is my belief that we want *a well-organised system for the collection of small weekly offerings from the less wealthy members of our church.*"

The following very suggestive table of statistics we take from the report of the Holy Trinity District Church, Birkenhead:—

STATISTICS OF THE "OFFERTORY,"

Showing the various Coins in which the Collections were made.

	1864. £	*s.*	*d.*	1865. £	*s.*	*d.*
In Note, (Easter offering to Minister . .	0	0	0	5	0	0
,, Sovereigns	10	0	0	9	0	0
,, Half-Sovereigns . . .	30	0	0	41	0	0
,, Crowns	1	0	0	4	10	0
,, Half-Crowns . . .	31	0	0	33	12	6
,, Florins	14	18	0	17	0	0
,, Shillings	99	19	0	104	7	0
,, Sixpences	80	18	6	110	2	0
,, Fourpences. . . .	16	16	8	25	16	8
,, Threepences	37	15	9	62	12	0
,, Pence.	23	18	11	21	4	3
,, Half-Pence	8	18	1½	6	7	7½
Total . . .	£355	14	11½	£440	12	0½

The incumbent kindly informs us that the givers do not exceed 200, and that there is not a *wealthy* man among them: yet the second year exceeds the first by a large sum,—more than the half is given in sums of sixpence and under,—and nearly 200*l.* in the smaller silver coins.

We began by quoting words of our greatest living authority in matters of finance: we shall conclude by expressing our thorough concurrence in the testimony given by him to this good movement, and our thankfulness that one so eminent should have given it. "I believe," says Mr. Gladstone, "that the diffusion of the principles and practice of systematic beneficence *will prove the moral specific of our age.*"

A. MACLEOD SYMINGTON.

A SUMMER HYMN.

THAT we have lived, live now, and know we live,
And see Thy bounties from the heavens come down
With sunlight, moonlight, and the fruitful rain,
We praise Thee, praise Thee, Lord of Light and Life!
Thy mercies come to us unmerciful:
Even 'mid the war of our insurgent blood,
We hear Thy choiring angels sing of peace,
And know that thou Thyself art near us still,
With heaven in both Thy unobtrusive hands
To give Thy children. Mighty is our loss!
Spurning Thy truer spirits, we entertain
The specious forms of sin. Ah, deaf and blind!
Too late we hear the pleading voice of love
Breathe through our shapeless unpellucid dreams
That mystify Thy glorious attributes:
Late, late we find—if haply we do find—
The way of life by which, deep scarr'd, we leave
The gilded paradise of all our woe,
Which to our twisted vision seem'd to be
The dwelling-place of gods. Our present life
Is sadden'd by the deeds of former times.

No vain caprice doth ever move Thy hand
In its good offices. Behold, even now,
Though we are unrepentant, earth is full
Of Thy unmeasur'd mercies. Every field
Smiles with Thy glory; and each chiming voice
In forest, or on heaven's invisible thrones,
Has one soul-soothing song. The sweet wind sings
Soft hallelujahs round the perfect rose;
And each replenish'd stream melodious rolls
Through gleaming uplands to the downward dells.
The season smiles. If nature sings and smiles,
Inspired by genial spirits, shall the soul
Of man do less, when she beyond this sphere
Can look, and see each brighter consequence
Rise radiant, dawn on dawn, like heaven on heaven?
The larger spirit owes the larger debt;
Yet we who come from Thee, and grow to Thee,
Could never pay our everlasting due,
Didst Thou, the Soul of Love, all-merciful,
Fail in Thy tender tenderness to man!

Therefore to Thee, the ever-bountiful
Rememberer, supremely beautiful,
Who hear'st the twitter of the youngling wren
Lodged in its hollow globe of woven down,
In the far forest, secret, deep, and still,
We move our lips uneloquent, and breathe
Hush'd prayers, songs audible to Thee alone,
To whom the silent wish is loud as bells.
Love us, and make us love Thee, evermore
And everywhere, of varying time and place;
Whether the night be o'er us, or the day,
Or the grey twilight of a heart-born grief.
Whatever is, we ever are with Thee,
For Thou dost fill all spaces of the world,
Where the most peaceful planets shine delight,
Or where inhuman war makes human woe.
While yet the flickering curtain of repose
Shuts out the impatient couriers of the dawn,
On Thy world-bearing wing we softly lie
Where all night long, beneath the healing stars,
We slept, while Thou with speed that drown'd the sense
Of speed, didst bear us o'er the populous gulfs
Through glimmering aisles of sweet solemnity
O'er-archèd by the gleaming plumes of peace
To the fresh airs and roses of bright morn.
And when vague sleep is chased by light away,
Thy pure unwrinkled angels hither come,
And with persuasive voices minister
To each diviner sense—entreating us
Out of our baser to our nobler selves,
And thence to Thee, the end.
Open our souls,
That we may see Thy pure prevailing light;
Soften our hearts, that we may feel Thy love;
Temper our minds, that we may think of Thee
Without the slave's dark fear; and make us wise
With Thy eternal wisdom, that we may
See, love, and worship Thee, the Only One,
In cold, in hunger, and in wretchedness,
And spurn the pangs that beat us down from Thee,
And bear the cross whereon we may be nail'd,
Patiently onward to the Mount of Christ!

WILLIAM FREELAND.

IN THE LIFE OF OUR LORD.

THE WOMAN WHO WAS A SINNER.

Luke vii. 36—50.

COMING as it does in the narrative of St. Luke (the only evangelist who records it) immediately after that discourse which closed with the invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," how natural the thought that here, in what is told us about the woman who was a sinner, we have one instance—perhaps the first that followed its delivery—of that invitation being accepted of one wearied and heavy laden coming to Jesus, and entering into the promised rest. Multitudes had already come to Him to get their bodily ailments cured: she is the first who comes under the pressure of a purely spiritual impulse—grieving, desiring, hoping, loving, to get all and more than all she seeks.

Jesus has accepted the invitation of a Pharisee, and reclines, leaning upon his left arm, his head towards

the table, his unsandalled feet stretched outwards. Through the crowd of guests, and servants, and spectators, a woman well-known in the city for the profligate life she had been leading, glides nearer and nearer, till she stands behind Him. As she stands she weeps. The tears fall thickly upon his feet. She has nothing else to do it with, and so she stoops and wipes the tears away with with her loose dishevelled hair. She gently grasps the feet of Jesus to kiss them, and now she remembers the box she had brought, in hope, perhaps, to find some fitting opportunity of pouring its contents upon his head; but she can make no nearer approach, and so she sheds the precious perfumed ointment on those feet which she had washed with her tears, wiped with the hairs of her head, and covered with the kisses of her lips.

What has brought this woman here? what moves her to act in this way to Jesus? Somewhere, somehow Jesus had recently crossed her path. She had heard his calls to repentance, his offers of forgiveness, his promises of peace and rest. The arrow had entered into her soul. She stood ashamed and confounded. Her iniquities took hold of her so that she was not able to look up, yet deep within her heart new hopes were rising, dimly before her eye new prospects dawning. All the penitence she experienced, all the new desires, expectations, resolutions, that were filling her breast she owed to Him—to the gentle and loving yet resolute and truthful spirit in which Jesus had spoken. She had looked at Him, had listened to Him, had followed Him as He opened those arms of his mercy so widely, and invited all to come to Him. And what He so fully offered—the peace of forgiveness, the blessedness of meekness and lowliness, of poverty of spirit, purity of heart—these are what she now, above all things, desired to have. Believing that she can get them alone from Him, an irresistible attraction draws her to Him. Jewish women were wont to honour, by one or other mark of favour shown, the Rabbi or teacher to whom they felt most attached or indebted. But what shall she render unto One who has already quickened her to a new life of hope and love? She hears of his going to dine with the Pharisee. Too well she knows how this man and his guests will look upon her, what an act of effrontery on her part it will appear for her to obtrude her presence into such a dwelling at such a time. But faith makes her bold, love triumphs over fear. She presses in and on, till at last she finds herself bending over the feet of Jesus, with the costliest thing she has, the alabaster box of ointment, in her hand. As she stands behind that form, as she stoops to embrace those feet, all the thoughtlessness, the recklessness, the unrestrained self-indulgence of by-past years, the ties she had broken, the injuries she had done, the reproaches she had incurred, the sins that she had committed, flash upon her memory. Who is she, that she could come so near and touch so familiarly the pure and the holy Jesus? She cannot meet his eye, she does not press herself upon his notice. But is He not the meek and compassionate, as well as the pure and the holy One? While others had frowned upon her, avoided her, discarded her, treated her as an outcast, had He not shown a deep and tender interest in her, a yearning over her to take her in his hand and lead her back to the paths of purity and peace? It was this kindly treatment that had broken down all power to resist upon her part, which had given Him such a hold of her, which had brought her to the house of the Pharisee to see Him, which had drawn her so close to Him. But the very thought of all the love and pity that He had shown to her and to all sinners open afresh the fountains of grief, and shame, and self-reproach, and the tears of a true and deep repentance flow forth, not the tears of a bare self-condemnation—a stinging remorse goading the spirit to despair. Along with a true sense of her sin there is an apprehension of the Divine mercy—that mercy revealed to her in Jesus. She sorrows not over her sins as one who has no hope: a trust in Christ's readiness and power to pardon and to save her has already entered into her heart. The very sense, however, of his exceeding graciousness quickens the sense of her exceeding sinfulness. The faith and hope to which she has been begotten intensify her penitence, and that penitence intensifies her love; so that as we look upon her—first standing silently weeping, then bending down and bathing those feet with her tears, then clasping and kissing them and pouring the rich ointment over then—she presents herself to our eye as the most striking picture of a loving, humble penitent at the feet of Jesus which the Gospels present.

It was with a very different sentiment from that with which we are disposed to look at her that she was looked at by the Pharisee who presided at the feast. He had noticed her entrance, watched her movements, seen that, though not turning round to speak to her, Jesus was not unconscious of her presence, was permitting her to wash and wipe and anoint his feet. For the woman he has nothing but indignation and contempt. He thinks only of what she had been, not of what she is; and his only wonder as to her is, how she could have presumed to enter here and act as she has been doing. But he wonders, also, at Jesus. He cannot be the prophet that so many take Him to be, or He would have known what kind of woman this was; for He could not have known that and yet allowed Himself to be defiled with her touch. Whatever respect he had been prepared to show to Jesus begins to suffer loss, as he sees Him allowing such familiarities to be practised by such hands. Not that this respect had ever been very spiritual or very profound. The omissions that our Lord notices—notices not so much in the way of complaint as for the purpose of bringing out the contrast between the treatment given by the two—Simon and the woman—would seem rather to imply that he had not been careful to show any particular regard to his guest. Perhaps he thought that he was paying such a compliment to Jesus in inviting Him to his house that he was the less attentive to the courtesies of his reception. It was a rare thing for a man like him—a Pharisee—to do such a thing. Simon, however, was not one of the strict and rigid, the religious devotees of his order; he was more a moralist than a pietist; and seeing much in Jesus to approve, and even admire, he was quite ready to ask Him to his house, in the hope, perhaps, that in the easy freedom of

social intercourse he might test the pretensions of this new teacher and see further than others into his true character and claims. One mark or token of his order is deeply stamped upon this Simon—pride,—a pride, it may have been, a little different from that of the Pharisee whom Jesus represents in the parable as praising himself before God for his fasting twice in the week and giving tithes of all that he possessed, yet quite akin to his in comparing himself with and despising others. He, too, might have stood and prayed thus with himself: God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or as this woman here. Anything like contact, concert, familiar intercourse with such a low, abandoned woman, no man who had any proper self-respect, he thinks, could practice or endure. And now that he sees Jesus consenting to be touched and handled by her, his only explanation of it is that He cannot know what kind of woman she is. "Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him" (vii. 39).

In thinking and feeling so, he entirely overlooks the change that had taken place—the evidence of which appeared in the very manner of the woman's present conduct, and above all the nature and strength of the tie which that change created between her and Jesus. It was to lift him out of this deep abyss of pride, and if possible to show him how much closer, deeper, tenderer relationship it was in which this penitent stood to Him, than that in which he, Simon, stood, that Jesus stated the case of the two debtors. "And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged."

As little as David saw the drift of Nathan's parable of the little ewe lamb, as little did Simon at first perceive the drift of the one now addressed, and so he promptly answers, I suppose that it would be he to whom he forgave most. Out of his own mouth he stands convicted. It would be straining the short parable in this instance spoken by our Lord if we took it as strictly and literally representing the relative positions before God in which Simon and the woman stood, or as intimating that both had been actually forgiven, the one as much more than the other as five hundred exceeds fifty pence. It is not so much the amount actually owed as that known and felt by the debtors to be owing, and their conscious inability to meet in any way the payment, that supplies the groundwork of our Lord's application of the suppositious case. "And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." Thou hast been watching, Simon, all that this woman has been doing, but what is the true explanation of her conduct, the explanation that vindicates at once her conduct to me and my conduct to her? Why is it that she has been showing to me marks of respect, and strong personal attachment contrasting so with those that you have shown, or rather have omitted to show. She has done so, because she loves so much; and she loves so much, because she has been so much forgiven. It is but little compared with her that you feel you owe, but little that you can be forgiven; but little, therefore, that you love. In speaking to him thus, how forbearingly, how leniently did the Lord deal with Simon; how much more leniently and forbearingly we may be apt to think than he had deserved, or than his case warranted. But it was so in every case with our Divine Master, ever seeking the good of those He dealt with—striving by the gentle insinuations of his grace to win his way into their consciences and hearts, rather than by full display of all their guilt or stern denunciation of it. If in this instance he was successful, if Simon's eyes were opened to discern in the two debtors himself and the woman, and in the creditor to whom all their debts were due none other than He who was sitting at his table, what a wonderful revolution in his estimate of Jesus must have taken place; for nothing in this whole narrative strikes so much as the simple, natural, easy, unostentatious manner in which Jesus assumes to himself the position of that Being to whom all spiritual debts are owing and by whom they are forgiven.

"Her sins," said Jesus of the woman to Simon, "which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much." So to interpret this saying of the Saviour as to make the loving the ground of the forgiveness would be to contradict both the letter and spirit of the preceding parable, in which the love is represented as flowing out of the forgiveness, and not the forgiveness as flowing out of the love—Jesus points to the love not as the spring but as the evidence of the forgiveness—to the strength of the one as indicating the extent of the other.

When Christ said so emphatically to the Pharisee, "Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee," the attention of the woman must have been for the moment diverted from her own case, directed to the colloquy that followed, the more so as it seemed at first to have no reference to her. But when He turned, and, looking on her for the first time, said, "Seest thou this woman?" into what a strange tumult of emotion must she have been thrown, all eyes on her—the contrast between her attentions and love to Jesus and those of Simon drawn out in particular after particular by our Lord himself, all closed by her hearing Him declare, "Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven." The desire, the hope of pardon, had already dawned

upon her heart. She had trusted in the Divine mercy as revealed to her in Jesus, and already experienced the relief and comfort this trust was fitted to impart. Her faith, however, was yet imperfect, her sense, her assurance of forgiveness not relieved from all uncertainty and doubt; but now from the lips of the Lord himself she hears the fact announced that her sins had been forgiven, and, as if that were not enough—as if He would do everything that word of his could do, to seal the assurance on her heart—Jesus turns to her and says "*Thy sins are forgiven.*" Fear takes wings and flies away, doubt can find no more room within, the sins without number of all her bygone life, rush out of sight into the depths of that sea into which Jesus casts them. Not ceasing to be penitent, more penitent than ever, the bowed-down spirit is lifted up as the full blessedness enters and possesses it of one whose transgression is all forgiven, whose sin is altogether covered.

"*Thy sins are forgiven thee.*" Was it in wonder and with an awe like that of men who feel themselves in the presence of One in whom the most peculiar prerogative of the Divinity resided, or was it in hatred and with contempt of Him as an arrogant, presumptuous blasphemer, that those around the table began to say to themselves, "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" Whatever their state of mind was as to himself, Jesus does not lay it bare, nor stops to expose or correct it. But there was one mistake that they might make as to the forgiveness He had pronounced. They might imagine it to have been capriciously or arbitrarily dispensed; they might fail to trace its connexion with the spiritual condition of her upon whom it was bestowed; if not dissevering it from its source in Him, they might dissociate it from its channel, the faith in Him which she had cherished. Even she herself, after what had been said, might be disposed to attach the forgiveness to the love, rather than the love to the forgiveness, overlooking the common root of both in that faith which brought her to Jesus, and taught her to cast her confidence alone and undividingly on Him. Therefore his last word, as He dismisses her, is, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." In peace she goes, silently as she had entered; not a single word throughout escaping from her lips, her heart too full of humiliation, grief, and shame at first, now too full of joy and gratitude. In peace she goes, light for ever after on her heart the reproach that man might cast upon her—the Christ-given peace the keeper of her mind and heart. She goes to hide herself from our view, her name and all her after-history unknown. The faith and traditions of Western Christendom have indeed identified her with Mary of Magdala, and assigned to her a place among those women who ministered to the Lord of their substance, who were admitted to close and familiar intercourse with Him in Galilee, and who were privileged to be the last attendants on the cross and first visitors of the sepulchre. We will not presume to say how far the former life of the penitent woman would have interfered with her occupying such a position; we will not allude to the difficulty that will occur as you try to imagine what substance she could have had, or whence derived, out of which she could minister to Jesus. Neither shall we dwell upon the fact that out of Mary of Magdala seven devils had been cast, a possession not necessarily implying any former criminality of life, yet apparently quite inconsistent with the kind of life that this woman had been leading. Enough, that when Mary, called Magdalene, is first mentioned, as she is in the opening verses of the next chapter in St. Luke's Gospel, she is introduced as a new person, not amid scenes then, nor at any time thereafter, that in any way connect her with the woman that had been a sinner. It is true that, whilst there is the absence of all evidence in favour of their identification, there is the absence also of evidence sufficient positively to disprove it. In these circumstances it may be grateful to many to trace in the narrative now before us, the earlier history of one so loved, and honoured afterwards by Jesus, as was Mary of Magdala. Much more grateful we own to us is the belief that this penitent, whose broken heart was so fully and tenderly upbound—having got the healing from his gentle loving hands—from that notoriety into which her sin had raised her retired voluntarily into an obscurity so deep that her name and her dwelling-place, and all her after-story, lie hidden from our sight.

I close by reminding you that the forgiveness so graciously conveyed to this nameless penitent is equally needed by all of us, is offered to us all—Christ is as willing to bestow it upon each of us as ever He was to bestow it upon her. The manner of our possession and enjoyment of this gift depends upon the manner in which we deal with the tender of it made to us by Him. We may keep it for ever hanging at a distance out before us, a thing desired or hoped for, now with more and now with less eagerness and expectancy, according to the changing temper of our mind and heart. But we might have, we ought to have, this blessing now in hand as our present full secure peace-giving possession. And not till it thus be ours, not till the hand of faith grasps and holds it as ours in Christ, ours through our oneness with Him in whom we have redemption through his blood, even this very forgiveness of our sins; not till we exchange the vague and general and vacillating hope for the firm yet humble trust which appropriates at once in its full measure this rich benefit of our Lord's life and death for us; not till the comforting sense that our sins have been forgiven visits and cheers our heart, can we love our Saviour as He should be loved, and as He wishes to be loved by us. It is when we know how much it is that we have owed, and how much it is that we have been forgiven, that the bond gets closest that binds us to Him—a complex, ever growing, ever tightening bond, the more that is forgiven ever revealing more that needs forgiveness; with us as with this woman, as with all true believers, the humility, the penitence, the faith, the love, the peace, that all accompany or flow forth from the granted forgiveness, all intensifying each other, all leading us more simply, more entirely, more habitually, more confidingly to Christ, for the mercy to pardon and the grace to help us in every time of need.

WILLIAM HANNA.

"PREACHING TOM."

We had an extraordinary piece of work the other week. The floor of our dining-room had become rotten, and the ceiling threatened to fall down upon us some day without giving notice, so that repair was imperative. It was very inconvenient to have workmen in the house, and especially to myself, for my little library, which looks into the garden, adjoins the dining-room, and a part of the partition near the ceiling had to be taken down. It is true, the underpart of the wall was high enough to hide me from the workpeople, but all the noise and a deal of the dust had free access into my sanctuary.

Unfortunately I had on hand just at that time a work which admitted of no delay, and constant reference to my book-shelves was absolutely necessary, so that there was nothing left for me but to follow the example of good old Archimedes, who, seated in his parlour at Syracuse, quietly drew a mathematical problem in the sand that covered the floor, while the Roman soldiers were engaged in pillaging his house.

I soon got pretty well accustomed to the noise of hammer and saw and plane, but what I never could be quite so indifferent to as I wished was the talk of the workpeople. At intervals there would be a short stoppage of work, and then a conversation would take place between the joiners from below and the plasterers from above. During those periods it was of no use for me to try to put together even so much as a single sentence. I was compelled simply to lay down my pen and wait till their worships in the next room were pleased to resume the hammer or the trowel. Sometimes the thought struck me that I might as well step in and ask whether it was their master's intention to charge me in his bill for the time they thus talked away; but as their talk, though on indifferent topics, was yet by no means improper, I resolved to let it go on, remembering that I, too, often paused in the middle of my work to take a breath and refresh myself. We are very prone to forget that due rest is the nerve of labour, and that the reason why so little is done frequently in a day is because too much is done in an hour. This reminds me of my friend Walter Oakley, Esq., who lives in that splendid villa at the foot of the hill, and has all his life done little else than sign cheques and look over his banker's accounts. One day as he sat in his garden he happened to look at a workman who with a pail was emptying a large tank into a drain. It struck him that the "lazy fellow," as Mr. Oakley termed him in his own mind, was doing the work dreadfully slow, for, by reference to his watch, he found that he poured out only two pails in a minute. Now as my friend Oakley is rather of a hot temper, he walked up to the man and asked him whether he was not ashamed of pouring out only two pails a minute. The man smiled, and said that he could not well do more.

"Well, then, I will show you that more can be done," answered Mr. Oakley with animation; and taking the pail he began working away with such energy, that he poured out about six pails a minute.

"Now, sir," he said, returning the pail triumphantly to the man, "you have learnt a lesson, behave accordingly."

"Please your honour," answered the workman, "would you be kind enough to go on in that way for another couple of minutes?"

"Why?"

"Because I never doubted that six pails might be poured out in one minute, but what I am curious to know is, how long you could continue at that rate?"

My friend Oakley had never thought of that. He was somewhat like the woman in the fable who had a hen that laid a golden egg once every day, and who, to get all the eggs she supposed the animal to contain, took a knife and cut the bird up.

But it is quite true, notwithstanding all this, that if the precious time workpeople waste in talking and loitering were deducted from their bills, we should have our houses much cheaper than they are now-a-days. It is a sad truth, which testifies unfavourably to the morality of the working class of the present day, that there are few among them who seem to feel that to steal a man's time is as much a theft as to steal his purse.

Still there are some good honest fellows who do really perceive and feel this, as I learnt from actual experience when my house was repairing. I was sitting in the library, compelled to listen to the talk that was going on in the dining-room when there was a moment's pause in the work, and I heard one of the workmen say to another:

"Why wasn't you at the —— Gardens, Tom?"

"Because I thought it wasn't right for me to go there," was the reply.

"Pshaw! Is there anything wrong in going out with decent company to spend a few hours in a fine summer evening in a garden?"

"I won't go quite so far as to say that; but what may be right for one man may be wrong for another, and I thought it was not right for *me*."

"Not for you! What in the world can there be wrong in it for you? You are unmarried, have neither chick nor child, plenty of money, plenty of time, and nobody at home to keep you back. Now tell us your reason. I wonder what it is. Listen, ladies and gentlemen!"

"I will tell you with all my heart some other time," said Tom, "but not now."

"Why not now?"

"Because this is not a time for talk, but for work."

"Hear the parson again!" said one of the band, bursting into laughter.

The tools were taken up again and the noise recommenced with its deafening ring. I returned to my books and soon forgot all about the conversation. After about an hour's time there was another pause,

and I heard the workmen preparing to go to their dinner. This promised me the pleasure of an hour's perfect quiet; but in this instance I was wrong in my expectations. It appeared that two of the men, Tom and David, stayed to take their dinner at the job. David, I found, was the name of the man who had begun the above-mentioned conversation with Tom.

"Now you will tell me why you wasn't out last night, won't you?" said David.

"I will. First, then, it costs me too much money."

"But it cannot cost you more than it costs me," said David; "and you earn the same wages as I do."

"Well, you are perfectly at liberty to spend your money as you think proper, but I thought I should not be justified in spending such a pretty bit of mine for such a purpose."

"I cannot see why you should not," said David. "We need a little recreation sometimes. It is as necessary for our health as our meat and drink, and paying a shilling for it is perhaps paying half-a-crown less to the doctor."

"I admit," said Tom, "that recreation is a good thing, and you know that I myself was in the gardens a month ago. But I cannot afford to go so often as you do, and I must seek my recreation in some cheaper way. I often take a walk across the fields, or visit a friend, or read a book."

"Of course all that is very cheap," said David, in a sarcastic tone.

"Why, yes, it is," Tom replied. "But it seems as if you cannot enjoy yourself unless it costs you money. I doubt whether you ever take a walk without calling at some public-house, or have friends at nome without sending out your daughter with a pewter-pot. I see her often crossing the street holding something under her apron. Now I don't mean to say that you are given to drinking, but I sometimes cannot help saying to myself, I wonder how David can pay for it all. *I* couldn't, I'm sure."

"But why couldn't you?" asked David rather crossly. "I have to support a wife and four children, and you have nobody to care for."

"I beg your pardon," said Tom. "I have more people to care for than you have. A bachelor is the head of a numerous family. The whole neighbourhood come down upon him because people think he can easily afford it."

"Oh, by-the-by," said David, "is it true what I heard the other day, that you bought a set of clothes for Bob Wilkins' boy, to get him apprenticed to the plumber?"

"Why, you know the father is a poor fellow, out of employment owing to ill health, and the boy was running idle about the street all day. I asked him why he did not try to learn a trade, and he said he had no clothes, else the plumber would have taken him. Now what was I to do? I thought, suppose I were married, and Bob were my son, shouldn't I buy a coat for him?"

"You're a queer chap, Tom," said David. "Of course it is clear that if you went on in that way you couldn't afford to go to the gardens, though you had all the money in the Bank of England."

"I'm glad I haven't got that," replied Tom. "It would bring a fearful responsibility."

"Responsibility or no, I wish I had only so much as a hundredth part of it," said David.

"Why, I won't say I don't wish it either," said Tom. "We all of us wish to be rich. That's human nature. But many of our wishes are unwise, and that is one of them, at least, so far as I can judge for myself. I find that it gives me plenty of trouble to spend my thirty shillings a-week properly. What would it be if I had to answer for the use I made of say thirty pounds a-week?"

"If you had to answer?" asked David. "What do you mean? Nobody has to answer for the way they spend their money. Isn't it their own property?"

"Well, I don't know. I rather think not."

"What! do you mean to say my wages, which I have earned with my own hands, are not my property?" cried David. "Have I not the right to do with them just what I please?"

"Of course you have, but one day you will have to give an account of what pleased you. It is true, you earn your wages with your own hands, but who gave you the hands to earn them with."

"Ah well, of course, I don't wish to say anything against that."

"I look upon my wages as money which is entrusted to me by God that I may use it for good objects," replied Tom. "It isn't my property, nor am I myself my own. We are, with all we have, the property of Christ. We are honestly bought and paid for, you know."

Footsteps were now heard, and soon the noise of the workpeople, who had returned from their meals, put an end to this conversation. I could not, however, help feeling interested in Tom; and as I was well acquainted with Mr. Brixton, the builder in whose service he was, I called upon him the next day to obtain some further information about Tom.

"Ay, Tom Perkins!" said Mr. Brixton, with a smile. "He is a singular character. We all know him by the name of 'Preaching Tom.' He is a little methodistical, you know; but for all that he is an uncommon good fellow. He has been in my service these eight years, and I never had a better man either as to work or conduct."

"Does he preach on Sundays?" I asked, thinking that perhaps he might be a local preacher.

"I don't think he does. At least, I never heard of it. His comrades call him 'Preaching Tom,' not because he really preaches, but because he is always giving them some little bit of moral advice. They don't take it amiss though, for he is never harsh. He sometimes gives them rather hard nuts to crack, however. I shall give you an instance. One of my men, of the name of Lewis Harding, abandoned his wife, and was living with another woman, whose husband was at sea. Tom and Lewis, and a few other workpeople, were at a job in the High Street. Owing to the road having been repaired, there was a heap of stones lying close to the entrance of the

place, which the road-men seemed to have forgotten to take away. At all events, the stones were there, and nobody knew why. Now Harding, who happened to be short-sighted, sometimes when in a hurry stumbled on them, and once he hurt himself so much that his elbow bled profusely. Tom, who was near at hand, at once fetched a basin of water, washed the wound, and bandaged it with his handkerchief.

"'Confound those stones!' said Lewis.

"'Hush!' said Tom. 'You may be thankful you have come off so cheaply. If you had lived in Israel under the law of Moses, they would have killed you long since.'

"'Who would have killed me?' asked Lewis.

"'The stones.'

"'Me?'

"'Yes, you. Don't you know that the law of Moses commanded an adulterer to be stoned till he was dead?'

"This observation of Tom's made such an impression upon Lewis that from that moment he never saw the stones without being reminded of the evil of his life. At least, so Lewis told me himself afterwards. 'At last,' he said, 'it was to me as if the whole lot of them threatened to rise and strike me; and they seemed to haunt me so fearfully, that I returned to my wife to get rid of them.'"

"And do Lewis and his wife live in peace now?" asked I.

"I don't know. I think they do, though she is said to be a very ill-tempered woman, with whom it is rather difficult for a man to live. But if you want to know something more about them, the best thing you can do is to go to Mrs. Burwood, who lives in the same street in which Tom lives. She is an acquaintance of ours, and a good old woman. She will also tell you all you want to know about Tom and his doings."

Having taken down Mrs. Burwood's address, I went to the place and luckily found her in. She was a cheerful old woman, whose open, honest face inspired confidence and respect. As she was by nature talkative, I had little trouble in getting her to tell me all about Tom, who, as I soon learnt, had been her neighbour for several years, and still kept up friendly relations with her. I also found that Mrs. Burwood was a good Christian woman, who, both from her Bible and from experience, had gathered more wisdom than is usually met with among women of her class.

"Oh, Tom is a good child of God," she said. "He is a preacher of the Lord to the Ninevites in this neighbourhood. But he preaches in his own way: not by sermonising or lecturing people, but by occasionally dropping a word in season, that causes people to think and to consider; and by his own conduct he shows them the better way, and tries to bring them to walk in it. I daresay in passing you noticed a little rag and tool shop at the corner of the street. If you were to enter that place, you would learn how blessed to an unhappy family may be a few words of a good man spoken in love. The inmates are the parents and their large family of nine children. The man was a glazier, and used occasionally to work at the same job with Tom. The woman is not a bad person, but rather frivolous, and has not much skill in household matters. She was willing enough to work, but did not know how to do it to a purpose. She had no rule nor order in her labour, and a family so numerous as hers requires a woman who knows what she is about every minute. She was always buried under such mountains of work, that her very spirit was crushed out of her, and in sheer despondency she allowed matters to take their own course. The consequence was, that her house was anything but comfortable—was, indeed, a very Babel of confusion. Add to this the sad circumstance that the eldest boy, a lad of sixteen, was a cripple, who, by aid of his crutches, could move about pretty well in the house, but never even thought of such a thing as apprenticing himself to a trade. As you will readily conceive, the family was continually in distress, as the husband could not possibly make up by industry for what his wife wasted through neglect. Upon finding his house buried in disorder and filth when he went home from his labour, he would sometimes take refuge in places where he could drown his discontent in the contents of the bottle. Now this sad state of things was well known throughout the neighbourhood, and had not escaped Tom's notice, and he often wished he could do something for these unhappy people. But as he was only slightly acquainted with them, he found no opportunity for this. One day, however, he happened to meet James (that was his name) at a job on the fifth storey of a very high warehouse. During a short pause they seated themselves in a window, from which they had a wide view over the houses of this densely-populated district.

"'If we could get the history of all the families who live in these houses written down,' observed Tom, 'what a strange book it would be!'

"'I have no doubt it would,' said James.

"'And what often strikes me,' Tom continued, 'is the thought of the awful sight it will be when all the heads of those families will stand before the great Judge to give an account of the way in which they have behaved to their wives and brought up their children. I am afraid not many of them think of that great responsibility.'

"'Perhaps not,' James replied. 'Many haven't got time to think of it. I for one, at least, am only too glad if so much time is left as to allow me to think how to keep the wolf from the door. I have a large family, you know.'

"'I know you have,' said Tom. 'I suppose your good wife must have a very great deal to do to keep matters right during the day?'

"James smiled rather sarcastically, and soon had read as many pages out of the book of his domestic life as enabled Tom to see where the root of the evil lay.

"'I cordially sympathise with you,' he said to James. 'But permit me to ask you one question: Do you believe that your wife and children were given you by God?'

"'I do.'

"'And do you believe that God can be pleased with the state of things you have described?'

"'Perhaps not,' James answered, doggedly. 'But what can I do?'

"'I think you might try to do something. Your house is far too full for your wife to manage well in it. You should thin the population. Your two eldest daughters, for instance, could you not place them in good places as servants?'

"'I have sometimes thought of that,' James answered; 'but, to tell the truth, I know nobody to send them to; and—they have no clothes.'

"That same evening Tom called upon me, and we soon arranged the matter. I promised to find situations for the girls, and Tom provided them with clothes. Before a month had elapsed, they were in good places.

"Tom was now, of course, introduced into James's family. He saw that four of the children were of such ages that they should have been at school long since.

"'I think,' he said to cripple Dick, 'you might try to earn the money to pay for the schooling of these four.'

"'Me!' cried Dick, laughing loudly. 'You might as well expect me to dance a quadrille.'

"Dick was a very good-natured lad, and was really clever in the head. Though lame, he was sharper than many a one who strutted along like a peacock.

"'I'll tell you how you could do it,' said Tom. 'I happened to need a file and went to old Allen Bowen's rag and tool shop over there at the corner. He told me that he was much in need of an honest fellow who could take care of his shop while he was away on business, for that his servant had run away with the contents of the till. I thought now that that would be something for you.'

"'Ay,' said Dick. 'He would not need to fear my running away with the till, at any rate. He'd soon overtake me.'

"In short, a few days after this Dick found himself behind Allen Bowen's counter at fifteen shillings a week and his dinner free. Every week he faithfully gave up as much as was required to pay for the children's teaching. After the lapse of three years, Allen Bowen, desiring to retire, advised Dick to carry on the business along with his father, who would be able to do the out-door work. Being fond of Dick, he sold him the shop on very moderate and reasonable terms. The family thereupon removed into the corner house, and have been thriving beautifully ever since. Tom's conversation was especially blessed to the heart of the poor cripple, who has never ceased to look upon him as his best friend and the main cause of his improved circumstances. So far as I am able to judge, Dick is a genuine Christian. He keeps the whole household under the discipline of the Gospel, to which James and his wife do not refuse to submit. It is now as much a pleasure to spend an evening in that family as formerly it would have been a punishment."

"Very wonderful," I said.

"Isn't it?" said Mrs. Burwood. "And he does it all so cheerfully, sometimes even in such an amusing way, that one cannot help smiling even while admiring the noble spirit of the man. He seems to sympathise especially with halt, lame, and cripple people. Last year he made out a list of all the poor cripples he could find in the neighbourhood. There were about a dozen of them. He purposed to give them a happy day this summer, and set about collecting among his friends, and when the plan was once known others began to collect for it. Dick gave a sovereign. Then on a beautiful day last month a large cart called early in the morning at the various houses of the cripples. There were plenty of hands to carry them down the stairs and lift them into the cart. It was a day of general merriment. Then the party drove to the —— Gardens, where a large crowd of friends and well-wishers assembled. I believe I am safe in saying that half the population of the neighbourhood ran out to the gardens, notwithstanding that the price of admission was a shilling a-head, which went to the benefit of the cripples. They had a good dinner and tea, and were wheeled about through the gardens all day, every one being eager for the honour of wheeling a cripple for half an hour. You may imagine the wonder and delight of these poor people, when they saw so many happy faces round them, and the springing fountains, and the sports and pastimes of the young people on the lawns. The amount collected at the gate was placed in the hands of a committee as a fund for the benefit of the cripples during the approaching winter."

"Oh," I said, "I see it now; it was that to which Tom alluded when he said to David that he had been at the gardens a month ago. He must be a great favourite with the people of this place."

"Well, he is liked by many, but still, you see, there are some who owe him a grudge. His remarks sometimes fall like good seed into a bad soil, and then they produce thistles which threaten to prick him. There is Mr. Lang, the teacher, for instance, who keeps a school a few yards to the left of the Mechanics' Institution Rooms. He picked a quarrel with Tom, which caused him much annoyance. It came about in this way:—

"One day Mr. Lang sent for Tom to repair a broken desk in his schoolroom. While Tom was working at the desk, Mr. Lang was standing at the window looking into his garden. He saw a boy doing something that greatly displeased him, for he stamped on the floor, and said, 'Hang that boy!'

"'Sir!' said Tom.

"'Never mind,' was the answer.

"'I'm glad of that,' said Tom.

"'Eh? What are you glad of?'

"'Of your not going to hang that boy.'

"Mr. Lang smiled.

"'Why,' he said, turning to Tom, 'he would have deserved it, the good-for-nothing scoundrel. He trampled upon one of my finest flowers.'

"'If every one who deserves to be hanged were hanged, I believe not a living man would be left on the earth,' said Tom.

"'That's strong language,' said Mr. Lang. 'And how can you prove it?'

"'Why, sir, it is quite plain, so far as I can see. We are saved by One, who, in our stead, hung

upon a cross, so it follows that we ought to have hung there.'

"'Speak for yourself,' Mr. Lang replied sharply. 'I am not aware I have behaved so badly as to have deserved the gallows.'

"'Nor have I,' said Tom, 'if there be no higher tribunal than that of man. But I believe there is a higher one, and that you as well as myself will one day have to stand before it, and to give account of every *word* which we have spoken.'

"'Ah, well,' Mr. Lang replied, now dropping his jesting tone and returning to sober earnest, 'I trust matters will not prove so bad as you seem to expect. I always say to the children: Do your duty; give every one what you owe him, fear God, and love your neighbour, and you will be happy both here and hereafter.'

"'That's a good religion for people who always do their duty and never sin,' said Tom, 'but unfortunately I am not one of them. I find that I have often neglected my duty and sinned against God, and so I am in need of a Saviour who died for my sins.'

"'Well, of course, I too have my faults and defects, as every human being has,' Mr. Lang answered; 'but the Almighty will overlook them if we try to do the best we can.'

"'Suppose that is true, sir,' Tom replied, 'still even such a religion would not meet *my* case, for I find that I seldom or never have done the best I could. I find that every day I am adding to the debt which stands against me in the great book of the eternal Judge, and I see that I shall never be able to pay it off. So I take refuge in a Saviour who paid it for me by his blood. My works, even though they were a thousand times better than they are, will never be sufficient to cover that enormous deficit. I am certain that if I were so reckless as to bring them forward on the great day of judgment, as a make-up for my sins, the anger of God would burn them up, and me along with them.'

"'What a horrible doctrine!' Mr. Lang exclaimed, in an angry tone. 'You make a bloodthirsty tyrant of our gracious Father in heaven.'

"'I cannot see how the title of a blood-thirsty tyrant can be applicable to Him who, to spare *our* blood, shed his own,' Tom observed calmly. 'I believe even the youngest child in your school will be able to perceive that no man can have greater love than He who has laid down his life for his enemies.'

"'I shall take care never to teach that cruel doctrine to my children,' cried Mr. Lang. 'I will tell them to do their duty. That will make better members of society of them than your fanatic theology can ever do.'"

"Here Tom, on noticing that Mr. Lang was getting angry, held his peace. Mr. Lang paced up and down the schoolroom, muttering many words which Tom, who resumed and went on with his work, could not understand. At length Mr. Lang, turning to him again, said:

"'Are you married?'

"'I am not, sir.'

"'If you had children, would you send them to my school?'

"Tom paused a moment to think.

"'Before answering that question,' he said, 'permit me to put another to you. Look you here, sir, this is a hole of seven inches square, which you want me to fill up with a piece of wood. Suppose you saw me cut off a piece of four inches square and try to fill up the hole with it, would you send your son to me to be taught joinery!'

"'Certainly not,' Mr. Lang answered. 'But what has that to do with *my* question?'

"'Why, sir, it appears to me that a man who tries to cover his sins by his own works is like a joiner who tries to fill up a seven-inch hole with a four-inch board.'

"Mr. Lang made no reply, and Tom, after having finished his work, departed. Since that day, Mr. Lang has been an enemy to Tom, and has not hesitated to speak of him occasionally to the children in a disparaging way. This has caused Tom to be called by various nicknames among the lower class. He has not, however, been molested by any of them as yet, for I believe a certain instinctive respect keeps them in restraint. They *feel* that he is better than the best of them."

* * * * *

The opening in the wall of my library is filled up again, the workpeople have left the dining-room, and a perfect quiet reigns in my snug little study. But sometimes still, when I pause for a moment from my work, I look up to the ceiling and wish the opening were there again, provided I could hear through it the voice of "Preaching Tom."

ANDREW WHITGIFT.

EXCELSIOR.

HOW THE RICH MAY BECOME A LITTLE RICHER.

WHILE we have reason to be thankful for the revived and intensified evangelism that pervades the Church of Christ in our day, we have also cause to fear lest our religion should become one-sided, and so lose its power. The jailer's eager question, "What must I do to be saved?" and the Apostle's short, clear answer, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," constitute together, like a constellation of binary stars in the heavens, a sure, bright light in the direction of safety; and it is well that the eyes of all earnest inquirers in our day are with one accord fastened on it. It is a blessed reaction from the legalism of a preceding generation. This is unquestionably the right side; and yet it is possible to stumble by leaning too hard and too exclusively over to it. Such books as Renan's "Life of

Jesus" and "Ecce Homo," though they disquiet the Church, may turn out to be rods permitted in Providence to smite her sharply, and so awaken her to that half of her work which she has, in a measure, been neglecting. Evangelical Christians in England may well listen to the warning of Edmund de Pressensé, who points out, in a review of "Ecce Homo," that such extreme views on the side of the human and the moral in Christianity spring ultimately from extremes on the other side. Now is the time for those who have drunk in most fully the doctrines of Paul, to listen to James when he urges practical duty. We accept our salvation as a redemption divinely wrought for us, and bestowed upon us free; but woe to the deceiver who hopes in this salvation and fails to obey the law of his Lord. It is the life-work of a Christian to forget past attainments in practical duty, and to strain ever forward, ever upward. Not, indeed, What shall I do in order to commend myself to God's favour? but, How shall I most effectually glorify God and do good?

Learn at this time one specific lesson on life, and take it from an Old-Testament example. "Let me go over and take off his head," said Abishai to David, when Shimei cursed the king in his misfortune. "And David said to Abishai, . . . Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him." (2 Sam. xvi. 11.)

This footprint on the sands of time has been made by one of the Good Shepherd's flock. The man who left this mark in the wilderness is safe in the New Jerusalem now. It is manifestly the track of a man of God, but we are surprised to meet it here. It seems to lie far out of the way. Yes; far out of the straight way, but not out of the right way. When the pilgrims get home, they will not complain that the road was rough and crooked. When Israel escaped from Egypt, the line of their march, in its first stages, was round about; and the circuit, instead of leading them past the difficulty, led them to it. The flight of the fugitives led them to the sea, at the moment when their pursuers were close on their track. They must march through that flood on foot; but when they emerge on the other side, they will be rid of their pursuers. This great type is repeated in the exodus of each individual pilgrim. Like the Hebrew host, every ransomed man, at some part of his progress, is led to the side of a sea; and like the Hebrew host, although he cries as he enters the avenue, he sings when he emerges on the other side: he confesses that the Lord who hath done all things for him, hath done all things well.

Examine for a little this strange, eccentric bend in the life-course of the king; consider this sharp "crook in the lot" of a saint, that we may not be taken by surprise when we come to the crook in our own.

There were many ups and downs in the life of David the king. A youth of rural plenty and peace was succeeded by a dark stratum, in which sudden prosperity led only to envy and the most cruel persecution. Again emerging from trouble, he had enjoyed a long period of power and prosperity. His throne was established by successful war, and consolidated by industrious peace. All his enemies he had subdued, and all whom he had subdued he had conciliated. Pure worship rose to heaven; peace and plenty overflowed the land.

But trouble was gathering again, as secret and unsuspected as the charging of the thunder-cloud, away on the verge of the horizon, while the sun is still bright overhead; and trouble burst upon David's house and kingdom as suddenly and as terribly as breaks the lightning on the city when the cloud is full. From the bosom of his own family the rebellion rose: when all his enemies were at peace with him, his own son, whom he tenderly loved and perhaps unwisely indulged, lifted up the heel against him.

Although details are not given in the record, it is not difficult to gather that the rebellion of Absalom was substantially a rising of the sensual and earthly element against the godliness which at that time held the ascendant in the government. Absalom, with his beautiful face and long hair and dashing wild ways, was the culminating point through which a whole continent of long-suppressed profligacy broke out against the restraints of religion. Absalom was the leader of a young Israel, who in those days refused to wear the yoke of a God-fearing king, and determined to have free-thinking and free-living too. This is the true conflict of ages. This spirit is as rife and as potent in our day as it was then. At that time, under the theocratic government of Israel, it could not disport itself at all, until it had first violently overthrown the throne. Why does it not produce revolutions still? Simply because we allow it to take its own way. We give it liberty, and it consents to be godless, without being also necessarily revolutionary.

The traitor succeeded in gaining the popular favour, and a great army enrolled under his banner. At his approach the king, his father, taken by surprise and without preparation, was obliged to flee. The aged father left his home, the aged monarch left his capital, and sought safety in exile. Most of the people fell to Absalom's party, and the conspiracy seemed to have been crowned with complete success.

It was then that King David was compelled to taste the bitter cup that is ever presented in this world to fallen greatness. Those who had served through fear, now disowned his authority with insult. False friends of the serpent type, who with lambent lips had flattered the king, attempted now by a twist of their supple bodies to sting the aged outcast to the very heart with their tails. David went up by the ascent of Olivet, and wept as he went up. Advancing in this guise he came to Bahurim, and thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera. "He came forth, and cursed still as he came." "And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial."

This was hard to bear: hard for a king to bear. The adversary roughly rubbed a wound that was still open. In the bitter enmity of this rude man the king would feel the ingratitude of a nation. As the point of the weapon pierced his spirit, he bitterly felt that a whole nation in revolt were the shaft behind that directed it and sent it home. The consciousness

that he had in the main employed his power for the benefit of the people would still more embitter his spirit at the moment of its greatest agony.

For thirty-three years had this man been accustomed to command; his word was law; obsequious attendants vied with each other who should best interpret his unspoken desires, and who should be first to fulfil them: and now the moment that adversity comes, one of those very flatterers hangs on the flanks of the venerable fugitive, tracks his path, and spurts his filthy venom in his master's face.

With a loyal intent, and in a rough-and-ready soldierly way, Abishai, the general in immediate attendance, proposed to go over and take off the head of that dead dog, who dared to curse the king. There was doubtless a precipitous dell between Shimei and David when this cursing took place, sufficiently narrow to permit his voice to be heard across the chasm, but sufficiently deep to render escape easy before any detachment could scramble across. Modern implements and methods would have made short work with Shimei, across his protecting glen. Alas! modern methods, which take all romance away from war and destroy human life by hundreds at a blow, have not yet banished war from the earth. No: increase of destructive force is a game at which both belligerents can play; and, therefore, it cannot bring in the reign of peace. War will not die of mere greatness; it must be killed at last by Christian love.

These are the circumstances from which the lesson springs, now for the lesson: having penetrated and divided the shell, we shall endeavour to feed upon the kernel. Consider the manner in which David met this affliction, and what use he made of it. The bearing of the exiled monarch under the curses of Shimei contains a precious example. It is full of instruction and reproof. We are not obliged—we are not permitted to suppose that David, as a king, counted Shimei innocent, or was indifferent to his guilt. As a judge he would have condemned the coward criminal; but at present he is not king; he is not judge. He is a helpless old man fleeing for his life. He does not at present concern himself with the guilt of his adversary; he is all occupied about how he may best profit by the affliction that has overtaken himself. The thought in David's heart is not, How shall I stop these curses? but, How shall I receive them so that they shall be turned into blessings for me? His thought was not of vengeance against an enemy; but of discipline for himself.

Nor does the weakness of the king detract from the value of his meekness. It is quite true that he had not much power at that time to punish his opponents; but it was not on that account more easy to forgive and bear. Feebleness does not make the feeble meek; those have often chafed the most under wrongs who lack the power to take vengeance. The spirit may be wrought into rage by undeserved insult, although the palsied arm may not be able to strike an avenging blow. Not that this man was always righteous and meek. When left to himself, he fell on slippery places, and greatly offended both God and man; but though he fell through his own waywardness, he was never permitted to fall away. I suppose Satan tried as hard to get this man as he tried to get Peter, in order to sift him as wheat; but a Redeemer unseen prayed for him that his faith should not fail; and sent trials tempered so as to test and strengthen his faith, but not to sever its links and permit him to drift away.

In this case he so received the trial that it did not injure him: more than that, he so met it that it did him good. "Let him alone, and let him curse!" Why? Surely it was not a pleasant thing to be subjected to obloquy from that vile tongue? Surely it would have been just to have silenced the reviler! The cursing was not pleasant; it was bitter; but the poor sufferer, while he tasted its bitterness, knew the ailments of his spirit, and felt that the bitter draught was a precious medicine. "The Lord hath bidden him." This was his way of acknowledging that the suffering was sovereignly appointed for him, and appointed in love. Don't rush with drawn sword upon Shimei; he is only the rod wherewith my Father in heaven is chastening me for my good! Abishai's hand is stretched out to dash the cup from David's lips, because it is bitter; but David stays his hand, and patiently drinks it, because it is mixed by his Father in heaven for the health of his soul.

You are sailing over seas that you have never crossed before, but you have the advantage of charts and journals which mark the experience of former navigators on these waters. Those who went before you found a calm sea and a favouring wind, up to a certain point of the voyage; but they have left it written that from this point onward a heavy gale from the south lay upon their side, and greatly distressed them for many days. You have reached this region, and the same gale from the same quarter springs up on you. Your deck is washed by the water, and your whole hull is made to shiver and thrill by the wind. There is much sickly tossing; yet you do not wish it were calm. For you have consulted the journal and charts of your predecessors, and have found a remarkable entry at the close. Before the gale sprang up from the south, they had sailed for some days in a great ocean current that set in from the north. Although in it, and affected by it, they did not perceive it: it was carrying them out of their course, and yet they did not suspect its existence. Afterwards, when they were saved, they discovered that they owed their safety to the storm. Had they been left another day under the power of the silent unsuspected current, they would have been driven to their doom; but the gale from the opposite direction, though it interrupted their comfort, yet saved their lives.

Knowing by this testimony that you are in the latitude where the ocean current is carrying you silently but mightily to your death, you do not complain when a storm arises from the opposite quarter of the heavens. That storm you welcome as an angel sent to save. The winds are his messengers.

Thus David welcomed Shimei's curse, as the sharp stinging culminating point of the great rebellion. He had sailed long on a deep smooth tide of prosperity; but in the tide of prosperity there are unsuspected, dangerous, deadly currents. The sharp blast of adver-

sity is sent by God to save from going down to the pit.

'Tis time now to turn the weapon round and point it directly to our own breasts. The story of Shimei and his cursing is like Nathan's story of the ewe lamb. We have become interested in the ancient picture, distinct in its outline and fresh in its colouring, as if it had been drawn yesterday; let us now take up and apply for our profit Nathan's parable, "Thou art the man."

Sudden angry gusts spring up and beat on our sides as we plod along the voyage of life: do we receive them skilfully, so that they not only pass without doing us harm, but work together for our good? "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is" (is intended and sent by God) "to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." (1 Pet. iv. 12.) The specific dart which was at this time launched against the king was the foul tongue of a false ungenerous reviler. This is a fiery dart: and, alas! it is not, like the arrows of those days, an antiquated and obsolete weapon. These poisoned shafts fly thick through the air in our own favoured land. The Scripture says, all men have not faith; and we may safely add another note on the same key: all men have not charity.

Calumny is a barbed poisonous arrow, and it is always aimed at a tender place. A good name is better than great riches. It is a precious possession, and may be enjoyed equally by rich and poor. We all love it dearly, and cherish it fondly; when it is wrenched away by unrighteous violence, the calamity is greater than tongue can tell, or human courage endure. Calumny is devilish as regards the calumniator, and it is a very sore calamity in the experience of the calumniated. The blow is easily inflicted. It is not more difficult to throw vile words against a neighbour's character than to throw mud on his person as he passes. In modern times men may and do calumniate at less risk than in ancient. Shimei, although he took what he considered the safe side of the glen when he cursed, yet indulged his spleen at some risk of getting Abishai's sword in his flesh. Now-a-days they can stab you in the dark and escape with impunity. Any heartless man who has command of a newspaper may, without danger to himself, plant thorns in his neighbour's pillow that will cause that neighbour many sleepless nights.

The grand question for us, when calumnies are flung at us, is, How shall we receive them so that they may not hurt our spirit—so that what was meant for evil may issue in blessing? It is allowed, it is sometimes peremptorily required, that the injured should step forth and defend his own good name. This side of the question is important; but it sinks into comparative insignificance in presence of the other side—how shall I so bear the injury that, instead of breeding corrupt anger and revenge in the wounded spirit, it may providentially become an opening by which other inbred defilements may be discharged?

An accidental wound inflicted becomes at one time the destroyer and at another time the preserver of life. In one case, either through something poisonous adhering to the weapon, or something morbid in the condition of the patient, the wound generates a disease which ultimately takes life away. In another case a wound accidentally inflicted on a man who is suffering from a dangerous ailment becomes the channel through which the disease is discharged, and the blow which seemed to injure actually saves.

It is thus with wounds that neighbours unwittingly, or enemies of design, may inflict upon our spirits in the battle of life. These wounds, if we are in a spiritually morbid state, may generate fatal disease; but to healthful spirits such strokes may become messengers of peace, by removing the corruption that was troubling and defiling them.

At certain times and in certain circumstances it may be the duty of one who is maligned to repel falsehood and vindicate truth in the world; but all thoughts of vengeance are absolutely forbidden by the law of Christ. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." This is not only a prohibition, it is also a privileged exemption. From this rough and dangerous work the Son makes his people free. If the flame that shall scorch the nest of hornets must be kindled and fed in my breast, what consolation is it to me that in the end the vermin are consumed, if my vitals are scathed in the process? Render not evil for evil, but contrariwise blessing. When He was reviled, He reviled not again.

When a Christian is unjustly blamed and traduced, he should not occupy himself with an effort to obtain a victory over the traducer: he should reserve his strength for a more needful and more profitable aim,—How shall I preserve myself from being inflamed into sinful passion by that fiery dart? It will profit me nothing to gain a triumph in public over my adversary, if my own heart be defiled by that adversary's tongue, and so unfitted for the presence of my Lord. What is a man profited, although he gain a whole world of pride-engendering applause, if he lose, even in part, the purity and peace of his own soul? When the gun is foul and overcharged, the soldier may bring down his enemy by the bullet, but what will the victory profit him, if himself is killed by the rebound?

When a neighbour assails our good name, our own hearts too readily prompt to vengeance. A son of Zeruiah is ready within us to say, Let me go over and take off his head. But, beware: like David, see rather God's hand permitting the trial to come, and adjust yourself to meet it so that it will press you nearer to your Lord, and keep you closer in his steps.

To go down into the battle-field, and deliver your strokes thick and fast on the adversary's head, that his calumny may be rebutted and your good name preserved, may in some cases be to some extent a duty: in such a case, may God shield the naked head of the feeble soldier in the fight; but in every such case, there is much pain and much danger to the soul's health. It seems altogether impossible for such combustible matter as we are to pass through such a fire without being burned. Avoid it, in the interest of your soul, if you can; and if conscience, as before God, command you to

make defence, do it as gently as you can, and have done with it at the earliest possible moment. Flee; look not behind you; enter your closet and shut the door; and throw yourself, all glowing as your spirit will be,—throw yourself into the Saviour's love, as you would plunge into cool calm water, if your garments were in a blaze while you stood upon its brim.

But wherever and whenever duty to God and men does not compel you to contend, be silent; I would even say, lean in your judgment to the side of silence, for old Adam will draw hard in the opposite direction. Abishai will be there, eager to draw the sword; David must be firm in his resolution to sheath it. Alas! many a time David has had to lament when the decision was given on the wrong side. "These men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me." Generally the safer method is, "Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him." In this case, you are freed altogether from the distracting, irritating conflict. You are permitted to run direct into the presence of God: with spirit grieved indeed, but not ruffled by passion, you are permitted to open all your case to the inspection of your Father in heaven. A sweeter experience human soul cannot taste in the present world. You could almost thank the reviler for his cruelty, because it became the occasion of closer communion with God than you had ever known in a time of prosperity. You have seen a child more than recompensed for the pain of some elder brother's blow, by the deeper plunge that his tears procured for him into his mother's breast.

> "Nearer, my God, to Thee; nearer to Thee!
> E'en though a cross it be that raiseth me,
> Still all my song shall be,
> Nearer, my God, to Thee,—nearer to Thee."

It is not that you go to God to justify yourself and soothe your ruffled pride: it is the opposite. When driven by Shimei's cursing into the presence of God, your first word in the Father's ear is, "Lord, although Shimei's word is false, Thou knowest more evil in me than my enemies suspect." It is not to hide your sins that you run into your closet and shut the door; it is to pour them all out, and get them all forgiven. When you come out again, you come out serene and strong. God is able to keep what you have committed unto Him. As much of your good name as He needs for his kingdom's cause, He will bring forth into the light; and the rest—let it go. The favour of men is fickle, at the least; but in his favour is life, in his presence is fulness of joy for evermore.

Now, of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum. The tongue is an unruly evil, and there are many of these evils in the world. What, then? When a reviling tongue is unjustly let loose against you, shall you unleash another reviling tongue against it? No; that is not profitable—is not safe. When that gust begins to beat fiercely on your side, so hold your helm and trim your sails that it shall mightily help you home. A seaman in the middle of the Atlantic does not waste himself in getting angry with the blast that beats against him, and attempting to strike it as hard as it strikes him. Passionless he marks its direction and its force; bent on one object, he receives it so that it is compelled to help him forward, and when it has pressed him another ship's length nearer the haven, he allows it to hiss past unheeded.

All things are yours, Christian, if you have skill to take possession of your varied wealth, and energy to employ it for your own advantage. "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life or death, or things present, or things to come;" or—for in the form of this royal deed of gift it is implied that power is given indefinitely to add to their number—friends and foes, riches and poverty, love and hatred, good words and bad words, kindness and cruelty, blessings and curses; all things are yours, for "ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

WILLIAM ARNOT.

TO RARATONGA AND BACK.

THE little town of South Moulton in pleasant Devonshire counted among its families, at the beginning of this century, a whitesmith named Buzacott, whom God blessed with a Christian wife and many children. He was a member of an Independent Church, which traced its origin to an acquaintance of John Howe's, who, being ejected from the Church of England by the same Act, founded a congregation at the same time. There were never over a hundred persons in it, but it was an earnest, resolute, zealous body, and within a few years furnished seven-and-twenty labourers to the harvest of God. Mrs. Buzacott was a pious woman, in her ways not unlike old Mrs. Wesley. Her children remembered how, when they fled to her from the thunder, she would repeat the hymn,

> "Day of judgment! day of wonders!"—

and the habit she had "once during the day, of taking as many of us as she could collect into her bedroom for prayer." It was in this home that her son Aaron grew up, and from it he went to the village school, and then, being weakly, to a farmer, with whom he lived till his health was established, when he betook himself to his father's business. He joined the membership of the church at seventeen, devoted himself to the Sunday-school, and after some years would take alternate Sundays with the home missionary in preaching at six villages round. This more public service brought him into notice, and by arrangement with some who took an interest in him, he entered Hoxton Academy. He continued his mission-work as a student, and pitched upon Somers Town, where he preached in a room "with a mud floor, a window in which every pane of glass was broken, and all the holes stuffed

with rags except one, which had an old hat thrust into it." Richard Knill had already singled him out, as he fancied, when pleading for missions in the church at South Moulton, and pointing to the choir with whom he sat, had said, "There is a young man in that gallery who is now saying, *Lo, here am I, send me.*" In his third year at college, another sermon of the same character drove the impression so deep, that with his mother's hearty consent he offered himself to the London Missionary Society, and studied theology for two years at the Mission College. It was, perhaps, an irregular and too hasty education, but it is to be noted that the missionaries of that date were educated, and did not simply, as they have been represented, throw off the apron and put on the gown. There were few collegemen and scholars bred, nor are there many yet, and *their* gifts and mastery are only slowly and imperfectly won by men of business; but considering the suddenness of the demand and the quality of the supply, the missionary societies acted well, and if scholarship is no doubt always a gain, it could nowhere be dispensed with to so little hurt as where young Buzacott was sent. For the directors appointed him to the South Seas, then the most distant, and romantic, and heroic mission-field in the world, and drawing more immediately on faith, and wisdom, and patience, than on culture.

The journey was itself an adventure, for those far seas were mostly unknown, and they that went brought back strange and awful tales, such as the buccaneers might have told to eager groups on the piers of some Devonshire sea-port two hundred years ago, of lovely islands with rich woods and many fruits and gorgeous flowers, and coral groves beneath the soft clear sea, and climate of perpetual summer; and of savages, hideous and untameable, and that ate human flesh; of wild tempests, and sudden and woeful gaping of the solid earth, and hidden fires that burst through the thin crust of land. Into this new world the missionaries went out with long farewells and brave hearts, and their lives in their hands, by tedious voyaging round stormy capes, and with much mocking of the rough sailors, and sense of separation that in these days of steam and telegraph we are unable to realise.* There were five on board whom a merchant was sending out in a trading-ship at his own cost, and to ensure them attention two hundred and fifty pounds were given by the directors to the captain and his mates—thrown away as it turned out, for as soon as the coasts of England were out of sight, "instead of the preserved meats put on board for their special use, they were served with old salt meat quite capable of taking a polish;" the water "came out of oily casks put on board for ballast: it was a thick fluid, with an offensive odour;" though the cabins let in rain the carpenter was forbidden to stop the leakages, and it was impossible to sleep "until I procured a piece of bamboo from one of the officers, and with this made a shoot, by which the water was drawn off into a large empty meat tin." Westerly gales pursued them and threatened them with wreck. Mr. Buzacott was prostrated with rheumatic fever, Mrs. Buzacott was prostrated by sickness, and off Cape Horn driven to wish that she "was in her father's stable and had some of the water his horses used to drink;" while the crew alternately cursed and abused the passengers. After five months of this miserable voyaging the ship reached Tahiti. "It was a beautiful day," Mr. Buzacott writes, "such as is not uncommon in this sunny clime; the sky and sea were for miles deep purple; the trade winds, gently filling our sails, caused our ship to glide gently along the shore of this romantic isle; the mountains, one of which is 9,000 feet high, were clothed with the richest and most varied verdure, from their bases to their summits. The coral reefs, by which these islands are girt, extend in some parts only a few yards from the shore and at others some miles distant, forming a placid lagoon and safe harbour at many of the settlements. However calm the sea may be there is generally a sufficient swell from the vast Pacific Ocean to cause a silvery fringe of spray to break upon the reef. In the lagoons formed by the reef there is an inexhaustible supply of fish, and a lover of nature can scarcely enjoy a richer treat than to sail on a fine day in order to look down into the water on the beautiful miniature forests of coral below, exhibiting all the colours of the rainbow, with fish of various hues and shapes sporting among the branches and hiding within the caverns. The water is clear as crystal, objects at the depth of ten fathoms may be distinctly seen."

Every description of the South Seas reads like panegyric. Captain Cook writes almost as warmly as Hermann Melville. "An eternal spring," says Malte Brun, "combining with an eternal autumn." The barest peaks have a richer colour than our heather. The mountain sides are clothed with the pale green crown of the tall branchless *apape*, and the slender, graceful arms of the fir-like *toa* wave across the whiter foliage of the stately candle-nut; the dark, glossy leaves of the *ati* fill up the valleys, and throw into relief the magnolia bloom of the mighty *huter*, beside the pink fringe of whose large white flowers the *atai* smothers its blossoms of red in feathery sprays of acacia-like foliage: the *aoa* climbs like a green wall over the cliffs, and plants its standard on the summit; the bread-tree, laden with its golden fruit, hangs its cool shade over the native huts; the rivers are marked by the winding line of haughty chesnuts, and groves of cocoa-nut fringe the shore till their roots and stems are washed by the tide; fragrant flowers hang from stem to stem, and insects and birds in the vivid colours of the tropics flash through the leaves. Fruit grows without tending; the forest yields food; no vipers lurk in the grass, nor wild beasts in the jungle. The heat is never greater than in Europe, and cold is unknown. Clear streams pour down from the hills; clear bays run up from the sea: placid harbours of transparent water are enclosed by reefs of coral, and the long waves of the Pacific break outside in a ceaseless glitter of foam. Yet the thunder crashes with a more awful roar here, and the lightning wears a more sublime terror. Hurricanes shiver the trees, sweep the sea up to the mountains, and wreck an island in a night. Earthquakes growl below the soil,

* No vessel touched at Raratonga for three years after Buzacott arrived.

and shake the foundations of the hills; and volcanoes burn with a lurid glare that is seen across a hundred miles of ocean. It is like a fabled land of the poets; "each lovely island is made a sort of fairy land, and spells of enchantment are thrown over its varied scenes." The seed of the *aoa* was brought by a bird from the moon, where its spreading branches causes the dark spots in the planet's disc. The bread-tree is a father's self-sacrifice: "I will die," he said, "and become food for our son. When you shall hear first a sound like that of a leaf, then of a flower, then of an unripe fruit, and then of a ripe round fruit falling on the ground, know that it is I who am become food for my son." The rain is the weeping of Oro; the rainbow his pathway to earth; the dogs of Hiro raise their rough backs above the sea; the very sharks are the god's horses.

The sense of being in a region so strange and remote was soon heightened to Mr. Buzacott by actual experience. On the east of the island there was a station without a missionary. The chief pressed him to go; "we will be your servants; we will build you a chapel, school-house, and dwelling; we will fence-in a garden; all the bread-fruit and cocoa-nut trees, all the pigs and poultry, shall be yours." It was hard to resist; but Tahiti was not the missionary's place. At last the chief and his people ceased: Mr. Buzacott was to return from Taiarapu to Matavai; his persistent friends manned the boat and took him their own way; and when the plot was detected from shore, and a chief put off to the rescue, they did not give up their object, but declared they would seize his infant, and that the parents would soon follow: nor did they leave for some days, nor when they did were they at all convinced that they had done wrong. It was a curious illustration of the moral confusion that would be found in islands less civilised. They respected the missionary and his message; they presented themselves for his teaching; but they thought it no sin to steal him. Mr. Buzacott had already remained five months waiting for an opportunity to reach his destination in the island of Raratonga; for ships were rare, and Raratonga was out of the way. When he set sail, his old fortune followed him, and westerly winds made the journey of a week into four. "The island presented a most romantic appearance. Range upon range of mountains towered above each other, forming to the eye a gigantic ladder by which Titan might ascend far above the clouds and hold intercourse with the immortals; the lowlands revealed cultivated spots amid stately trees and forests. The very hills and mountains from base to summit were covered with dense wood of varied growth and colour. Mountain torrents leaped from crag to crag, forming the most lovely cascades and miniature waterfalls, and breathing a grateful coolness through the hot atmosphere. A vegetation of wondrous luxuriance grew down to the sea-shore, and seemed to contend with the ocean for every inch of ground. The battle-field of this bloodless war was a narrow strip of white sand that fringed the whole island. Then came the lagoon with its inexhaustible treasures of fish and coral of diverse hues. While beyond, at varying distances, stood the reef of white coral, girdling the entire island, and protecting the soil from the absolute conquest of the rolling Pacific, whose waves of deepest blue rose on high, always in beauty, and often in majestic grandeur, and curling, broke into white silvery spray on the coral wall, and sent swift wavelets towards the sandy beach."

John Williams was already on the island, locked up there by the same want of shipping that had delayed the new missionary; and the people assembled in great excitement round the landing-place, "a vast host of semi-savages, with long hair and tattooed faces, arms, and legs." The native police cleared a passage, but the crowd was not to be baulked, and when the party reached the mission-house, every room was packed, and through the rough Venetians, "eyes, nothing but eyes, could be seen." At the first native service, where there were thousands present, the scene was as novel, and eyes from every quarter were fixed upon the strangers, "and wide-open mouths, full of pearly teeth; while the long hair, which had never known a comb, gave the wearers a most hideous appearance." "Is there any danger?" Mrs. Buzacott had said to Williams, startled by the aspect of the crowds on the beach. "There is none," he was able to reply; but it was not a reply he could have given four years before. The Raratongans were then notorious cannibals, and a party of those very men had once waylaid a poor man and his seven children, who were flying by night to a place of safety, killed them, baked them in the same oven, and joined in the meal. There were warriors who seldom appeared without human flesh suspended from the shoulder as a badge of honour. When an injury was received that could not be immediately revenged, a mark was tattooed on the throat—so many marks sometimes that the throat was covered—and till revenge was taken, each generation wore the badge; nor could anything obliterate it but the death of some relative of the wrong-doer. One son who had thus received his father's charge fell upon the family, seized them all, with the exception of a daughter, who escaped, put the bodies in the oven, called his relatives, and feasted on them with delight. Their mightiest chief considered human flesh his daintiest meal, and when the provision of the slain and captives failed, would have one of his own people killed. Nay, he had the flesh suspended in joints to the trees round the house, like meat on the hooks of a butcher's shop. Three women, not above forty years of age, when conversing with Williams, at Raiatea, confessed to having murdered twenty-one children, and the Raratongan women must have had the same sin to answer for. Human sacrifices were offered, to propitiate the gods. Licentious rites were practised with a licence that throws the worst of the Egyptian Ghazawee and the impurities of Hinduism into the shade. The tribes were reputed by the Tahitians to be the fiercest savages they had ever known. The first teachers Williams introduced barely escaped with their life. It was a population so hopelessly bad that, at the time, he would have abandoned it; but Papeiha, a native Christian, sprang up, and leaped into the sea, crying, "Whether the savages spare me or kill me, I will land among them; Jehovah is my shield, I am in his hand." Landing among a group of armed men, with only some portions of the Tahitian Bible wrapped in his handkerchief, this intrepid man commenced his

work. In part he succeeded. Before two years and a-half the idols were abolished, rough chapels and school-houses were erected, large congregations assembled, and children and adults crowded to be taught. There was the greatest apparent attention to instruction. The men could repeat the whole of a sermon. But there had not been one conversion; the natives were content with civilisation; and regeneration they did not profess to understand. It was at this juncture that Mr. Buzacott arrived. He found Williams, in despair of ever leaving the island, busy in building his famous ship; and as soon as he had got order into his household he appeared, to Williams' delighted surprise, with his sleeves rolled up and a smith's apron on, and was soon forging nails and bolts for the schooner. "For an anvil there was a large block of basalt; and the bellows amused me very much. The poles which worked the pumps were long and heavy pieces of iron-wood. It required thirty men to keep up the blast. These were divided into two parties, the one-half resting while the others were working. Such a machine for raising the wind was never before invented. To make the suckers air-tight, folds of tapu, or native cloth, were wrapped round them; and if the blowers did not so mind their work as to raise the break in regular succession, the blast failed to be continuous, while through the spout live coals would not unfrequently be drawn in and set the bellows on fire." The ship was launched, but owed its first passages to fair weather more than to the shipwrights; yet some repairs preserved the *Messenger of Peace* for many a service in the cause of Christ. It was work that introduced the new missionary to a new aspect of his life. The South Sea evangelist was to be able, like Paul, to work with his own hands, and minister to his own necessities. The people could not understand wants that they had never felt; nor could he reduce himself to their barbarous simplicity. Involuntarily he became both the herald of the cross and the pioneer of civilisation. "Missionaries had to be their own carpenters, cabinet-makers, and upholsterers." Mr. Buzacott commenced modestly with a footstool, and advanced to a four-post bed; he made chairs, but the wood was green, and they quickly fell to pieces; he planted a field with sugar-cane and boiled the juice into treacle in a saucepan; and salt he obtained from sea-water. The failures were perplexing enough, though only a stimulus to an active and practical mind; and we are not surprised that, before long, the mission-house was well-furnished by his own hand; that the mission families were never without sugar; and that the builder of a four-legged stool became the architect of a church. When there were only a dozen slates for fifteen hundred scholars, he utilised a slatey stone of the island, and converted the spikes of the sea-urchins into pencils; and his own wit sharpened others, for in one place he found that needles had been made out of iron hoops, split, and rounded with a file, and instead of an eye, a notch to which the banana fibre was tied; so rudely sometimes is necessity the mother of invention.

Meanwhile, he was mastering the language and welding it with as much facility as he swung the hammer in Williams' smithy; and the chief was attentive, courteous, and kindly; and Papeiha all that could be wished; and he began to look for fruit. Besides the great natural barrier of an unregenerate heart, there were local hindrances. A chief on whom a deep impression had been made flung himself back into vice when a native teacher seduced his daughter; and the scandal spread its shame through the island.* Ancient warriors who could not break the restraint of law, and men that were touched by discontent, and seventy of the priests "who had vowed a vow over their sacred fire that they would die rather than submit to Immanuel," plotted against the missionaries. "It was no uncommon thing on a windy night to hear the alarm of fire, and on looking out to discover that the house of some native favourable to the new religion was in flames." The chapel and schoolhouse were successively burnt. A guard of hundreds surrounded the missionary quarter to drive away intruders, and yet the conspiracy gathered strength. But it missed its opportunity, and wore its strength out, until a pestilence came and broke it up. A hurricane burst in 1831, terrible beyond anything the missionaries had ever seen. "The ocean seemed to rise bodily and sweep over the lowlands with frightful rapidity," provisions were destroyed, and there came a famine. Rebellion, plague, hurricane, and famine, wrought out their purpose. The natives felt that God was speaking, and that they must hear. They dropped in one by one, confessing hideous sins that they had stoutly denied. Four of them, well-known men, were baptised, and formed the nucleus of the first Christian Church. They "appeared full of love to Christ and love for the souls of their countrymen. Nearly the whole of their time was given cheerfully to the Lord's work. They would go two and three together in some cases, and in others singly. The compulsory summons to the chapel was dropped, and instead of religion being associated with the chief, the people were taught their personal responsibility." The visits of these members were always ended by prayer. "Scarcely a sermon was now preached without a blessing. Penitents came daily, anxiously inquiring, and often by night the missionary would be aroused by some sin-stricken soul unable to wait until the morning; the whole island became a garden of the Lord; and to the present day no spot of the mission field can compare with Raratonga in the variety and abundance of its precious fruit."†

* At Savaii, in the Samoas, Mr. Buzacott mentions the hindrance of runaway sailors, who set up superstitions on their own account. A young fellow assumed the title of Tangipo, the night-crier, erected a rough pulpit in a native hut, and placed upon it some old books he had brought ashore. "These he styled sacred books, which he allowed to be uncovered only on Sundays. In imitation of the Evangelists, he persuaded the people to assemble for worship on the Lord's day. The service consisted on the part of the hearers in coming to the sacred books and listening to some paragraph read by the sailor out of one of the books, which he did not deign to explain to his audience. He managed to be regarded as the high priest of his lotu or religion, and as such was held in high repute, and liberally supported by his disciples." Another, Joe Gimlet, "taught the natives to keep the Sabbath as a day of feasting and worship. His followers met in their places of worship, and went through certain performances which had been practised in their heathen superstitions, and to these he added the firing of muskets, and some absurd and unintelligible references to the name of Jesus Christ."

† The four first Christians to whom so much was owed were afterwards unanimously chosen deacons. Maran, who had murdered the father with his seven children, died full of joy. Tuata died, exhorting an ungodly nephew on whom his words took effect, and who in his turn died as a teacher in New Caledonia. Uriarau, an old warrior,

Some of the instances were striking. "On Thursday morning very early, I found Abera, an old chief, an uncle of Makea's, waiting at the door of my study. It was only about five o'clock, and he said he had been waiting long before daybreak. The sermon I had preached on the evening before had deprived him of sleep. He said it so exactly suited his case that he felt as if I were preaching to him alone. The subject was, *Who have fled for refuge.* Holding his head down, he directed my attention to a large scar on the back of it, saying it was done by his own brother in their heathenism. Their father had died, and left him a portion of land, at which his eldest brother was very angry; and as he was not willing to give it up, he was determined to kill him. One day, as he was walking alone, a short distance in advance, his brother hurled a large stone at his head, which laid it open. He fell down bleeding, and his brother, supposing him to be dead, dragged the body aside into the bush, and left it. After a while consciousness returned; and, weak as he was, he crawled away, and succeeded in reaching the residence of Makea, and put himself under his protection. Makea, the chief, received him, and defended his rights. Abera said, 'You told me in your sermon last night that I was still in danger—the justice of God was pursuing me on account of my sins, and that unless I fled to the refuge God had provided, I should be overtaken and perish. Like as I was successful in obtaining protection from my own brother, who sought my life, so now I wish to flee to Jesus to be saved from the hands of the avenger.'" Makea was the greatest and bravest man in Rarotonga, and one of the most cruel. "On one occasion he found a thief stealing some trifle from his premises; he seized the thief, bound him to a tree, thrust his spear through his body, and thus nailed him to the tree. He then left the man in this awful situation, and coolly went home to his dinner. After which he returned to his victim, whose agonies were excruciating, and whose cries for mercy were heartrending; but the heart of Makea knew nought of mercy, or even of pity: seizing the end of the spear, he literally dragged the spear to and fro through the poor culprit's body, until death put an end to his torture." He attached himself to the missionaries long before he believed in Christ; and his conversion followed some singular incidents in his life. As chief judge he had sentenced many persons for adultery, when it came out that he himself was guilty. He frankly confessed it, and insisted that the law must be obeyed. As no one at the station would venture to be judge, the chiefs and judges of the other two stations were summoned, "and a large concourse gathered at the gate of the entrance to his own house, the usual place of trial. Tupe, the excellent and upright judge of Ngatangüa, was appointed to pass the sentence. Makea stood up as a culprit, and made a solemn confession of his sins before them all, and Tupe fearlessly passed the sentence on him and his guilty companion, and accompanied the sentence, which consisted of fines, with faithful and cautionary remarks." After a sermon on Zaccheus, the mission-house was beset with persons, some of high rank, restoring tools and other articles they had stolen, and bringing a present of a fowl as interest for the loan. Makea had nothing of this kind to restore, but he had appropriated land of the lesser chiefs; and inviting those he had wronged to a feast, he confessed his sin, and restored to every man his own. In the adult school he sat on the same form with Ma, the sorcerer, Maeau, an old priest, and some ancient warriors, notorious for their savage life; and a little boy might often be seen teaching them the mysteries of reading and writing. He lived long enough after his conversion to prove its reality, and died in peace. It was surely natural when the people said, "Oh, what a wonderful thing is the Gospel!" Nor was the change it wrought confined to a few; nor was it less broad, and marked, and deep, than we might expect.

"Well, my friend," said Mr. Pitman to a very old man who went into his study, "what is your business?"

"I wish to give myself to God in baptism."

"Is that the real desire of your heart?"

"Yes, the real desire."

"Do you love God and Christ?"

"Yes, I love God. I have been a wretched being, a great warrior in this place, and many a one have I slain in my days of ignorance; but there is a new day. We now hear things that we never heard before. I heard you preach from these words, *God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.* I thought much about the cross of Christ."

"Do you know who is Christ?"

"He is the Son of God."

"What was his object in coming into this world?"

"To be the true sacrifice for sins, that we might be saved."

"Do you pray to Him?"

"Oh, yes."

"Do you trust in Him?"

"Yes, like this," leaning his back and his whole weight against the sofa in the study. "My soul thus leans on Christ."

At a missionary meeting in the island, an old man rose up and said, "I have lived during the reign of four kings. In the first I was but young; we were continually at war, and a fearful season it was—watching and hiding with fear were all our engagements. During the reign of the second we were overtaken with a severe famine, and all expected to perish. Then we ate rats and grass, and this wood and the other wood, and many other unmentionable things. During the third we were conquered, and became the peck and prey of the two other settlements of the island. Then, if a man went to fish he rarely ever returned; or if a woman went any distance to fetch wood, she was rarely ever seen again. But during the reign of the third king, we were visited by another king—a great king, a good king, a powerful king, a king of love,—Jesus the Lord from heaven. He has gained the victory—He has conquered our hearts."

These missionary meetings themselves read curiously within a generation of the time when a missionary ran

passed away in a calm, firm trust. And Ma, the sorcerer, to whose gains the Gospel put an end, is still alive at fourscore years, the Christian patriarch of the island.

imminent risk of being eaten. The people meet in the open air, somewhat in the German fashion, for an entire day of missionary festival. They dine after the service, in some quiet spot among the woods, with the leaves of the *hibiscus* for table-cloth and plates; and after dinner they resume their graver work, "say their little words" on the subject before them, and bring their gifts.* To such a people the Bible was a priceless treasure. It was at first only accessible in manuscript, and to the most was only to be had by memory; but "whole chapters were repeated almost without a single blunder." The first edition of the Bible in print, consisting of 5000 copies, was immediately sold, and the native purchasers thus completely repaid the grant made by the Bible Society. When Makea received it, he exclaimed, "Now am I a great chief." It was the first thing that Tupe tried to save from his burning house; and when, though at the risk of his life, he failed, he piteously moaned, "Oh! teacher, the book of God is consumed; let not my house and property be regarded; but oh! my book, my book!" "Friends," said Mrs. Buzacott, as she passed through the settlement one evening, and found a family sitting in the dark, "how is it that you are sitting in the dark? Have you no oil?" "We have very little," they replied; "so we keep the lamp burning while we read the Scriptures, and then we blow it out and sit in the dark till we sleep." It was in the schools that the main early work of the missionary was done. The attendance was large, for every one was anxious to master the cabalistic signs of the alphabet, and "to make chips talk." Natives often followed the letter-carrier, and put their ear as near as they could in hope of hearing the contents. They would chant over the lessons they had learnt, as if they were so many heathen songs; and repeat the alphabet as a form of prayer.† A thousand adults assembled at sunrise, and fifteen hundred children came an hour and a half later; and as the primary instruction advanced, adult classes were formed, where instruction of a higher kind was imparted, and the fanciful legends on natural phenomena were exchanged for accurate knowledge.‡ When the number of converts increased, a missionary college was established, where evangelists received a suitable training, and a female school was opened by Miss Buzacott for the daughters of the chiefs, and at once became popular. It became a rare thing for a child of eight to be unable to read and write, many of the scholars had attained proficiency in arithmetic, geography, and astronomy; and Sir Edward Belcher was shown "a manuscript copy of the New Testament, the writing clear and intelligible," and the work of one of the pupils. At first there were no school-books, but this want was soon repaired by the indefatigable missionary. He taught himself printing; and while his brother missionaries helped him in translation, he set up, corrected, printed, and bound the sheets. Beginning with no better agency than a worm-eaten press, he printed not less than 100,000 volumes, and most of them prepared by himself. They included the Old and New Testaments, the "Pilgrim's Progress," Watts' books for children, Bogue's "Theological Lectures," and various elementary reading books, that in later editions were illustrated by woodcuts. But the result of these labours may be best estimated by what we know of Mr. Buzacott's station, Avarua, when he left the island in 1857. The original native hut was merely a respectable shed, thatched in with palmetta leaf, provided with an aperture of four feet square for door and windows, and sufficiently large to receive from forty to fifty tenants. At Avarua a broad and level road runs for two miles parallel with the beach, bordered on each side by detached cottages, that, with their bright coral plaster, and Venetian blinds, and pretty gardens, look more like a European than a native settlement. Ornamental plants shade the white coral footpath from each house to the street, which is itself planted with rows of the beautiful Ti tree. Many of the cottages are stone, and are furnished with beds, tables, chairs, sofas, and cupboards. About a quarter of a mile from the road, on a terrace cut away from a steep hill, lies the mission-house, gleaming through an avenue of cocoa-nuts. The mission college is a much larger building, also on ground terraced out of the hill, and built of block coral. Besides school-rooms, lecture-rooms, and residence, it includes a surgery; and close by are the cottages of the married students. Six months' probation is always required, and the course occupies four years. Their wives are trained by the missionary's wife; and the unmarried students live together; though all meet in the common dining-hall, where the women superintend the commissariat week about. The annual cost of a student is £5; and twenty students and their wives can be educated, clothed, and boarded for about £3 a week.* The chief edifice of the settle-

* At a meeting in Vavau, Mr. Pritchard mentions that almost 100*l.* was subscribed; King George contributing ten sovereigns which he had received for the model of a Tonga canoe, that, as the best mechanic in the island, he had good-naturedly built for the captain of a ship-of-war. The same sovereign was on the list of local preachers.

† "An aged couple who resided near the mission-house were greatly alarmed by the evening visits of a cat belonging to the native teacher. The cat's peculiar mew drew their attention to the door of their dwelling, and being pitch dark, they saw what they described as two balls of fire. The wife began to remonstrate with her husband for having anything to do with the new religion; for without her consent, and contrary to her wishes, he had attended the daily instructions. 'See,' said she, 'what your conduct has brought upon us. Here is this monster come from the teacher to visit us. Alas! we shall be destroyed.' Poor puss, hearing the sound of muffled conversation, began to grow frightened, too, and sent forth some of her most terrific cries. 'Oh, Jiaki,' said the wife, 'say some of the prayers you have learned.' Both immediately dropped on their knees, and Jiaki began most earnestly to cry, 'B, a, Ba; b, e, be; b, i, bi; b, o, bo;' whereupon the cat flew home in terror at such unwonted supplications."

‡ Of the legends floating through Raratonga, Mr. Buzacott has preserved the following account of the origin of the sun and moon:—

"One of the goddesses brought forth a son. Two of the gods claimed the paternity of the child, and so equally balanced were their claims, that the child was adjudged to be cut in two, and half given to each. The god who received the head and shoulders for his part, threw it into the sky, and it became the sun. The other god, not knowing what to do with his part, threw it away into the bush. He was soon after visited by the sun-maker, who inquired what he had done with his portion? He said that he had thrown it away. 'Give it to me,' said the sun-maker, and on receiving it, he threw it also into the heavens, and it became the moon. In the horned stage of the moon the children were told by their parents that the horns were the logs of the lad, and when full the dark places were pointed out as the marks of decomposition that had taken place while it lay in the bush."

During a total eclipse, Mr. Buzacott was called out to witness Tangaroa destroying the sun. "The eclipse had just commenced. A small part of the sun's disc appeared gone. 'Look!' said they, 'that is the first bite; and he will not be content till he has swallowed the whole.' The question was put, if the sun had been eaten before by Tangaroa, how did they manage to get it back again? They replied, by giving him so much food as to make him sick, and cause him to vomit back the sun."

* In 1857, 61 of the students were at mission work; 7 superannuated; 36 had died; 4 men, 2 women, and a child had been massacred; 4 widows had returned home; 10 had retired, and 21 had fallen, though many of these last had been restored.

ment is the handsome Gothic church, the third that Mr. Buzacott had planned and built. The massive walls are three feet in thickness, and, like the college, it has been constructed to resist the fury of the storm-wind. A bell, which the natives erected in the western tower, summons the thousand worshippers, to which the Christians have been reduced by depopulation. When Mr. Pritchard entered the school (where there appeared to be about 800) the children had just assembled, and, as their custom is, one of the boys was requested to give out a hymn. "A youth about thirteen or fourteen years of age went into the superintendent's desk, and, with the greatest composure imaginable, read out distinctly a hymn in their own language. They all stood up, and, as with one heart and one voice, sang most sweetly *Hosanna to the Son of David.** Only a few years before, the children on that island were running about naked and filthy, indulging in all kinds of vice, and actually eating human flesh." The change in dress is almost as complete as the climate will permit. A native, who had been out a little into the world, declared, on his return, that the people were dressed "the same as in Sydney." Cotton, indigo, and sugar are cultivated; horses, cattle, and farm-yard fowl have been introduced; and the gardens display almost every vegetable and fruit that will freely grow. Thirty years ago a hurricane would have swept away the food of the people, but much of what they at present consume can be "prepared and kept with care." A hundred vessels call in one year. A code of laws is fairly administered through judges and police, who are to be found in every settlement. Congregations no longer assemble at the will of the chief or by military summons, but with as much earnestness as in Europe, and most families worship God twice a day. "On one occasion, no less than 700 communicants assembled round the table of the Lord." And an anecdote, taken at random, will show the sincerity of this Christian life. Amid the weeping which rose at tidings of Williams' death, a native student stood up and said, "Do not delay to send the Gospel to Erromanga. The Word of God must prosper where the blood of his servant has been shed. The seed is already sown." And a hum of Amens followed the appeal.

That is the picture left of Avarua—of a change that was chiefly wrought through the agency of one man, whom the islanders venerated as a father in Christ, and who lived to see an entire race of savages transformed into an earnest, energetic Christian Church. His strength was overtasked, and at length gave way. He had already spent five years in England, but they were spent in hard work, in revising and completing the translation of the Bible. He had found time to sail among the islands, and encourage and help the missionaries. And his unbroken toil had worn him out at last. He determined to leave the work free to a younger and stronger man, and left the island. "Barakoti," said one, "I know what we were in heathenism. These eyes of mine have seen it. No lives were safe. We were like beasts; and when our bodies were slain, they were dragged about the ground and ill-treated; others were cut in pieces whilst alive, and suffered all kinds of cruelties. This was our state when you came amongst us. You taught us better things. Do not leave us. Live and die with us." The people flung themselves at his feet, with tears, that he might change his mind. Resolute in this, as in all else, he quietly continued the preparations for his departure. The population accompanied him to the beach, and stood weeping on the shore; and from the deck of the *John Williams* the true-hearted missionary took his last look of the happy town he had created, and watched those shores recede that he had first seen with so much wonder thirty years before. He was to have returned to England, but he died last year in Sydney, working to the end, and the last words he spoke were something like his life—*Christ is all in all.* "Dear friend," wrote Makea to his widow, "the whole of the population have gone into mourning for Barakoti; we are still wearing it; it is universal. All the chapels are in mourning. The pulpit at Avarua is covered with black, and the galleries with white tapu, on which are printed our lamentations for Barakoti." "Barakoti," wrote one of the native pastors, "has left his likeness, so that all Raratonga can look at it." He does not sleep in any vale of pleasant Devonshire; "Raratonga, and the Raratonga Bible, and Rarotongan evangelists are his monument;" but the story of Aaron Buzacott will surely linger by the ancient chapel of South Moulton until some other heart is touched by it to say, *Lord, here am I: send me.**

* The singing of these children was to those who knew them as marvellous as anything about them; for although Williams had declared it was impossible to make Raratongans sing, Mr. Buzacott, who seemed to have a knack for everything, made their singing a most attractive part of public worship; and the Raratongan hymn-book went through successive editions, till it included nearly 300 hymns. It is said that, having few opportunities of getting musical instruments from England or Australia, Mr. Buzacott took some natives to the mountains, cut down a suitable tree, took it home, and out of it made a bass viol. A seraphine was afterwards purchased by the natives, and the pleasant chanting of Avarua was famous through the Southern Seas.

* Since the Life of Williams, there has been no picture from the South Sea Missions so vivid as in the Life of Buzacott ("Mission Life in the Islands of the Pacific"). It may be hoped that the demand for a new edition will allow of fuller details, and that they will be better put together.

THROUGH THE MIST.

No sunset closed the dim grey day,
The mist swept upward from the sea
And shrouded all things drearily ;
The light died down without a ray,
And the night mingled with the mist,
And there was darkness ere we wist.

And, as we went upon our way,
We could not see each other's face ;
The homeward path we could not trace,
Though straight before our feet it lay,
It seemed, things loomed so strange and vast,
An unknown land through which we passed.

Still, step by step, we homeward drew,
And though I could not see Thy smile,
Yet beaming down on me the while
Thy tender smile was there I knew,
And in the light of home anon
Into my gladdened heart it shone.

Even so the mists of fear and doubt
Come sweeping upward from the sea
Of fathomless eternity,
Blotting earth's fairest features out,
And deep'ning with their blinding breath
The darkness of the night of death.

Yet, when the awful shadows loom,
When fades the Saviour's face of love,
When from our Father's house above
No home lights lead us through the gloom,
Still, step by step, in faith we fare,
The light we see not still is there.

I. C. Knox.

UNFORGIVING AND UNFORGIVEN.

BY THE EDITOR.

Part II.

Fear not snow-drift driving fast,
Sleet, or hail, or levin blast ;
Soon the shroud shall lap thee fast,
And the sleep be on thee cast
That shall ne'er know waking.

Haste thee, haste thee, to be gone :
Earth flits fast, and time draws on,—
Gasp thy gasp, and groan thy groan,
Day is near the breaking.

The cottage, to resume my tale, which I at length reached—and where they who watched a dying bed muttered to each other, "She cannot pass away with that on her mind, it tethers her here"—like others of the same class, was thatched with straw. On each side of the door stood a window, the lower panes of which were filled with wood instead of glass ; an arrangement which an Englishman, who gives an account of his travels in Scotland early in the seventeenth century, mentions as common not only in the best houses of Edinburgh at that period, but in Holyrood Palace itself. These wooden panes indicated something else than Scotch poverty. Hung on hinges, they admitted of being opened ; an arrangement that explains a line in an old popular song, and was well adapted for sanitary purposes. How often have I wished for them when breathing the foul, pestilential air of Edinburgh's Cowgate and Grassmarket tenements!—the loss of light they caused being more than compensated by the free admission they gave to the fresh breath of heaven. The cottage of the woman to whose strange deathbed I had been summoned, consisted of two apartments, called the *but* and the *ben*, and a small closet. The first was that in daily use, where the household work was done, the family ate as well as prepared their meals, and also slept, till it grew so large as to overflow into the *ben*. That, the best-furnished of the two, sometimes boasting a chest of drawers, polished chairs, and an eight-day clock, was commonly reserved for the accommodation of visitors, and for great occasions—festive meetings, baptisms, marriages, and such like. The floor of the *but* was clay : its fire-place an open one, where the fuel, chiefly peat, or furze, or logs of wood, burned on the hearth-stone, while the smoke, though partly straying into the room, where it hung in dun folds and coated the bare rafters with a black, lustrous varnish, went curling up a chimney so spacious that you could sit with your feet at the fire, and study the stars overhead. These dwellings were simply, perhaps I should say, often meanly furnished. Yet, the abodes of an educated, shrewd, and pious peasantry, there were few of them but had one or two shelves for books, where, besides the Bibles and catechisms of the family, you would find Boston's "Fourfold State," Ambrose's "Looking unto Jesus," Willison's "Sacramental Meditations," a volume or two of John Owen ; and along with them some old ballads, perhaps a cheap geographical dictionary, and a few other books of secular knowledge.

As calculated to increase the interest which, in these days, is felt in the Waldensian Church of Italy, that poorest, smallest, yet oldest true Church in Christendom, I may mention that I was often pleasantly reminded of this feature of the old Scotch peasantry during a visit I lately paid to its mountain homes. Take, for example, a cottage in one of its highest and wildest valleys. It was the home of one of the poor peasant proprietors, and stood near the celebrated rock of the Balsille, where Henri Arnaud, at the head of seven hundred gallant men, defied for six long, weary, wintry months the armies of France and Savoy—

against these emissaries of Papal Rome, holding up a banner for the truth, and achieving prodigies of valour. My readers must understand that, though in "Sunny Italy," the inhabitants of these valleys have to face the storms and endure many of the rigours of an Arctic winter; hardships greatly aggravated by their scanty stores both of food and fuel. Wood abounds in their noble forests; but the labour required to cultivate their patches of soil away up among the precipices, and on the steep slopes of the snow-crowned mountains, is such as to leave them little time to lay in a stock of fuel. Hence, half the inhabitants of the parish, where this cottage stood, though proprietors of the lands they cultivate, sleep, and eat, and work for five months of the year in the lower storey of their houses, in company with their cattle, for the sake of the heat they give out. I grieved to see the members of this noble church, the descendants of heroic martyrs, suffering such hardships, steeped to the lips in poverty; but how was my pity changed to astonishment and admiration? In the poor, bare house where I stood, I found a library of not less than thirty books, great and small; and among these, interesting to see and curious to tell, French translations of some of Ryle's tracts and Spurgeon's sermons. The Valdese, by this and many things else, reminded me of the old, poor but virtuous, intelligent, Bible-reading, Sabbath-keeping peasantry of Scotland — many of whom still exist, and whose character in connexion with the subject of their dwellings, I would make a digression to free from ignorant and unmerited aspersions.

It has been fancied and asserted that where people live in such cottages as I have described, and found this woman dying in, the proprieties of life cannot possibly be maintained. Decency, it is said, must always be lost where a whole family live and sleep in one room. So many of our modern sanitarians and philanthropists allege; to use the words of Paul, "understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." I venture, on the contrary, to affirm from personal observation that many of the old Scotch peasants who lived in such circumstances would compare favourably in point of delicacy and decent habits with people in any rank of life, or any country under the sun. Those who assume that it must have been otherwise, do so through their ignorance of the arrangements that obtained in these cottages, and especially of the merits and mysteries of what are called *box-beds*. This was an old invention, which no doubt owed its existence to those feelings of delicacy it at once gratified and preserved. These beds, let me explain, were so screened all round with a wooden framework, that when the sliding doors by which they were entered were closed, the party within was completely concealed. Each such bed in the single apartment where the family slept was thus in fact a room within the room, and as much shut out from observation as if it had been a separate chamber in another quarter of the house. Being furnished within with shelves for clothes and other things, the persons inside these wooden walls could dress and undress with as delicate a regard to propriety as the Queen in her palace or a duchess in her dressing-room. And, since our poorer classes find it almost impossible to pay the rent demanded, especially in the large towns, for two or three apartments, and therefore herd together in a way offensive to decency and destructive of virtue, it might be well worth considering whether this old fashion might not be introduced among them with advantage. A simple device, which I saw in use in Brittany, where such beds are common, removes the chief objection to which they stand exposed. In that part of France where the natives, who speak not the French but a Celtic tongue, have preserved unchanged for five hundred years, if not from the days of the Druids, the customs of their ancestors, you will see three or four such beds in one apartment. Made of beautiful walnut or cherry wood, polished like a mirror, and carved with considerable taste, they are ornamental rather than otherwise; and having a breadth of five or six inches of open lattice-work at the top, they are constructed with an eye to fresh air as well as to those delicate proprieties of life, which, being germane to virtue and godliness, Sabbath sermons and Sunday magazines do well to recommend.

To return now to my story. It was in such a bed the woman whom I had been requested to visit lay a-dying. So soon as I entered the cottage her attendants hailed my appearance, expecting that she would now unburden her conscience, and get free to depart; and so drop the curtain on a scene that was one of pain to her, and terror to them. They hastened to announce my arrival. I heard her mutter something in reply, but could neither catch the words, nor see her face. There was no light but what, coming from the fire on the hearth, threw a feeble and ghastly glare over the room, and the forms and faces of her attendants; while, though its doors stood open, the pillow on which her head lay was cast into deep shadow by the fixed framework of the bed. Getting a candle lighted I placed it on a shelf inside, where it shone full on the form and face of what looked much more like a dead than a living body. The countenance was singularly pallid; the nose pinched sharp; the eyes deeply sunk in their sockets; the features firm and rigid; and the brow, from which I put back some grey dishevelled locks, felt chill and clammy. The only sign of life was in the eyes, which, though partially glazed with a film, followed all my movements; strangely, I may say horribly, mingling the features of life and death, giving to the body the appearance of an animated corpse. I did not wonder much, knowing the common superstitions of the country, that those who watched her had got nervous, and possessed with the notion that some dreadful crime lay heavy on her conscience, which she must reveal ere the spirit was allowed to leave its mortal tabernacle. For a few moments I silently contemplated the solemn sight; and on waking from my reverie found the attendants standing close by my side. During those years which I spent so happily as a country minister, I was often annoyed on my visits to the dying by the neighbours, no doubt with the best intentions, pouring into the house—crowding the room. The practice was inconsiderate, depriving of fresh air one who was, perhaps, with heavy lift of chest and shoulders gasping for breath. Besides, it altogether prevented or interfered with free and confidential

intercourse—that intercourse which, though far removed from the secrets of a Roman Catholic confessional, often affords relief to the mind of the dying, and to the minister of the gospel a precious opportunity of saving a soul, or soothing a troubled spirit. It might be that the female attendants here in crowding round the bed had no curiosity, but were merely following what, when the minister of a rural parish, I had found to be a very common custom. However, if there was any ground for their suspicions, and some secret crime was to be revealed, it was more likely to be divulged to my ear alone than in their hearing. So I asked them to retire; which they did with some reluctance, taking seats by the fireside. Left alone, I now addressed myself to the dying woman; and, approaching the matter with the utmost delicacy, was not long in finding that she had no murder or any such crime to disclose—a circumstance which, in justice to her, I let the nurses know.

Yet death-beds that have revealed dreadful crimes have been less dreadful than hers. In all my experience as a minister I never stood by one so appalling. I had seen people dying in many and very different frames of mind—some in callous indifference, others in eager anxiety crying, What shall I do to be saved? some despondent, others full of hope; not a few with their heads pillowed on Jesus' bosom, enjoying a calm and blissful peace; one or two, in an ecstacy, in celestial transports, rejoicing in the Lord and soaring away up to glory on the wings of song. Here, this woman was dying in "the blackness of darkness." Standing on the deck, I have seen a drowning man, to whom a life-buoy was thrown across the roaring waters, catch it in his arms, and I have seen a man on his death-bed seize with equal eagerness and cling with as strong a hold to the hope of a Saviour, of a free, full, gracious pardon through the blood of Christ. I made that offer to this dying woman, and, though hanging on the brink of a lost eternity, she rejected it—cast it from her. She was no sceptic; had never read a line of Tom Paine or Voltaire. Nor was her mind diseased, in the proper sense of the term. It is indeed hard to say how dying people may comport themselves when under delirium. I remember the case of a sweet young girl in my country parish, from whose lips, quite unaccustomed to oaths or any improper language, there came rolling forth, as if she had been possessed of a devil, volleys of fearful imprecations. But no fever was disordering this woman's brain. She was coherent, calm, collected. So far as concerned her mental faculties, her sun was setting without a cloud. But what a cloud otherwise rested on her troubled spirit? She neither could nor would entertain a hope of salvation—putting away from her all my offers of a Saviour. I prayed for her; I pleaded with her; but only to get such answers as reminded me of the request of that evil spirit who implored our Lord to let him alone, nor "torment him before his time." Despair had her in his ruthless grasp; and a darkness deeper than what was gathering around her bed, lay on her soul. Still, when I thought how long she had been a-dying, for how many days death had strangely lingered by the door, I hoped it might be for a gracious purpose; and that, called at the eleventh hour, her case might yet prove one where Christ saves at the uttermost. To me, as to his servant of old, God might be saying, "Pray not for her."—"She is joined to her idols, let her alone." Yet I clung to the hope that death had delayed to strike, because, bending in pity over this wretched creature, God in heaven was saying, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger... for I am God, and not man!" So I hoped, continued to hope; waiting, watching, as they that watch for the morning. But, alas! there came no change. At parting, I took her cold hand in mine, and bent over her to ask, If she could cherish a hope? But—as if the pains of the damned had already begun, her only answer was to gnash her teeth, and look up in my face with an expression of despair, which long haunted, and even still sometimes haunts me. She "died, and gave no sign."

If my acquaintance with this unhappy woman had begun, as it ended, there, I might have regarded hers as a case where the repeated rejection of all his gracious offers has provoked God to withdraw his Spirit, and leave sinners, as he left Pharaoh, to the hardness of their own hearts. For though, thanks be to a loving and long-suffering God, these words hold generally true—

> "As long as life its term extends,
> Hope's blest dominion never ends;
> For while the lamp holds on to burn,
> The greatest sinner may return"—

cases occur from time to time to prove the extreme danger of continued impenitence and procrastination. Like the lurid clouds which thunder, and flash-out lightnings from the blessed sky, there are, mingled with the gracious words of Scripture, awful and ominous intimations — such as, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man"—such as, "Your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand. . . . For the Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act. Now, therefore, be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong,"—such as, "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you." Let none therefore venture to keep Christ waiting at the door—till he come who knocks, not to request, but to demand admittance. When that happens, no Saviour may be nigh, lingering there: nor when the soul, alarmed at the appearance of the King of Terrors, flies to the gate of mercy, may there be any other answer to its cry, Open and let me in, than this, The door is shut!

And who shut it in this case? It was not God. I am sure of that. He has no pleasure in the death

of him that dieth; but is willing rather that all should turn and live. Sin is suicidal; and in this, as in every other instance, such as are barred out of heaven, have only themselves to blame. But the peculiarity of this case lay here, that, strange to say it, the means by which this woman destroyed herself, plunged her soul into perdition, was her prayers—and that very prayer which, taught by Jesus to his disciples for a very different purpose, she had learned from a mother's lips, and in the days of sweet childhood had often lisped at a mother's knee. Like, I fear, not a few others, every time, in church or elsewhere, she had repeated the words, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us," she had done worse than drive a nail into her coffin. Judging from that dreadful death-bed, God had taken her at her word. She had lived Unforgiving, and died Unforgiven.

Within the walls of that same cottage she and I had met in other years; and standing on that same floor, I had warned as with a prophet's tongue, had solemnly and affectionately warned, her of the very scene that I had now the pain to witness. It so happened that, years before, I had been asked by her daughter, a highly respectable woman, and her only surviving child, to mediate between her and her mother. Domestic differences about money matters, or something else, had grown and ripened into a bitter quarrel; and, after years of alienation, the daughter, who longed to be restored to a mother's affections, requested me to try if I could heal the breach. For this purpose I waited on the mother; but to find all my efforts coldly, resolutely, and at length even fiercely repelled. As ever happens in such cases, there were faults on both sides. But the mother, not satisfied with admitting none on hers, bitterly exaggerated her daughter's faults, and even where her conduct admitted of a favourable, put none but an unfavourable and the worst construction on it. This shocked me. Still I did not abandon either hope or the attempt—having seen in other cases what a depth of affection is in a mother's heart, and how much more than any one else a father or mother can forgive and forget. I attempted to mollify her—recalling the happy days when her daughter, a sweet infant, hung on her breast; lay nestled in her bosom; the joy of her heart and home, prattled at her knee. I reminded her of the long-suffering and love of God; of Him who shed his blood for his enemies, and, dying, forgave his murderers. With everything that could touch her conscience and wake the mother in her heart, I plied her; imploring her in the name of Christ; and by her hopes of salvation, to act a Christian part, and, pitying a daughter's sorrow, receive her back to her arms. Hard as the rock under whose shadow her cottage stood, she sat obdurate and unmoved. At length patience gave way; and yielding to what I felt to be a holy indignation, I rose to shake the dust from my feet, and warn her, since she refused to forgive, she need not hope to be forgiven in the hour of death and at the day of judgment. Now the hour had come when as she meted to others, it was meted to her again. Unforgiving, so far as man could judge, she was Unforgiven; hers, the only death-bed I have seen, during a ministry of six and thirty years, of blank and black despair. On going out, I found the whole firmament sparkling with stars, and a broad band of silver light cast on the sea by the rising moon, like a path that led from the moaning shore to distant, happier worlds. A contrast, indeed, to the scene I had left!—a dying sinner around whose head a night had gathered without one ray of hope, and for whose departing spirit no bright way seemed to open to the gates of heaven.

Quarrels will arise between the dearest friends, and in the bosom of the most affectionate families. Would that the sun never went down on our wrath! and instead of being allowed to form deep, running sores, that discharge offensive humours, and, even when closed, leave ugly scars behind, would that all such wounds were healed by what surgeons call the "first intention!" But if this has not been done, let us beware of cherishing an unforgiving spirit. Of all states of mind, an implacable temper least becomes those who cannot themselves be saved but by a large measure of forgiveness, and is most unlike, and indeed plainly opposed to, the mind that is in Jesus Christ. It is sad, and much worse than merely sad, to see love turned into hatred, or warm affection into cold indifference. Nursing an unforgiving temper, making no honest and anxious attempt at reconciliation, repelling perhaps the efforts mutual friends make to heal the breach, every time, in church or elsewhere, we repeat the words, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us," we are mocking God; and pronouncing on ourselves the horrible imprecations, familiar to profane and brutal lips, with which I shall not shock my readers nor pollute these pages. Thankless as their office often proves, blessed are the peacemakers! But of all peacemakers, those are most blessed who humble the pride of their own hearts in the dust, and, though the injured, stoop as Jesus stooped, to make the first overtures of reconciliation. Would that the tale I have told might warn some!—inducing them to take staff, or pen, in hand, to heal every unhappy quarrel with friend, or neighbour, or member of their family! Our Lord places such an effort at the head of all Christian duties. He gives it honourable precedence over prayers, and preaching, and sacraments, and the highest religious services. It is one a man should leave his pew in the church, should rise from the sacred table of communion, should get carried from his dying bed, to accomplish. "If," says our Lord, "thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Unforgiving, is to be Unforgiven.

LAZARUS.

(*Continued from page 770.*)

THERE were neighbours and friends to welcome the dead man back. The merest spectators could not resist the infection of delight. We think of the vacant places filled up in many hearts; of the happy stop put to the mourning of those four days; of the busy, eager greetings; a joy too bright and absorbed to allow of other thoughts but one. We think of the cry we have uttered after the departed; involuntary, wailing, hopeless cry forced from us by grief or keen memories; and of what we might have felt, had that cry been stilled by their return. Yet an awe overshadowed the joy. It was not a return to life from the verge of death, a reversal of the last sad words of the physician, a recovery from faint or stupor that had worn death's aspect. But the gates of the invisible world had been flung open to let Lazarus pass out, and a word had done it, and He who spoke the word was standing in the midst. Before this Master, who could spoil the kingdom of death and *bind the strong man*, men would hush the babble and tumult of their gladness. The sisters, above all, must have felt the strangeness of the scene. Covering their eyes from the ghastly sight in the tomb and then lifting them to see their brother alive, clinging to the sympathy of their brother's friend and the tears He wept with them and then face to face with that brother himself, knowing him dead and seeing him living, yearning yet too timid to touch him and clasp him, haunted by the dream that he was but half real, and that he must come back changed and perhaps in future isolated—it was all too sudden to be realised, nor dared they trust themselves to take what God had given, till their joy swept away "all subtle thought, all curious fears," and they led him to the house and could look with hungry love into his eyes. Then the mourners wound their way back to Jerusalem, the burial-place grew silent and deserted, the shadows lay in deep folds among the hills, and in the family of Bethany there was peace, and the Prince of Peace himself was there, and Lazarus, his friend, whom He had raised from the dead.

IV.

Lazarus appears only once again, and that appearance, perfectly simple and natural in itself, manifestly owes its place in the record to the miracle, and not to the personal history of the man. He took his place at a feast when Jesus was afterwards entertained in Bethany, where his sisters were also present. Bethany had already come to be the village where Lazarus lived; Lazarus himself had come to be, he that was dead. It was the miracle that was pointed at, and the man for the miracle's sake. The interest of that supper does not turn on him, but on Mary; there is no record of his words, or of his bearing to Jesus, or of the words of others about him. He had already borne his witness to the human sympathy and divine might of Jesus; for all purposes of illustration his life was at an end; and the next light flung on the character of Christ is from Mary, not from him. But his resurrection was not a mere apparition, a moment's wonder: he was visible, within easy reach. The *loud voice* had already repelled the insinuation that there was any murmured incantation or wizardry about it; his daily presence would remain as the simplest evidence of what had happened. The veil of mystery that hung over him on his return is lifted up to let us see that he resumed the functions of his life. He returned to be a brother in his home, a neighbour to his townsmen, a friend to Jesus. He ate and drank, he went to men's houses, he took his part in society. That is the last impression of him that we have. There was indeed a young man who was seen at night in Gethsemane hastily roused from some near house, for he had only a linen cloth cast about his body, and who narrowly escaped being made a prisoner. He has been identified with Lazarus. It is not improbable; it is natural even that Lazarus would cling to Jesus at the last; if the identity is assumed, it would explain his apparent absence from the crucifixion.* But as far as any absolute certainty goes, as far as the narrative requires, we take leave of him at the supper where he saw his sister anoint their Saviour's feet. Church legend gives him thirty more years of life, and makes him die at sixty; it sends him and his sisters out in a leaky boat and takes them by miracle to preach the Gospel at Marseilles; it leads him to martyrdom, and fetches his bones to Constantinople and builds over them a church. It is not this exactly that we care to know, even if we could. He had seen death; he had been vanquished and led away by it into whatever is beyond. Men have been brought very near to die and have recovered, when a second or a breath would have turned the scale. They have come back with an awe and reserve that never wore quite away. Men have surrendered themselves to death, calmly faced and expected it, yet have rejoined the living. But none of these cases tell us what it actually is to die. We see strange lights gleaming from dying eyes, sudden starts of happy souls, and flashes of intelligence that beautify the face. We hear words of broken rapture, see the struggle to tell something that is felt for the first time, look wistfully on, and only watch the secret pass away behind the closed lips and the silence of the grave. What is it? What is the pain? What revelation bursts upon the spirit at its release? Lazarus could have told. He kept the wonder in his heart. He had actually been in the world of shadows. He could declare what the grave is like. When he resumed his place, the mark of that awful knowledge was upon him. They flocked out from Jerusalem to see him

* Professor Plumptre in his article on Lazarus in "Smith's Dictionary of the Bible," and in the notes to his poem on the same subject, ("Lazarus and other Poems,") says all that can be said for this hypothesis, as well as for the identity of the young ruler with Lazarus. His argument on this latter point is extremely ingenious and interesting. The Lazarus of his poem, and of the more dramatic "Epistle of Karshish," in Mr. Browning's "Men and Women," is a fine ethical study, and extremely suggestive.

pass the street.* Children might point to him as they did afterwards to Dante in Florence. He held in his keeping the experience for which the world is sighing. If he loosed his tongue, how men would hang upon his words, and hear a tale more wonderful than it ever fell to man to tell. Were the links of memory unbroken, or was there a gap like what a fever leaves? Did he maintain a fixed reserve, or did Martha and Mary and John listen to his story while yet a "silence sealed the lips of that Evangelist?" These are questions that spring up whether we will or no, to which we can return no answer. It would harmonise with his character if we suppose him silent and self-involved; it would be in keeping with all that we have felt if he bore the mark of his marvellous rescue to his second grave.† What he had seen beyond may well have sent him back to life with a more solemn sense of its issues, and of sin, and of the mystery of conscience and the face of God. The voice that summoned him by an irresistible obedience from which the supremest obstacles fell away may have retained a special power, and calm unhesitating submission to the will of God may have characterised his life.‡ He had brought back the fact that death was conquered, so that not by faith alone, but by actual trial he knew that Christ, his friend, was Lord and Master of the grave and the future, who openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth; and the consciousness of this must have been curiously inwoven with the texture of everyday thought and human experience.

From all speculation upon his fate and after-character we may turn to one fixed point, to which the very silence of the Gospels draws us. They are careless to satisfy our curiosity, to lead us one step into the wonder-world. They restrain us by a wise and impassable and pregnant *Thus far*. Lazarus, by his miraculous resurrection, is isolated from us, and has no help to give us out of that special act of his life. It helps us to know more of Christ. Men stare at the wonder, but faithful souls recognise the Wonder-worker, not only in a miracle grey with age, but in the continuous providence of God. We have a clear glimpse into the vastness of Christ's dominion, spreading out over the furthest confines of things visible into unknown regions of the invisible; we have by anticipation one vivid act of that great series that the Resurrection and the Last Day will unfold; though we see not yet all things put under Christ, we can feel that virtually they are under Him, and we gain whatever courage this may throw into our faith. But to produce this result, Lazarus need have been no more than any one man out of millions,—a human unit without a story, without an interest. For any help that *he* can give us, we must look to something else than miracle,—to such relations to Christ and the world as we might share with him. Wonder and awe went with him through the world and set him apart: yet the deepest mark he bore was that he was Jesus' friend. The miracle might have been wrought indifferently on any one that was dead; the friendship was a personal relation peculiar to the man that was a friend. A like miracle was wrought on the daughter of Jairus, on the young man of Nain, yet there was apparently no relation between their families and Christ. Miracles were wrought for those who never claimed his help as a spiritual Teacher, and for the miracle's sake men might be pursued by staring crowds, and be no friends of his. Wonders are done for men daily by Him who made the world and keeps it. They are not indifferent to them, and they perhaps become conspicuous among their neighbours for some almost incredible deliverance, but no one thinks of calling them even disciples of Jesus. We may see in these acts proofs of the power, government, interposition of Christ; and the acts of Christ are mighty, and the mightiest is no doubt the resurrection. But there is something deeper in the story of Lazarus than proofs of the divinity of Jesus, deeper than the wonder that filled men's mouths with curious talk, deeper and more wonderful. The friendship out of which the story springs is its greatest marvel. For mere strangeness, no passage into the world of spirits nor giving of life to a dead man can equal that. And then what infinite pathos! Nowhere do we gain a profounder sense of the new relation between God and man, of the intimate union that is possible between Christians and Christ,—of its tenderness, sympathy, and breadth. Nowhere can we better feel that we ought to throw ourselves on Christ with less reserve,—that He may be touched at any point in the range of human feeling,—that fellowship with Him should be practical, and have a human and not a purely ideal basis. And while our life may be devoid of all that is marvellous, and probably will be, in this we may be sharers through the grace of God, that the Friend of Lazarus is also ours.

W. F. Stevenson.

* John xii. 9.

† "Silent, and solemn, and self-involved."—Stier.

"And oft the man's soul springs into his face,
As if he saw again and heard again
His sage that bade him 'Rise,' and he did rise."—Browning.
"Upon my lips the seal of silence lay."—Plumptre.

‡ "Indeed, the especial marking of the man
Is prone submission to the Heavenly will."—Browning.

PSALMS.

PSALM III.—*Domine, quid multiplicati.*

FASTER yet their bands are flocking,
Prouder yet their banners wave,
Cruel scorning, bitter mocking,—
Lord, they say thou canst not save!

Spread Thy shield above, around me,
Pour Thy glory on my brow;
Even they can not surround me,
While my sure defence art Thou.

Though my voice was faint and weakly,
Night hung o'er me clear and still;
Past the stars it echoed quickly,
Piercing to His holy hill.

He my griefs and fears assuaging,
Calm I laid me down to rest,
Dreamed I heard the battle raging,
Woke on His sustaining breast.

Now I will not shrink nor tremble,
Though with shouts the air is rent,
Though ten thousand foes assemble
Round my lonely battle-tent.

Rise, O Lord my God! and save me,
In Thy holy arm I trust;
All who still resist and brave me
By Thy stroke shall lick the dust.

Thine be glory and salvation,
Hymn of battle, temple-psalm;
Saved by Thee, the holy nation
Lay before Thee crown and palm.

PSALM XXIII.—*Dominus regit me.*

HE is my Shepherd, I His sheep;
I do not want to know
Whether the way be soft or steep,
By which I am to go.
If green and smooth the mountain be,
I need not ask for more;
If stony, He will carry me,
As He has done before.

He is my Shepherd, I His sheep;
We travel onward still,
By pools where water-lilies sleep,
By many a quiet hill;
I feed in many a grassy dell,
I drink the waters clear;
The gracious voice I know so well
Is music to my ear.

He is my Shepherd, I His sheep;
I wandered once, I know,
I heard Him on the mountains weep
That I should leave Him so.
I trembled as I faintly guessed
A sorrow so divine,
For as He clasped me to His breast
The blood gushed forth on mine.

He is my Shepherd, I His sheep;
And what if death be near?
The shadows up the valley creep,
And yet I do not fear;
As closer to His side I cling,
I feel the cross so true,
With which His love was pledged to bring,
And safe has brought me through.

He is my Shepherd, I His sheep;
We journey on and on,
At last the smile upon his lip
Shall tell me all is won.
The table that He spreads for me
My foes shall all behold,
And in these trembling fingers see
His cup of royal gold.

The cup He put so gently by
When death was drawing near,
He freely fills for such as I,
And tells me not to fear.
And for those funeral odours shed
Upon His dying brow,
He pours the oil of joy instead
On each disciple now.

Shepherd! Good Shepherd! turn and see,
I follow far behind,
Thy voice of mercy calling me
Comes borne on every wind.
Set wide thy Father's open door,
That I the light may see,
And in His house for evermore
At last abide with Thee.

NOTES FOR READERS OUT OF THE WAY.

JUST when the returns of the cattle-plague had fallen so low as to justify the belief that that visitation was at an end, the sudden and awful outbreak of cholera in London came to remind us how much greater evils God may send on us than the destruction of our cattle. Walking as the pestilence always does in darkness, and often directing its course with a seeming caprice that no theory can reduce to law or reason, it pounced on this occasion at once on the heart of the empire; and the natural awe occasioned by its outbreak was greatly increased by its establishing itself, at the hottest period of the year, in the very quarter where the field for its ravages was largest, and the conditions most favourable for its rapid diffusion. For nowhere are the evils of filth and overcrowding, deficiency of water and of air, absence of cleanliness, and general depression of the vital system more prevalent than in the east of London, and nowhere is that class more abundant that are usually the first victims of cholera—those who have no stated or defined way of living, and whose uncertain earnings naturally give rise to an irregular and unwholesome manner of life. If the permanent improvements that shall result from this "explosion of disease" (as it has been called) be at all in proportion to the present efforts to meet and check its ravages, it will have a place among those chastisements which though not for the present joyous but grievous, nevertheless afterwards work the peaceable fruits of righteousness. If it so multiply men like Alderman Waterlow and Mr. Peabody, that wholesome and airy dwellings shall become the rule, instead of the exception, for London working men; if it give such emphasis to the warnings of Dr. Jeafferson, that

a sufficient supply of clean water shall be provided for every family; above all, if it give rise to a solemn sense of God's presence, and if it so quicken the zeal of all who are labouring for the spiritual elevation of the masses, that the cry for the breath of heaven shall be heard from all parts of the valley of dry bones, and every agency of regeneration and of improvement shall be plied with double zeal, the merciful character of the visitation will be conspicuous, even in the midst of its desolations. It is interesting to be told that a spirit of religious concern appears to be diffusing itself over the regions that have been visited by the disease. It must be the prayer of every pious reader that this spirit may become deeper and more defined, so that this portentous messenger may usher in, not only for the east of London and the metropolis, but for the whole land, a brighter and better day than any but those whose faith can remove mountains have ventured to anticipate.

The successful laying of the Atlantic cable between this country and America is one of those events which cannot fail to stir even the most sluggish imaginations. That it is destined to have an important influence on the future relations of Great Britain and the United States, all seem to feel; and while, to a certain extent, it can be foreseen what will probably be its bearing in this respect, it seems also to be felt that there may be grander developments connected with it than we can yet conceive. It is satisfactory to note that there has not anywhere been a discordant voice to the general expression of desire that it may bind Great Britain and the United States in closer and happier bonds, and no one probably would not rather that it should lose its cunning and become utterly useless, than that it should ever carry across the ocean a declaration of war between two such countries. Attention has been called to the manifest interference of Providence in preventing the electrical connection of the two countries from being carried out when it was first attempted, and the idea has been suggested, that possibly, at a time when serious misunderstandings had arisen, when national feeling was extremely keen, and when the American people were much excited by their domestic war, a rupture between the two countries might have been the result, had electric messages, that left no time for deliberation and calming down, been passing between them. In the providence of God, that time of excitement was made to pass by before it became possible to send a message and to receive the answer in the course of a few hours. It is wonderful to think that the lightning and the ocean, so long looked on as the most terrible foes with which man had to contend, have been so wonderfully subdued to his purposes that by means of them he can bring the most distant parts of the globe into almost immediate communication, and greatly advance his interests and his plans. Would only that the boon of which we have now got possession may be constantly used in a humble spirit, and dedicated to the glory of God and the good of man!

The 123rd Annual Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Ministers has been held at Leeds. The President selected on this occasion,—the Rev. William Arthur, A.M., author of "The Tongue of Fire,"—is a much younger man than has almost ever filled that office, and the first, it is said, who has been trained in a Wesleyan Institution; but his remarkable combination of gifts and graces, his great fervour of spirit, weight of character, and experience of men and affairs, amply justified the choice. The statistical and other returns indicate a certain amount of progress, the number of members of the society being 331,193, and of those on trial 20,819, showing an increase of 366 on the previous year. There seemed, however, to be a deep feeling that the spiritual efficacy of the society,—its influence on the world lying in wickedness,—was not advancing with the manifest force and rapidity that were to be desired and expected in a condition of great vitality and Divine power; that the open paganism and vice of great cities, and the abounding worldliness and carelessness of men everywhere, were not disappearing, as they might be expected to disappear, before the agencies that were brought to bear against them. A very solemn and earnest meeting was accordingly held to consider the state of the work of God. The address of Mr. Arthur was so impressive that on his resuming his chair there was an interval of several minutes of the most profound and solemn silence. He laid great stress on the class-meetings, as forming the very life of Methodism, and the pulse of its spiritual vitality. The trust bequeathed to them by John Wesley was not merely a form of order, but of pure doctrine and holy discipline; not merely the discipline of prudential regulations, but the supreme enforcement of Christ's law of holiness over all their members. In the character of the Christian bishop, the two *musts* of St. Paul were indispensable—he *must* be blameless, and he *must* be well reported of them that are without. He prayed that God would perfect his love in their hearts, and save thousands of souls. The meeting responded to the solemn appeals of the President, and the expression of purpose and desire by several of the ablest ministers was quite in the same direction.

It is interesting to find that the yearning for Christian union which is manifesting itself so strongly in other branches of the Church is also operating among several of the Methodist denominations. Overtures on the subject have been passing between the "New Connexion" and the "United Methodist Free Churches," and now the New Connexion comes into correspondence with the parent Wesleyan body. At its conference in Birmingham a few weeks before, the New Connexion (which dates from 1797), passed resolutions in favour of closer union and fellowship among the different sections of the Methodist body, and empowering a committee to take such preparatory steps towards this consummation as should be in accordance with their rules, and fitted to promote the prosperity and harmony of the churches. The Wesleyan Conference agreed to refer the matter to a small committee. The "United Methodist Free Churches," which have been holding their Conference at Sheffield, have declared in favour of "brotherly love and friendly intercourse with all the liberal branches of Methodism," and appointed a committee to meet with the committee of the New Connexion.

From a statement made in the Wesleyan Conference by Dr. Scott, of Canada, it appears, that, as in the matter of Presbyterian union, the Colonial churches have taken the lead in this question. In Canada, conferences have taken place between representatives of the Old Connexion and the Wesleyan body, and the result had been beneficial in strengthening the spirit of brotherly love and Christian union; but no disposition had been evinced by any of the ministers to alter the constitution of their respective churches.

The proposal, on the part of the bishops of the Church of England, to institute an order of "lay-readers," seems an acknowledgment of the value of the principle which has given so much strength to Methodism and other Nonconformist bodies,—of making use of all the gifts and graces which God has given to the ordinary members of the Church. According to a statement by the Bishop of Peterborough, the Church had not the means of utilising all the talents which were abundantly bestowed, and of which other bodies had to some extent availed themselves. The Bishops had had a meeting at Lambeth on the subject, which was attended by seventeen or eighteen archbishops and bishops, English and Colonial, and a plan had been agreed to by which men of leisure, piety, zeal, and holiness of life, if willing to devote themselves to the Lord's work, would be appointed to do so. He had heard of half-pay officers in the army, retired barristers, country gentlemen, who had the ability, and were willing to take this office on themselves. They made it unpaid for various reasons; they did not wish to make it a profession; they wanted it to be a matter of zeal and love for religion.

Some time ago it was announced that Mr. Charles J. Hemans, the son of the poetess, had returned to the Church of England, after having been for ten or twelve years a convert to Romanism. An interesting letter has been published, in which Mr. Hemans explains the reasons of his re-conversion. "Having," he says, "been induced during the many years spent by me at Rome, to examine into the evidences of Christian antiquity in the range of catacomb monuments, and having approached that study with a strong sense of the value of those primitive records, as the incorrupt and pure expression of the mind of the early Church, I have been finally led to see, that between the picture of a past reality there presented and the actual religious practice of Rome, exists an opposition affecting essentials—an irreconcilability, in short, which I believe no amount of ingenious erudition, no argumentation or sophistry, can either explain away or harmonise." He proceeds to say that on two great points he found the opposition insurmountable; the absence of any recognition by the early Church of an earthly head in the successors of St. Peter, and the absence of any trace of creature-worship or Mariolatry. The recent Encyclical, and other evidences of the rotten state of the Papacy, have had their weight with Mr. Hemans in coming to the conclusion he has reached. Still, he says, that in the Romish system there is much that is holy, beautiful, and useful, and that many pure and truth-loving minds will be found among her adherents; yet he has been led to the painful conviction, that it is rather [illegible] interests of a potent system by which her zeal for the [illegible] animated, than pure uncompromising love of truth.

The magnitude of the blow which the Papacy has received by the humiliation of Austria is gradually becoming apparent. Attention is turned to the decadence of those countries which bow to the sceptre of Rome, and their utter want of ability to cope with the vigour of the Protestant nations. It is some time since Spain ceased to be a great power, and Austria would now seem to be following in its wake. France and Italy are vigorous and bold, but both have spurned the Papal yoke, although they have not become Protestant. The consternation that prevails at Rome is said to be very great. Austria, as an able journalist has remarked, the last of the great ultramontane Powers, has been hopelessly beaten. The new Germany that is rising on her ruins is either Protestant or liberal Catholic, and is ruled by a king who is almost fanatically Lutheran. The world, as it appears at the Vatican, will be divided between six great states, and of these France will be Voltairian, Prussia Lutheran, Britain, on all Papal questions, Calvinistic, Russia Greek and hostile, Italy Catholic but anti-Papal, and Austria Papal, but bound by the evil prejudices of the Hungarians. The changes, too, are so sudden and violent as to leave no room for intrigue. Things are worse than in 1848, when, despite the spirit of liberalism, the Papacy had great powers behind her; and far worse than in 1800, when her calamities depended on a single man. It is most interesting to Protestants to think that in such countries as Bohemia and Hungary, the long-crushed plant of Protestantism has now some chance of recovering its vigour, as it has done in some measure among the Vaudois and in the north of Italy. That loss of prestige which has befallen the Papacy, that rude dissipation of her mysterious glory which has had such an effect in subduing men's minds and keeping them subdued, may now, in Austria, as for some time past in Italy, awaken a spirit of religious inquiry, and create a thirst for the Word of God. While we cherish such hopes in regard to the issue of the wonderful events of the past few weeks, we are of course not to be held as approving of the means by which these events have been accomplished. Wherever injustice and violence have prevailed, God will take his own way of punishing them; but not the less may He make the events themselves instrumental in preparing the way for the triumphs of the Gospel.

In the midst of the atrocities of the war, there is a pleasure in remarking the zeal and devotedness with which it has been endeavoured to mitigate its horrors in the hospitals. Among those who have devoted themselves to the work of Christian charity may be mentioned the establishment of Deaconnesses at Berlin, Kaiserswerth, Breslau, and Konigsberg. The house of Deacons of Duisburg has sent thirty of its brethren to the fields of battle, and the establishments of the Rauhe-haus, near Hamburg, have not been behind. The depôts of the British and Foreign Bible Societies at Berlin, Cologne, and Frankfort have been abundantly supplying the armies with the Holy Scriptures.

In Austria, also, much care has been bestowed on the wounded. In Pesth, very opportunely, the first Protestant hospital in Hungary had just been opened, under the auspices of the Rev. Rudolph Kœnig, missionary of the Free Church of Scotland, and pastor of the German congregation in that city. Two deaconnesses had been sent from Kaiserswerth to aid in the hospital, and others were on their way, or in training. When the wounded thousands arrived from the seat of war in Bohemia, application was made to Mr. Kœnig for nurses to supply a new hospital opened in Pesth, which application Mr. Kœnig undertook to supply. Some of the leading members of the German Protestant congregation have formed themselves into a society for visiting the sick in the hospitals, and supplying them with tracts, Bibles, and Testaments. The small beginning of the 2nd of January has thus widened out into a considerable stream of Christian activity, on which, both in its temporal and its spiritual exertions, there is good cause to hope an ample blessing may rest.

The progress of evangelical work in France, if not very marked, is, in some districts, not the less real. "We hear of spots," says the correspondent of *Christian Work*, "where the Lord is awakening Christians to active work and increased prayer; and others where, without any new agency from without, except, perhaps, the prayerful distribution of a few tracts, souls apparently dead in sinful carelessness are awakening to the consciousness of their danger, and to the all-importance of securing their eternal welfare. In the Gard and the Lozère we hear of a person here and there having found peace, and, in the joy of possession, reading aloud a tract to fellow-travellers in a coach or elsewhere, and then in villages around, until little meetings of three or four become crowded, and sixty or seventy persons join the prayers with an earnestness never before manifested. In the Ariege a striking little tract has also been remarkably blessed in connection with a small meeting of four persons, who met two months ago in their pastor's parlour; the number increased successively to eight, twelve, twenty, forty, and at last overflowed the apartment and adjourned to the church, where the happy pastor welcomes between three and four hundred souls every evening, anxious, as they had never yet been, to hear the words of eternal life. We must not forget that behind the noise of party skirmishing in the Churches, and the deadly warfare of contending elements from without, there are thousands of simple souls going their regular round of duties, more or less sleepily, more or less intelligently, not in the least affected by the clamour of combatants they probably have never heard of."

Syria is again desolated by the plague of locusts. At the very time when Captain Baker has discovered one of the largest fresh-water lakes in the world among the sources of the Nile, bearing the name of the "Lake of Locusts," and supplying an interesting proof how terrific the desolations of that creature may have been in ancient Egypt, the inhabitants of Hasbeyia, Nazareth, Nablous, and other well-known places in Syria and Palestine have been reduced to utter poverty and misery by their terrific assaults. In 1855, the Christians did all in their power to destroy the locusts and their eggs, whilst the Mahommedans caught and ate them as a great delicacy. Notwithstanding, their ravages this year are more terrible. They have entered the houses of the people as they never did before. Two babies left in a house in Hasbeyia were choked by them, and died. The Rev. F. A. Klein, of the Church Missionary Society, writes that while in some places the barley crop has escaped, the olive-trees, fig-trees, and vines have been stripped of their foliage, and the distress of the people is overwhelming. "Some days ago, one of our people from Boi Zeit came to me quite broken-hearted. Owing to the destruction occasioned to the vineyards last year, the poor fellow borrowed money at fifty per cent., hoping to be able to pay back capital and interest from the produce of this year. Now the locusts have destroyed his olive crop, his fig-trees, his vineyard, his only means of support. 'Is not the last day near at hand?' he said to me with a voice choked with grief and emotion. 'I understand that such scourges, hunger, and wars between the various nations, are signs of the last day.' I read to him the second and third chapters of Joel, and every now and then he said, 'Oh, how true!' He said he would get these chapters read to all his friends on his return to the village. I could not help shedding a tear at the sorrowful account this man gave me, with so much grief, yet at the same time with so much resignation to the Lord's will." Dr. Sandreckzi describes the locusts as he saw them advancing towards Jerusalem. "They fell upon the city and all the country surrounding it in such multitudes that almost everything verdant was eaten up within four days. A few locusts of the largest size (six and seven inches long) were caught at Bethlehem, I think. I myself have seen about twenty-two different species of them. At Tiberias, the cholera has broken out, and at Nazareth small-pox and the measles are raging."

An interesting illustration of the value of Medical Missions, especially where ordinary missionaries are not allowed to prosecute their work, has occurred at Sirinagur, in Cashmere. Three years ago, two missionaries of the Church Missionary Society entered the valley, but were obliged to return. In 1864, Mr. Clark, one of the two, renewed the attempt, accompanied by his wife and some trustworthy native assistants. On arriving at Sirinagur, they were mobbed by a large crowd, who theatened to set the house on fire. The authorities could not be induced to afford them protection, and on one occasion, when a great fire had occurred, and a subscription had been made for the sufferers, they were obliged by the authorities to refund it, because Mr. Clark and some native Christians had subscribed to it. Inquirers who came to him were punished and imprisoned, and after trying the effect of removing to a house outside the city, and of an appeal by the British Resident, Mr. Clark was obliged to leave. It was evident, however, that it was not the people but the government that were hostile to the mission. Next year

the Rev. W. Handcock and Dr. Elmslie entered the Cashmere territory, Dr. Elmslie as a medical missionary. At Sirinagur he rented part of a bungalow belonging to a native merchant, consisting of a large room and three verandahs, which he fitted up as hospitals and a surgery. Mr. Handcock, finding that no opportunity of preaching could be had, was obliged to leave the territory, but Dr. Elmslie remained. The number of patients who came to him was considerable, and some came for surgical operations, such as the removal of tumours. By means of chloroform he was able to perform the operations without giving pain, and as the operations were successful, a great impression was produced on the people. A religious service is held with the applicants every morning before the distribution of medicine or the giving of advice begins, and Bibles and tracts are distributed among the people as opportunity offers. In this way, as well as by itinerating journeys on Saturdays, the Gospel is more or less made known in a district from which its regular preachers are determinedly excluded.

Interesting tidings have been received in connection with the work of another medical missionary, Dr. Lowe, of Travancore, and his associates. It would seem that during the week of united prayer last January, a deeply earnest and solemn feeling seemed to pervade the services, and many interesting results have followed. On the 12th a meeting was held at Kádamálei Kúmm, in one of the largest chapels of the district, accompanied by remarkable tokens of the Divine blessing. The exhibition of lively emotion in connection with preaching is so rare among the people, that the manifestations of it this day were the more remarkable. It seems to have resembled a revival meeting at home. Some faces indicated depths of distress, others showed hearts rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Meetings for prayer and conversation among the people followed. Some who had known the depths of sin were pierced to the heart, prodigals were restored, and formalists quickened; and even the very ignorant were sometimes enabled to see salvation so clearly that nothing could deprive them of their treasure. The missionaries hope, from these and other symptoms, that a brighter day is dawning on Travancore.

In addressing the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland last June on the state and prospects of Christianity in India, Dr. Duff gave a very interesting account of a remarkable young man, a leading member of the Brahma Somaj, Baboo Khesub Chunder Sen, who has been exciting great attention and interest among the educated Hindus of Calcutta. He is gifted with a marvellous oratory, which he exercises in the English language, and he is able to hold an assembly of even a couple of thousands of educated Hindus entranced, for two or three hours, as he pours out, like another Chrysostom, the golden streams of his eloquence. It is in itself a remarkable sign of the times, that an audience of this size should assemble and listen to an address in English, and it is still more remarkable that they should come to hear an address on the subject of religion. As the apostle of the reforming section of the Brahma Somaj, Sen of course makes no secret of his contempt for Hinduism. For Christianity he entertains a very high respect, although he be not avowedly a Christian. Recently, says the *Friend of India*, he delivered an extempore lecture to his countrymen in the theatre of the Calcutta Medical College on "Jesus Christ—Europe and Asia." He sketched the state of the world at the birth of Christ, the life and death of the Saviour of the world, and the progress of the Church till the Reformation, and of Christian missions thereafter. "Humanity," he said, "when Christ appeared, was groaning under a deadly malady, and was on the verge of death; a remedy was urgently needed to save it. Jesus Christ was thus a necessity of the age; he appeared in the fulness of time. He laid down his life that God might be glorified. I have always regarded the cross as a beautiful emblem of self-sacrifice unto the glory of God, one which is calculated to quicken the higher feelings and aspirations of the heart, and to purify the soul, and I believe there is not a heart, how callous and hard soever it may be, that can look with cold indifference on that grand and significant symbol. . . . . Is there a single soul in this large assembly who would scruple to ascribe extraordinary greatness and supernatural moral heroism to Jesus Christ and Him crucified? Was not He who by his wisdom illumined, by his power saved, a dark and wicked world—was not He who has left us such a priceless legacy of Divine truth, and whose blood has wrought such wonders for eighteen hundred years—was not He above ordinary humanity? Blessed Jesus! immortal Child of God! For the world He lived and died. May the world appreciate Him, and follow his precepts!" Of this remarkable man, Dr. Duff further said, that in his intense desire for light, he had asked the prayers of the missionaries on his behalf, and that he was in the habit of conversing with some of them. Should these prayers be answered, and should Sen, as a thoroughly Christian man, devote his remarkable powers to the preaching of Christ among his countrymen, the results that might be looked for, in Dr. Duff's estimation,—making allowance for differences too obvious to require naming—might be worthy to be compared with those which sprung from the conversion of the Apostle Paul.

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